Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 1 NOVEMBER 1968

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

QUESTIONS

REVIEW OF WAGE AND SALARY STRUCTURE

Mr. Houston, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Labour and Tourism,—

As recent Industrial Court judgments have given wage increases to tradesmen and associated classifications but have refused increases to less skilled employees, will he take immediate action to institute a review of the wage and salary structure with a view to establishing an equitable distribution of earnings to all sections of the community, thus enabling less skilled workers and their families to have a standard of living more appropriate to our times?

Answer:—

"The Honourable Member is well aware that the Industrial Commission makes its determinations, only after hearing evidence from parties relevant to an application made for an increase in wages. This includes evidence from the unions, whose members are in the category to which the Honourable Member refers. This Commission is an independent industrial tribunal, free from political interference or control, and it is the firm policy of the Government that this independence be preserved. I would add that all former Leaders of the Parliamentary Labour Party in Queensland, whether as Premiers or Leaders of the Opposition, have subscribed to this policy."

DIRECTOR OF CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Mr. Walsh for **Mr. Aikens,** pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) At what salary and allowances was the Director of Culture appointed and from what date were they paid?

(2) When did he actually take up duty in Queensland?

(3) Was any allowance made to cover his fares and other travelling expenses so that he could come here?

(4) Where has he been installed and what type of accommodation has been provided?

(5) How many persons will be attached to his staff and what will be their duties and salaries?

(6) Has any estimate yet been made of the total over-all annual cost of the establishment of this new Government Department and, if so, what is it?

Answers:—

(1) "Appointed salary classification of $350.20–$358.20 per fortnight ($9,135–$9,345 per annum) with commencement salary of $350.20 per fortnight ($9,135 per annum). Salary paid from October 14, 1968."

(2) "October 14, 1968."

(3) "Yes. In accordance with the practice followed in cases where officers from overseas are appointed to positions in the Public Service, the fares and reasonable expenses were approved for payment."

(4) "On the second floor of the A.G.C. Building, corner of Edward and Elizabeth Streets, Brisbane. The accommodation is of the same standard provided for other directors."

(5) "Provision has been made in 1968-69 Estimates for a clerk and a clerk-typist to be attached to Cultural Activities Staff, at Public Service Award rates of salary."

(6) "The estimated cost during this financial year of the establishment and operation of this new section is $23,965. Apart from the cost and operation of the section, as indicated above, the amount allocated for cultural activities during the current financial period is $175,600."

CAPITAL COST FOR SMALL ABATTOIRS

Mr. Cory, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Primary Industries,—

As the annual report of the Queensland Meat Industry Authority for 1967-68 stated that a plan had been developed for a small abattoir within an economically serviceable cost range—

(1) What daily throughput is envisaged for such works?

(2) What is the capital cost envisaged?

(3) Does the figure include chiller space and a digester? If so, by how much would the capital cost be reduced if such facilities were not considered necessary?

Answers:—

(1) "A daily throughput of up to 40 cattle and 150 small stock per day."

(2) "Approximately $108,000."

(3) "Yes. The reduction in cost of an establishment without chiller would be approximately $21,000 and without By-Products Equipment a further $12,200. The latter estimate includes cost of $5,000 for a digester."

TEACHER RESIGNATIONS

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

How many male teachers and female teachers have resigned from primary schools and high schools, respectively, between August 1, 1967, and the census date, 1968, for reasons of—(*a*) changing

occupation, viz. (i) marriage, (ii) household duties, (iii) transfer to other Departments and (iv) other; (*b*) failing health; (*c*) leaving the district or State; and (*d*) miscellaneous?

Answer:—

"The numbers of male teachers and female teachers who resigned from primary schools and secondary schools between August 1, 1967 and the census date, 1968, were:—

Cause	Primary Schools			Secondary Schools		
	Males	Females	Totals	Males	Females	Totals
(*a*) Changing Occupation—						
(i) Marriage	..	339	339	..	240	240
(ii) Household Duties	..	..	..	..	..	..
(iii) Transfer to other Departments	..	..	..	..	..	..
(iv) Other	99	50	149	72	63	135
(*b*) Failing Health	..	21	21	3	8	11
(*c*) Leaving the District or State	28	201	229	37	85	122
(*d*) Miscellaneous	40	271	311	20	125	145

During the same period there were 1,136 experienced teachers admitted or readmitted to the Teaching Service. In addition, 1,263 teachers entered the service at the beginning of 1968 from courses of Teacher Education."

Fire Protection for Multi-Storey Buildings, Gold Coast

Mr. Hinze, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Labour and Tourism,—

Has an investigation been made by the State Fire Services Council into all aspects of the manning and operation of the Magirus-Deutz Ladder at Surfers Paradise, as stated by him in Answer to my Question on September 19? If so, what is the position?

Answer:—

"The Chief Inspector of Fire Services, Mr. C. McKenzie, has visited the Gold Coast. He considers that the training could be more comprehensive in regard to the ladder in question. Consequently, the State Fire Services Council has instructed the Chief Inspector to carry out a full inspection of the South Coast Fire Brigade, with particular emphasis on ladder training. This inspection is in progress, and additional training in the use of the escape ladder is being carried out by the South Coast Fire Brigade."

Third-party Insurance Premiums for School Buses

Mr. V. E. Jones for **Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

Will he consider investigating the need for meeting the increase in third-party insurance premiums where a school bus route is shorter than sixty miles per day?

Answer:—

"Yes. This factor will be taken into consideration when the next review is made of rates of payment for school road transport services. It is anticipated that this review will be made at an early date."

Air Pollution at Kairi

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

Further to his Answer to my Question on October 25 relative to air pollution at Kairi that dust-arresting machinery was expected on October 25 and as this problem has been avoided by Monver Stock Feeds since June—

(1) Is he aware that no machinery has arrived and that there is no knowledge of its whereabouts?

(2) Will he consider urgent action to prevent the pollution until the machinery is installed?

Answers:—

(1) "I have been advised that the dust arrester ordered by Monver Stock Feeds at Kairi has been delayed in its delivery. It is expected to be despatched about November 8 and will arrive in Kairi about two weeks later. It should be installed by the end of November."

(2) "No. This is a matter for the Local Authority concerned."

Removal of Tailings, Irvinebank Treatment Works

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

In view of the importance of water for the treatment works at Irvinebank and as Louden Dam could provide adequate water if the tailings were removed—

(1) What quantity of tailings has been removed by the contractor who obtained the right to remove and treat the tailings?

(2) When will the contract be completed?

(3) Have all conditions relating to the removal of the tailings been complied with? If not, what action was taken against the contractor?

Answers:—

(1) "None."

(2) "This is dependent upon the completion of metallurgical tests being conducted on behalf of the successful tenderer."

(3) "All preliminary requirements have been met."

UNION BLACK BAN ON SERVICE STATIONS

Mr. Miller, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) Regarding articles in the *Telegraph* of October 30, headed "Union Black-ban on two service stations" and *The Courier-Mail* of October 31, headed "Service Station declared Black," will he instigate immediate enquiries into the matter?

(2) Will he direct his attention to the apparent intimidation by the Queensland Trades and Labour Council through Unions to achieve a situation which obviously conflicts with Mr. Justice Hanger's decision in such matter?

(3) As it might be agreed that Federal Awards are involved which would be outside the ambit of the State, will he direct his attention to the threatening and undemocratic methods, illegal in concept, being apparently used by the Queensland Trades and Labour Council and the Unions involved?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) "I have read the Press reports referred to by the Honourable Member and deplore the use of intimidatory tactics in any circumstances. I will have inquiries made into the matters referred to by the Honourable Member."

SALE OF OBSOLETE POWER-STATION, TOWNSVILLE

Mr. Walsh for **Mr. Aikens,** pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

What electric authority sold the Hubert Wells power-station at Townsville, on what date and at what price?

Answer:—

"The Townsville Regional Electricity Board; May 28, 1959: $33,000."

OVERLOADING OF TIMBER TRUCKS

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

(1) In North Queensland and in other areas are checks made of trucks overloading and operating with excess axle-load limits in the haulage of logs and sawn timber?

(2) Has action been taken against owners or operators for overloading and/or not using chains to secure log loadings?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "Prosecution action has been instituted recently against the operators of timber-hauling vehicles found to be overloaded. The securing of loads is a matter for the Police Department under the provisions of 'The Traffic Acts'."

RAIL CONCESSIONS FOR COUNTRY STUDENTS

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

(1) In each year how many passes and what concessions for travel on the Queensland Railways are extended to individual country students attending Teachers Training Colleges, University and/or the Institutes of Technology in Queensland?

(2) Will he extend the travel concessions and the issue of passes to all country students in order to enable them to return home in each vacation period?

Answers:—

(1) "Country students at the Teachers' Colleges receive free rail passes to enable them to visit their homes during each of the three vacations—May, August and Christmas. A similar concession is available to full-time students in Certificate Courses at the Institute of Technology. Country students at the University take advantage of the normal half fare concession offered to them by the Queensland Railways."

(2) "Provision has not been made for any additional expenditure in the present financial year. The matter will be reviewed when consideration is being given to the requirements of my Department next year."

NURSES' ACCOMMODATION, ROYAL BRISBANE HOSPITAL

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

In view of a report in *The Sunday Mail* of October 13 headed "Prisoners get more, they claim. Brisbane nurses are enraged and upset by the State Government's planned 'New Deal' for Boggo Road Prisoners"—

(1) Are the nurses quarters at Paradise Towers small and depressing?

(2) Is there only one light hanging from the ceiling and a power point which the nurses are not allowed to use for a room heater or an electric jug?

(3) Is the furniture old and needing paint and have most of the girls insufficient space for all of their clothes?

(4) Is there one bathroom on each corridor with two bath tubs, two showers and four toilets which are shared by twenty to thirty nurses?

(5) Is there no provision to entertain friends or to study in a peaceful atmosphere?

Answer:—

(1 to 5) "I have seen the comments referred to by the Honourable Member. It was a significant co-incidence that photographs of the shabbier parts of the nurses' accommodation should have been given to the Press at a time when extensive renovations were in progress and before the renovations had reached those particular parts. The photographs will, however, retain an historical interest. There is a continuous maintenance programme on these buildings and the additional extensive renovations which are currently being undertaken will ensure more attractive accommodation for the nursing staff. The number of toilet facilities provided vary in the different areas of the building; however, additional toilet facilities have recently been provided and I am advised that these and the bath and shower facilities are adequate. It is true that restrictions are placed on the use of certain electrical appliances in the nurses' bedrooms, but this is done because of the inherent fire danger which would exist with the unrestricted use of such appliances. A large and well appointed recreation hall is provided where nurses conduct dances and other social functions and to which they may invite and entertain their friends. A room is available for study purposes in the tutorial section and the improvements presently being undertaken will provide study facilities in each bedroom. When this Government assumed power in 1957 it inherited a legacy of many unsatisfactory outdated and uncared for public buildings, included in which was the nurses' quarters at Royal Brisbane Hospital where the nurses did not have even separate bedrooms, but merely cubicles with dividing partitions to a height of 7 feet. For the information of the Honourable Member, I would advise that in the eleven years from July 1, 1957, to June 30, 1968, the North Brisbane Hospitals Board has expended from loan funds, the sum of $331,544 on remodelling and renovations of the nurses' accommodation at the Royal Brisbane Hospital, whilst in the eleven years prior to July 1, 1957, the total amount expended from the same funds amounted to only $14,096."

Establishment of New Major Power-Station in Central Queensland

Mr. Hanson, pursuant to notice, asked The Treasurer,—

(1) Did he recently interview representatives of financial consortiums in the U.S.A. relative to the establishment of a large power-station in Central Queensland?

(2) What were the names of the consortiums and will he supply any details as to the results of his negotiations?

(3) Has he, subsequent to these negotiations, made representations to the Commonwealth Government relative to Queensland's or Central Queensland's future power needs? If so, when was the case presented to the Commonwealth Government and was the case of a comprehensive nature?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "I do not propose to reveal the identity of the industrialists concerned. They are large corporations engaged in a highly competitive field. Premature publicity could be prejudicial to their interests."

(3) "A strong case for financial assistance to establish a new major power station in Central Queensland was submitted by the State to the Commonwealth on September 4, 1968, and was discussed by me personally with the Right Honourable the Prime Minister as late as Tuesday of this week. I am now awaiting a final answer from the Right Honourable gentleman."

Jurors' Fees

Mr. Thackeray, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Justice,—

As men and women called to serve on juries receive $8 per day, which in many cases is less than the normal daily wage, will he have adjustments made so that there will be no loss in weekly income when they are asked to serve on juries?

Answer:—

"Down the years in various countries jury service has been regarded as a public duty which the individual citizen is called upon to perform infrequently. This principle has been always recognised in the fixing of allowance scales which were provided to obviate any hardship in being obliged to perform this duty. Even in recent years in England the Morris Committee on Jury Service did not agree with those witnesses who urged that jurors should in future be paid a flat rate as if for a service rendered, regardless of whether any losses are incurred. Nevertheless that Committee recommended the payment of allowances

up to a certain maximum rate per day and intimated that there was no entirely satisfactory solution to the problem of overcoming all hardship. In Queensland the allowance scale is reviewed from time to time in the light of changes in average earnings and is presently under review."

PAPERS

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

Reports—

Operations of the Sub-Departments of "Eventide" (Sandgate), "Eventide" (Charters Towers), "Eventide" (Rockhampton), and Queensland Industrial Institution for the Blind (South Brisbane), for the year 1967-68.

Director, Department of Children's Services, for the year 1967-68.

Queensland Radium Institute, for the year 1967-68.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under the Forestry Acts, 1959 to 1964.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

INTERNATIONAL SUGAR AGREEMENT

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah —Premier) (11.16 a.m.): Because there has been anxiety about the future of the Queensland sugar industry in the minds of hon. members on both sides of the House, I felt that I should take the earliest possible opportunity of informing Parliament of the results of the UNCTAD sugar conference at Geneva, from which I have just returned this morning.

The Deputy Prime Minister has, of course, already made a comprehensive statement which hon. members will have read. Perhaps a recapitulation this morning of the major provisions of the new international sugar pact will serve to confirm what has already been published and reassure this Parliament about the usefulness of the agreement concluded last week.

Might I say at the outset that I am greatly encouraged by the outcome of the five weeks of intensive negotiation in Geneva, during which many major difficulties confronted the 72-odd countries represented. These were overcome only as a consequence of what I judged to be a common acceptance of the urgent need for more orderly arrangements for the control of raw sugar being sold on the world free market.

Might I also say, that representatives of the Australian sugar industry, who have just gone from Geneva to London to commence their talks on the important British Commonwealth Sugar Agreement, have unequivocally expressed their satisfaction with the results of the UNCTAD negotiations.

When the Australian delegation departed for Switzerland, it did so in the knowledge that the Secretary-General of UNCTAD (Dr. Prebisch) had already proposed a basis for the distribution amongst exporters of his total assessment of the free-market potential for 1969 and the immediate future years. Dr. Prebisch had, of course, already secured agreement from the major exporters for his basis of allocation.

The Australian Government, with the support of the State Government and the sugar industry, had agreed to its proposed basic export tonnage of 1,100,000 metric tons. The delegation's primary task, therefore, was to protect the size of its proposed quota, and this it did so firmly and effectively. I think hon. members might be reminded that the Australian basic quota of 1,100,000 tons is second only to that of the 2,150,000 tons allotted to Cuba.

Bearing in mind the certainty of a quota reduction below what we had originally sought, the delegation concentrated particularly on the most important matter of price.

In a situation in which the world free-market price has remained dangerously depressed for an uncomfortable period of years, it was natural that this part of the negotiations should be confronted with very strong opposition from the major importers.

Throughout the discussions on price, the Australian delegation found themselves on quite opposite grounds to the Japanese, who, of course, have been Australia's largest customer. On their part, the Japanese had strong support from Canada, another of our principal free-market customers.

In these circumstances, there is little need for me to remind hon. members of the delicacy of a situation in which our principal customers were seeking price provisions at minimum levels whilst, on the other hand, we were seeking to secure reasonable price provisions to compensate for our readiness to co-operate to a major extent in making the quota provisions workable.

On the very last day of the conference, a compromise was engineered by the insertion of a formula which designates points of reference at which quotas may be varied.

When the price falls to 3.5c per lb. quotas may be reduced by 10 per cent., with a further 5 per cent. introduced in special circumstances if the price drops below 3.25c per lb. All operative quota changes will be by Sugar Council decision. The formula thus gives added flexibility and avoids excessive emphasis on upper and lower prices.

The importance of raising the price of free-market sugar will be understood when I explain that each ½c rise in the price will net Australian producers an additional $10,000,000 on an export quota of around 1,000,000 tons.

Although it has been necessary to accept a lower quota than our average exports to the free market during the past few

years, this sacrifice should be compensated for by an increase in the over-all net return to the industry through improved free-market prices.

Furthermore, but for this agreement, the world free-market price would most certainly have fallen still lower—there is no question about that—perhaps to around 1c per lb., which, of course, would be completely disastrous for the Australian industry.

The conference was under strong and constant pressure from the developing exporters for concessions in respect of quotas.

One concession sought was that shortfalls by those countries unable to meet their quotas should be distributed exclusively to the less-developed exporters. Although sympathetic to the claims of these exporters, the Australian delegation felt obliged to protect the interests of its own producers.

Finally, an arrangement was reached whereby shortfalls would be distributed, at the discretion of the international council, firstly to those exporting members whose quotas were below 100 per cent. of their basic export tonnages, and, thereafter, 20 per cent. exclusively to developing exporting members and the remaining 80 per cent. being again distributed among all exporting members. This was regarded as an equitable solution and, although it is not expected that shortfalls will represent any great tonnage during the first year of the agreement, the Australian industry could benefit in subsequent years.

With exporters proposing production restrictions, importer countries naturally desired some assurance that stocks would not fall to a level which could result in a sugar shortage should one or more of the large exporting countries experience droughts or other disasters, thus resulting in world sugar prices sky-rocketing as was the case in 1963.

Exporting countries have therefore undertaken to hold minimum stocks, at the disposal of the council, equivalent to 10 per cent., with a maximum of 15 per cent. if necessary, of their individual export tonnages. These stocks will be released by the council as the supply and price situation demands. Furthermore, exporting members have undertaken to make supplies of sugar available to traditional customers, within prescribed limits, at a maximum price of 6.5c per lb. This stock obligation may require the provision by the Australian industry of additional storage facilities, and this problem will be examined by the industry at an early date.

I am confident that Australia's free-market export quota, together with our special outlets in the United Kingdom (335,000 tons) and the U.S.A. (180,000 tons), which are not subject to quota restrictions, and our domestic requirements, will protect the acquisition of our present mill-peak tonnage.

It is well to remember, of course, that the mill-peak system has always been universally accepted as the foundation of economic stability within the industry, and adherence to this principle should not cause hardship.

At the close of the conference a legal and drafting committee was appointed to check the draft agreement and make translations into the various languages. This committee was hard at work after the conference closed, and it will be some little time before an authentic copy of the proposed agreement is transmitted to Governments for their consideration. I propose tabling a copy of the agreement in Parliament when it becomes available.

Members will appreciate that the agreement is still subject to ratification by Governments, but when I left Geneva competent authorities were confident that sufficient importing and exporting countries would ratify the agreement to enable it to come into operation by 1 January, 1969.

I think I should acknowledge to this Parliament the excellence of the leadership of the Australian delegation by the Right Honourable John McEwen, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade and Industry. I might say that it was interesting for me to be associated with him and see the way in which he handled this whole business. He fought vigorously for the Australian industry, and his profound experience in the negotiation of commodity and other agreements at international level had an important influence on the final result. There is no doubt in my mind about that.

The Deputy Secretary of the Department of Trade (Mr. D. H. McKay), supported by other officers of his department, senior members of the Department of Primary Industry, the Agent-General (Sir Alan Summerville), and the Chairman of the Queensland Sugar Board (Mr. Otto Wolfenberger), skilfully directed the Australian delegation throughout the general negotiations.

I must also pay tribute to the industry advisers—Mr. Pearce, of the Australian Sugar Producers' Association; Mr. Henderson, of the Queensland Cane Growers' Council; and Messrs. Wheen and Campbell, of the Colonial Sugar Refining Co.—who were frequently under tremendous pressures and forced to make far-reaching judgments on many matters vital to the welfare of their principals.

For myself, I feel that sugar producers in Queensland and New South Wales can now go about their normal business of growing cane and manufacturing raw sugar with a degree of confidence that has been totally absent in recent times. It would be foolish to suggest that there will be a meteoric change in the present financial structure of the industry, but the terms of the agreement should, without doubt, exercise a gradual, beneficial and lasting influence which will quickly reflect itself in the over-all economy of the sugar-producing districts and, indeed, throughout the State generally.

I fully concur with the Deputy Prime Minister in his view that the agreement will ultimately operate to the benefit of the Commonwealth's general balance of payments.

AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS DISTRIBUTION CONTROL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. J. A. ROW (Hinchinbrook—Minister for Primary Industries): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act of 1966."

Motion agreed to.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

Hon. J. A. ROW (Hinchinbrook—Minister for Primary Industries) (11.36 a.m.): I move—

"That a Bill be introduced to amend The Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act of 1966."

This is a very short Bill. It contains only four clauses and I do not intend to speak on it at any length.

The purpose of the Bill is twofold: firstly, it is designed to tidy up some of the wording of the original Act so that the intention will be clearer. Secondly, it will bring the Act into line with proposals which have been agreed to by all States.

Following the initial introduction of legislation by Victoria, Western Australia and Queensland, some anomalies became apparent. These mostly affected the other States but there are one or two points in the Queensland Act that need to be brought into line with the other States' Acts.

Victoria has already brought in amending legislation, and I understand that in Western Australia similar amendments are also under consideration and that New South Wales, in the current session, will be bringing down a complete Bill.

Only three sections of the Queensland Act are affected, namely, sections 6, 25 and 26. It is proposed to amend three of the definitions, or meanings of terms, in section 6 of the present Act.

In discussions with other States and with insurance underwriters, it was suggested that there could be some doubt whether the definition of aerial spraying was adequate to cover all situations. Spraying of the wrong property could result purely from accident, or it could be deliberate. To make the position quite clear it is proposed to add the words "whether intended or not" to the definition of "aerial distribution". The present definition is probably all right, but it is always best to be on the safe side.

Mr. Tucker: What is the object of that proposal?

Mr. ROW: To tidy the position up. In the original Act the definition of "aerial distribution" reads—

"The spraying, spreading or dispersing of any agricultural chemical or any preparation containing any agricultural chemical from an aircraft in flight."

We are adding the words "whether intended or not" in order to make certain that the definition covers spraying done either by accident or deliberately. It is to clear up the phraseology from a legal point of view. As I said, the present definition could be all right but the addition of these words will make it absolutely clear and watertight.

Mr. Hanlon: It ensures that the liability is recognised.

Mr. ROW: That is right.

The second definition that needs amendment is that of "owner". Under the Act as it stands the owner of an aircraft is required to take out an insurance policy for indemnity purposes. During recent years the practice of leasing aircraft has developed to some extent, and lessees as well as owners should be covered.

The third amendment to the definition section, that is, section 6, is designed simply to make it clear that loss or damage from spray drift as well as the spray itself is fully covered. The proposed amendments to section 6 that I have just mentioned are simply for clarification purposes.

The second section of the Act that requires amendment is section 25, and the main amendments apply to this section.

Firstly, it is intended to extend the indemnity under the insurance policy to cover not only the owner and his servants but also any other person using the equipment. The purpose here is to ensure that the injured party will have recourse against the policy, regardless of who uses the equipment. The Act says, "owner and his servant", and it is intended to amend it to "owner and any other person". This will cover cases where equipment is lent to someone other than an employee or servant of the owner. It will cover even a friend who is operating the aircraft.

After joint discussions with all States, insurance underwriters and spraying operators, it was felt that the present wording of section 25 (2) was too open to misinterpretation. Of course, the intention of the legislation is to cover damage resulting from spraying operations. It is not intended to cover damage that might result from the ordinary transport of chemicals. Under the Act it was argued that if chemicals were being transported from one property to another and not being actually sprayed and if the truck carrying them capsized this could be interpreted as being damage to the property. This situation is clarified by the proposed amendment.

At the same time, the opportunity has been taken to reword this section to make it clear that the policy is available to cover all claims totalling in aggregate up to the amount of the policy for each flight or ground-spraying operation. If the pilot makes six flights each of the flights has a cover of $30,000. The Act provides for a $30,000-cover for aircraft, and this cover will apply to each separate spraying operation.

The only really major amendment proposed also affects section 25 of the Act. This proposal is that damage on the property of the person requesting the spraying will not be covered. In the discussions held with other States the insurers indicated that this type of exclusion is normal in all indemnity policies of the type that is envisaged. The view generally taken is that it is a matter between the two parties to the contract—the operator and the farmer engaging his services. Negotiations have indicated that it would be very difficult to obtain a policy without the payment of very high premiums if the present provision was retained. The premiums would be substantially higher. I point out further, and this is very important, that other States are not covering the property of the person who requires the spraying to be carried out, and there must be uniformity among the States in such legislation. The policies are to be recognised by all States. There is a lot of interstate movement of operators, and it would be impractical for us to have a coverage different from that provided for in the other States. In effect, an insurance policy taken out in New South Wales would apply to Queensland, provided it fulfils Queensland's requirements in all respects.

The only other amendment proposed affects section 26 of the Act. At the present time the owner of the aircraft or equipment is the only person required to keep records of operations.

Hon. members will see a list of about 11 or 12 types of records that he is required to keep under section 26 of the Act.

In practice this could be very difficult, since the owner may have no direct contact with the actual operator on a day-to-day basis. He may be a man who is employed by him.

The proposed amendment will place the onus for preparing a record on the person actually carrying out the spraying. These records made by the person doing the spraying will then be furnished to the owner, who will still be required to keep the records for two years. That provision is in the principal Act.

The few points I have mentioned are all that are covered in the Bill, but I should like to make some general comments on the operation of the Act.

As hon. members will recall from the debate some two years ago, when the original Act was passed, provision was made for the setting-up of an Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Board. The board was set up some time ago and had its first meeting towards the end of 1967. It has some very competent technical people on it. The Deputy Director of the Plant Industry Division, Mr. Marriott, is chairman. Other members from my department include Mr. Everist, Government Botanist, Mr. Beckmann, Chief Chemist, and Mr. Berrill, Chief Horticulturist. Mr. Peel, Director of Agricultural Standards, is the secretary. There are also two members from the Lands Department, namely, Mr. Mann, Director of the Biological Research Laboratory, and Mr. Hunter, who is head of the Development Branch. The other members are Mr. Drury, from the Department of Civil Aviation, and Mr. Jones, from the Council of Agriculture.

The board has been working very well and the necessary regulations have been drafted. They are currently being looked at departmentally and should be put forward fairly soon.

An Aerial Operators' Chemical Rating Manual is already available and it is a very valuable reference book. It was prepared by a joint Commonwealth-States Committee. Work is well advanced on a similar manual to cover ground spraying, and it should be ready for printing before the end of this year. Hon. members will recall that Queensland is the only State that covers ground spraying for herbicides. The other States cover only aerial spraying. The ground-spraying manual should serve a very useful purpose in agriculture, quite apart from its value to spraying operators.

Arrangements have been made to conduct special trials with various chemicals on a variety of fruit and vegetable crops in order to observe the effects. The trials will be carried out at the research station at Rocklea. They will involve treatment at various stages of growth, and at different concentrations. The results will be observed and photographed, and specimens will be analysed. These trials will provide very useful reference material for use in assessing damage under the Act.

One problem we have come across—I suppose it is not peculiar to us—is the difficulty in getting suitably qualified people for assessment and analytical work. Suitable people with the necessary chemical background just do not seem to be available. I hope this problem can be overcome reasonably soon, because we have spent a lot of money in purchasing the equipment for testing the chemicals and assessing the damage they do to plants and materials.

I have given hon. members this brief run-down on what is happening in the field so that they will know what progress has been made. Apart from the technical staff problem, it is going along very well.

I commend the measure to the Committee.

Mr. TUCKER: (Townsville North) (11.49 a.m.): If the legislation is as outlined by the Minister, I feel that the Opposition will be completely happy with it. It is essential to ensure that there are no loopholes in the legislation that will allow those who are either aerial spraying or ground spraying to escape their commitments, or permit the insurance underwriters to escape theirs. In that respect the Opposition has no argument with the Bill. As the Minister said, the proposals are designed to tidy up and clarify the legislation.

The Minister said that certain anomalies have become apparent in the legislation of the various States. I realise that it is necessary for all States to have similar legislation because, as the Minister said, operators move from State to State and would come under the legislation of different States. Therefore, it is necessary that we follow the lead given by Victoria and perhaps Western Australia by introducing these proposals.

Relative to definitions and terms, the Minister said that there could be doubt about "aerial spraying". The reason for the proposal is quite obvious.

Regardless of whether the damages are suffered by accident or deliberately, people who suffer damage must be covered. This is a good proposal. The people who suffer damage would not be assisted if it was claimed that the damage was caused by accident and that therefore they were not indemnified by the insurance company. We have no argument with this proposal.

The Minister referred to the definition of "owner" and has included "lessees". Again, this is an admirable proposal.

The Minister said that it should be spelt out whether or not the loss or damage resulted from spray drift. We have to tidy these matters up and be definite about them, and it is good that the Minister has seen fit to introduce this proposal.

The Minister said that $30,000 can be paid out for damage suffered in respect of each flight. One can see readily that in the course of a day's work quite a deal of damage could be done.

Mr. Row: The insurance people wanted this, and they are quite happy about it.

Mr. TUCKER: I think that this is reasonable. We must all go along with it.

The Minister said that the landowner or other person who engages somebody to do aerial spraying is not covered by insurance. Such a person would have to sustain his own loss. I suppose that is a gamble that he must take. It could possibly be argued that there should be some form of insurance cover for this person. I do not intend to argue that point today, but I can see why those who do the engaging must carry the risk.

Many companies have aerial-spraying aircraft and equipment that is leased out. Previously the owners of the aircraft and equipment had to keep the records. To place on them the onus of preparing these records of the use of aircraft and machinery that could be hundreds of miles away is unrealistic. That onus will now be placed on the person carrying out the aerial or ground spraying. The Opposition cannot see anything wrong with that, as the other requirement was a trifle unrealistic.

I was very happy to hear what the Minister said about the operations of the control board in Queensland. All who take an interest in the control of the use of chemicals know that many of our streams show evidence of pollution. In fact, if we can believe those whose job it is to know these things, much of the ocean has become polluted by chemicals, and indeed as far south as Antarctica animals and birds have shown traces of DDT.

All who are concerned about the state of the land realise that vast quantities of chemicals are being spread, willy-nilly, around the countryside. Whilst we are making attempts to halt the damage done by certain insects, we could well ask ourselves what damage is being done in the process by the pollution of streams. For example, vegetables grown by the use of polluted water could introduce harmful chemicals to human beings. It appears, from books that I have read on this subject, that many people throughout the world are concerned about this problem.

I was therefore very interested to hear what the Minister said about our own control board. I know that there are very dedicated men in the Public Service who are well aware of what I am saying today, and of what the Minister has said. It is therefore rather sad to hear that there is a dearth of suitably qualified people to keep a check on possible damage done by chemical pollution. I believe that quite a lot of it is done by continual aerial spraying, and it is highly desirable to have people who are able to say, for example, "At present the level is such that we do not think it is causing any harm to the people." It is believed in some places throughout the world that the human race is suffering as a result of the uncontrolled use of chemicals.

This problem is increasing throughout the country, and, if it is not possible to obtain suitably qualified people to keep the position under strict observation, we should start training our own officers for this work. It will not matter if training them takes five or even 10 years if the result is that we have on our own boards people who are able to make accurate reports on exactly what is happening. I feel very strongly about this matter. The hon. member for Salisbury has made many contributions dealing with it, and I have on my desk at the moment a number of books on chemical control that have been written by interested people

throughout the world. I am very happy to think that our control board is keeping a strict eye on the position, and I hope the Minister continues to make every effort to get suitably qualified people for this work.

The Opposition has no argument with the Bill—at this stage, at any rate—and we will allow it to go through.

Mr. AHERN (Landsborough) (11.59 a.m.): I wish to commend the Minister on the introduction of the Bill. It is one that has particular reference to my area of Landsborough. As has been outlined by the Minister, it is designed specifically to remove loop-holes in what was essentially a new type of legislation, and it will give adequate protection to both producers and contractors.

Originally a Bill was brought down in this Chamber in 1966 as a result of a recommendation of the Standing Committee on Agriculture of the Australian Agricultural Council, and Queensland was the only State in which the Government was brave enough to extend its provisions to cover ground operators. Legislation in other States at present covers only aerial operators; but, having seen the Queensland legislation in operation, the Governments of those States are considering it and thinking of amending their own legislation to follow Queensland's progressive lead.

Some of the amendments proposed by the Minister are of a machinery nature; others are quite significant. It is proposed, firstly, to remove the intention factor in errors in aerial spraying and ground distribution; secondly, to widen the definition of "owner of equipment"; thirdly, to clarify indemnities relative to insurance; and, fourthly, to ensure that records are kept by everybody concerned. However, the most important proposal is to widen the terms of the Act to include the word "drift". It is very important in the light of recent research findings in this field, and I should like to come back to that point later.

I express the hope that the Act, with the amendments proposed in the Bill, regulations, and associated manuals relating to operations, can be published and brought into effect at a very early date, because they are eagerly awaited in my electorate.

I understand that, in essence, the provisions of the Bill will operate in this way when they come into effect. On receipt of a complaint against a contractor, officers of the Standards Branch of the Department of Primary Industries will investigate it, consult with the owner of the equipment concerned, conduct any investigations that he might think are necessary, and interview the plaintiff. They will also take samples and analyse them. All that information will then be considered by the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Board, as outlined by the Minister. Once the matter has been considered by the board, reports will be given to interested parties and will be the basis of a negotiated settlement between plaintiffs, defendants and insurance companies. If necessary, it will become expert evidence to be placed before a court.

A very important and significant decision was given by the Supreme Court of Queensland in April this year. It established that damage which is not immediately visible is caused by volatile hormones commonly used in groundsel and burr control in this State. In principle, the court accepted evidence that previously it had been very difficult to get any court to accept, and it means that the general provisions outlined in the Act will now operate effectively.

The case to which I refer is Bush versus McKillop, which arose in my electorate. The court granted an interlocutory injunction against Mr. McKillop to prevent him from spraying groundsel in his area because such spraying had injurious affection on papaw crops and, to a lesser extent, banana crops immediately adjoining.

I do not wish to argue the merits of that case, but the principle contained in the decision was very important in relation to the proposed Bill. It meant, in effect, that the court accepted the sort of evidence that the board will endeavour to provide in these difficult cases of drift of volatile toxic hormones causing losses in fruit by interfering with fruit-set mechanisms. It is very difficult to obtain evidence of such drift, particularly in the case of 2,4,5-T esters, which are extremely liable to drift, as the Act recognises. They are very often used, particularly in groundsel eradication.

This is the sort of evidence that was put before the court in regard to papaws. A layman looking at the crops might have seen them green and growing and said, "There's nothing wrong with them." But when expert evidence was taken and investigation conducted into the growth in terms of the number of leaves per week, it was shown that this had been substantially reduced and that there was distortion of the leaves, and cleavage or breaking of the leaves. A papaw does not set fruit other than under an undamaged leaf, which meant that the fruit-set was severely damaged and impeded, and that year's crop was virtually a write-off.

I welcome the fact that drift is included in the Bill, because it has reference not only to papaws but also to citrus, bananas, and many other crops which are extremely sensitive to this type of damage from hormone drift.

Not only has the sort of damage I am talking about been established but it has also been established that with much smaller concentrations, and therefore at greater distances, pollen sterilisation can occur. This again interferes with the fruit-set.

A paper was introduced at a recent weedicide conference to show that, in still air when the particle size is very small—this can quite easily occur when misters of the common, ordinary type are used, and

when the particle size is of the order of only 5 microns in diameter—these particles can travel up to 18,000 feet, and research has shown that injurious affection can occur up to 2 miles distant because of spray drift. This has been demonstrated by authentic research which, as I say, was published in a report of a weedicide conference early this year.

I am pleased that this particular aspect is clarified in the Bill because thousands of dollars are invested in plantations which cannot readily be replaced. It is all very well to say that if a farmer has $100,000 invested in an orchard and you pay him $100,000 compensation he is being fully compensated, but it must not be lost sight of that he cannot get his orchard back into production very quickly for next year's crop. It is imperative, therefore, that the rights of producers and operators should be adequately protected. Until now, a grower had to spend thousands of dollars on costly legal expenses in order to establish his claim. Now, departmental officers will provide expert evidence and put it before a board, and the board will produce evidence on which claims will be based. Those claims will be decided either by negotiations or before a court.

Prevention is better than cure in these matters. If, by regulations and through the activities of the control board, prevention can be achieved, this will be a very good thing. The original Act refers to the powers of the Minister to make regulations in particular areas, and subparagraph (f) reads—

> "regulating the droplet or particle size in aerial and ground distribution whether generally or in prescribed areas or in prescribed weather conditions;"

That is very important. Operators in areas of high risk should be advised not to use certain types of spray nozzles and not to use them at certain pressures that will give a particle size that is susceptible to drift.

It has been shown beyond doubt that a particle less than 100 microns in size is very susceptible to drift. The practice should be adopted of instructing operators in highly hazardous areas on the use of certain nozzles at certain pressures and pointing out to them the high risks involved in their misuse. I suggest that the manual and the regulations ought to grapple with this problem in order to afford a measure of protection to property-owners. It is far better to achieve prevention than to reimburse a property-owner who has suffered damage.

In initiating the Bill the Minister has outlined the proposals very fully. However, I should like him to clarify one particular proposal. He said that the insurance company will indemnify the farmer or owner in each operation to a maximum amount of $30,000. That is very clear when it relates to aircraft—that is, from when an aircraft takes off until it lands is regarded as a single operation—but it is not quite so clear when it relates to ground operations. It would be helpful if the proposal could be clarified by the Minister.

I strongly support the measure as outlined, but will reserve any further remarks till the second-reading stage.

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) (12.12 p.m.): I wish to speak on several matters raised by the Minister, namely, damage caused from drift of spray, the equipment that is used, and indemnities to farmers whose properties have been damaged. On those matters I agree with the hon. member for Landsborough. The Minister should look into the qualifications of people who use spray equipment, particularly for aerial spraying. Apparently all that an operator needs is a commercial pilot's licence—a licence to fly small aircraft—and provided he has the aircraft he can hold himself out as an aerial-spray contractor and seek contracts for spraying crops. By allowing that, we do not afford enough protection to property owners. A person who holds himself out as an aerial-spray operator should be required to obtain knowledge of the effects of the sprays that he is using and of the standards and qualities of those sprays. I should imagine that the use of a particular spray is left to the discretion of the contractor. He could choose to use chemicals that are not of the desired standard. For example, he may be connected with a firm that is not as careful as it should be in the production of chemicals, and he may purchase cheaper chemicals than those produced by other manufacturers. The use of these cheaper chemicals could result in serious damage. The people who undertake this work should have their qualifications investigated and determined. I suppose that these remarks should apply also to those who use ground equipment for crop spraying.

The Minister dealt with crop damage caused by spray drift. I raised another matter with the Minister relating to damage caused to crops by hormone spray escaping from factories where the chemicals are manufactured. Crops at Pinkenba and in the lower Nudgee area have been damaged by hormones from the chemical plants in the Hamilton area, but apparently the farmers are not covered by insurance against the effects of hormones. The trouble has been traced to the manufacturing plants at Pinkenba, and one plant has been found to be mainly responsible. I asked the Minister to look into this matter and his inspectors investigated it from the point of view of drift from spraying operations, but that did not cause the trouble. It is caused by the drift of hormones from the manufacturing plants. I should like to see legislation introduced to indemnify farmers whose crops are damaged in this way. The chemical company to which I have drawn the Minister's attention, on occasions accelerates its production of various hormones and it is then that the outflow from the plant affects the farmers'

crops. The damage is continuing, and it has occurred for some years. It mainly affects the tomato crops in the area.

I hope that the Minister will consider providing some protection or indemnity for these farmers, and that he will consider also the other matters I have raised about the qualifications and standards of those undertaking crop spraying.

Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) (12.18 p.m.): This is a very important measure. We should realise, right now, that we are living in the days of "wogs" and chemicals. As the "wogs" increase in number and variety, chemists and research workers must be ready to cope with them. That is a rather big undertaking.

Mr. Tucker: But are we attacking them in the right way?

Mr. MULLER: I believe we are.

Aerial spraying commenced when I was Minister for Lands, and at that time the Department of Lands controlled aerial spraying. We commenced operations on the North Coast, between here and Gympie, chiefly with the object of eradicating groundsel on some of the poorer country that was not worth clearing by hand. We were treating some of the dairying country, where the cost of manual operations would have been exorbitant. After we completed some of this work people came to me with complaints. I confess that I was not competent to judge whether or not a complaint was justified. Samples of fruit and vegetables were brought to me, and I could see that they were either diseased or were affected by hormone sprays. There was some plant-life trouble. I would not have been competent at that time—nor am I now—to know whether that disease was caused by aerial spraying. As time went on we became convinced that aerial spraying had a good deal to do with it. We did not introduce legislation at that time owing to the many complications and difficulties associated with the matter, and we waited for further information.

The hon. member for Nudgee said he hoped that crop-owners would be fully compensated. This measure provides for such compensation.

I do not wish to be critical of the measure. However, when the Minister was speaking about insurance he said that the premium would be increased substantially. The word "substantially" concerns me, because it has a wide meaning. I do not know what the increase will be, but there is a possibility that it will be large. I know that many of the early difficulties in assessing damages have been overcome by appointing boards of review, and we now have a competent authority to assess the value of those damages. We got over that part of it all right.

There are two or three points connected with insurance cover on which I should like further information from the Minister. I am not asking for the impossible, because I know that this matter is full of difficulties. I also know that we cannot side-step them. This problem is with us right now and we must do something about it. First of all, we try to overcome the difficulty by throwing the responsibility onto the operators. Well, there are operators and operators. Is it intended that we should handpick these operators or require them to have some qualifications before they take a plane into the air to distribute these chemicals? I believe that this should be done, and I take it that the Minister has made provision for it.

These men should be capable of doing the job. It does not matter how capable a person is; the weather is likely to change quickly. It is an old saying that things change like the weather, and that is true. In a matter of minutes, winds change. A person might set out to spray an area of country, allowing for a drift, perhaps, to the east, and within a matter of minutes the drift might change to the west, south, or north. All these things must be considered.

It is easy to say that if somebody makes a "blue" and destroys somebody else's crops, it is a matter for the insurance company. I point out to the Minister that the insurance underwriters are not a pack of nitwits. They will not accept impossible risks. The damage caused to a crop could be tremendous, and it would be difficult for anybody to hazard a guess at what the damage might be. It can be thrown back onto the insurance company that has taken the risk, but it will not take a risk without receiving a very high premium. I am troubled at the moment about just what this insurance cover is likely to cost. There is a way of doing almost anything—at a cost.

I support the proposals and I believe that they are necessary, but I am wondering if the Minister or his advisors have anything in mind on how to control these insurance premiums. If they rise terrifically, the stage will be reached where it will be impossible to afford cover.

Spraying with implements on the ground is a different matter. This method is used extensively today on potatoes, pumpkins, and crops like that. If they are not sprayed there is no crop, and that is all there is to it. In this regard I pay a tribute to our research workers and chemists, who are working continually to keep one step ahead of this problem. What will kill "wogs", today, for instance, will not be so successful against them in a couple of years' time, and the spray used has to be changed. It is all very well to say, "This is too costly; I won't do anything about it," but it is absolutely necessary to spray or there will be no crop. Primary producers have to think of the food requirements of the people as well as the risk that they might take.

I am happy to know that the Minister feels that many of the problems can be overcome by insurance. I should, however, like to know

a little more about this cover. I am wondering if the Minister consulted the underwriters before having the Bill prepared. Before a Minister introduces amending legislation, I think it is always advisable for him to consult those who are to be brought into the picture. In this instance it is the underwriters, who will foot the bill. They probably have some means of which I am not aware of protecting themselves.

I am wondering if the underwriters are to have a say in who are to be appointed as licensed operators. I think that that is extremely important, as, without such a form of protection, the damage done could be so great that it would be beyond the capacity of insurance companies to cover it. There has to be a certain amount of elasticity in such a measure and, if it does not meet the need for it in every detail, I cannot help but feel that no matter what we do, or what is done in other States, before long it will be necessary to amend legislation of this type.

It has to be remembered that legislation such as this is more or less experimental; the previous generation would never even have thought of it. But the days when Nature seemed to provide her own means of protection are gone, and we are faced with a problem that has to be solved. In the early days people went onto the land when it was in a virgin state and did not have many insect pests to contend with. We have them today, and we have to do something about them.

Finally, I should like to congratulate the Minister and his advisers who helped him to frame the Bill. I had a little to do with this problem when I was a Minister, and I know how contentious it is. People claim that damage to their properties has been caused by spraying by someone else, but no-one is able to prove or disprove that allegation.

The Bill brought down a few years ago removed some of the difficulties, but I am a little troubled at the moment about the cover provided by insurance companies, and whether they are happy about meeting a situation of this kind.

Mr. CORY (Warwick) (12.29 p.m.): I should like to say how important this Bill is to me, mainly because of the increasing need to spray crops. Those in areas in which years ago there was no thought of spraying are now finding it more and more necessary to do so. I refer not only to what might be termed small-crop areas, but areas further out in the major agricultural belt.

It has been said before—and it is indeed true—that various insects and weeds are building up an increasing resistance to sprays that farmers have been accustomed to use, and newer sprays have to be found to which there is no resistance. There has therefore to be a constant changing of sprays to maintain their killing power.

It is also well known that many sprays have been the means of killing the natural enemies of insects and grubs, and today we have to rely more and more on chemical sprays to maintain many crops in healthy condition. Therefore, I am very pleased that the Minister has introduced the proposed amendments. They are particularly important because they will bring Queensland into line with other Australian States. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition mentioned the chaotic position that would arise if different laws relative to this matter operated in different States, especially when contractors move from State to State.

I commend the Minister also for accepting the need for the amendments before the provisions of the principal Act are enforced. It is obvious, I think, that those provisions would not have been really workable without amendment, and the Minister has shown that he is prepared to try to make the Act worth while by ironing out many of the anomalies that have already become apparent.

The real purpose of the proposed Bill is to ensure that insurance companies and operators know in all circumstances the extent to which they are liable. I shall not go into detail, but the Bill could be interpreted as spelling out the liability of contractors for malpractice or accident accociated with the spraying of both herbicides and weedicides from the air and herbicides from the ground. Contractors pay premiums to insurance companies to indemnify themselves in such circumstances, and I support the remarks of the hon. member for Fassifern relative to the assessment of the rate of premium for that cover. In my opinion, it would be impossible for insurance companies to say at this stage, "The premium will be such-and-such," because they could not assess accurately what the actual ratio of claims to premiums is likely to be. I do not think that the employer and the contractor should be indemnified under such policies at this stage. That would be the prime cause of premiums increasing out of all proportion.

It is very important, too, that a maximum indemnity should be fixed in cases of this type, and that really gets back to the whole claims structure that is developed in the industry. Every contractor who wants a licence, irrespective of whether he sprays from the air or on the ground, must pay a premium. He must pay it whether he is a good or a bad operator and whether or not he thinks he needs the protection of such a policy. Premiums will be held at a reasonable level only if a maximum indemnity is fixed.

Another provision in the proposed Bill lays down the procedure that an aggrieved person must follow when lodging his claim, and I think that is a very important and desirable feature. It will ensure that the cause of the damage is discovered and enable the extent of the damage to be assessed. As hon. members know, different plants react in different ways to various

hormones and sprays, and very often damage to crops is not caused by the hormone or spray that the crop-owner believes has caused it.

The fact that we have this independent body of experts to do the assessing is important because this sort of scientific assessment is far beyond the ability of the average person. The Bill provides for scientific assessment by an independent body, and I think its machinery provisions are very good.

Finally, the most important result of the Bill is the great psychological effect it will have on both operator and landholder, as well as those who live in areas where sprays are used. They will be made more aware of the dangers of using these sprays.

Some hon. members have already mentioned the sterilisation of land and the unfortunate effects, both in humans and in animals, of coming into undue contact with many of the sprays that are used. Organic phosphates, I suggest, are the worst in this direction. One has only to use organic phosphates over a lenthgy period to realise the aches and pains that can be experienced in the muscles through coming into contact with these sprays. We realise how dangerous they can be and, as I said, I think there will be an improvement through making the public more and more aware of many of these dangers.

It will also tend to give the contractor a greater sense of responsibility if he knows more about the type of substance he is spreading. These people are in business as contractors—that is their privilege—but they also have a responsibility to other citizens generally, particularly to people growing crops. They have a responsibility to make sure that they are not careless with such dangerous commodities as these. I think it will also have a psychological effect on the landholder who has no need to get a licence, or to be covered by a policy, say, for a mister, but who is spraying in areas where others could be affected. I think he, too, will gain something from this Bill, because it will make him more aware of the dangers inherent in the commodity he is using.

I conclude by saying that I hope that the premium basis is reasonable and not one that will make this activity impossible because of cost. There is the danger that as yet we do not know what the size of the average claim will be. We know what the maximum can be, but we do not know the size of the average claim or the number of claims that will be made. I feel that that is the only danger in the Bill—that there will be wholesale claims that will make increased premiums imperative. However, I commend the Minister for introducing the Bill and I am looking forward to hearing more about it at the second reading.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH (Tablelands) (12.39 p.m.): I support the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in saying that we find no fault with this Bill, and I commend the Minister for the way he introduced it. He mentioned the various sections and set out what the amendments actually refer to.

I am going to deal mainly with section 26, under which, as the Minister mentioned, the owner of an aircraft previously had to keep records. In future, this will have to be done by the operator. This is a very important provision, because it has been found on many occasions when something has gone wrong after a certain activity is undertaken that no records of it were kept and therefore none are available. It should be made part and parcel of the operator's duty to keep records of each trip that he does, the area that he sprays, and the quantity of chemicals he uses. The Minister has mentioned that records will have to be kept for a period of two years.

Dealing with section 25, the Minister mentioned the transport of poisons from one farm to another. Ironically, it was a poison truck that I hit the other night, so I can tell hon. members that poisons are carried on trucks. I do not have any quarrel with the present method of transporting poisons, but members on the Government side who are practical farmers know that the day can be extended by farmers, hour after hour after hour. They often say, "We will work for another half hour, and then take the poison down the road to our neighbour." This extension of operations creates an additional risk, because the transportation is carried out hurriedly in order that the farmers can be ready for spraying the next day. It is desirable for the Minister to make it known to farmers that they should regard these poisons as lethal weapons and that danger is created in rushing their transportation from one farm to another.

I was pleased to hear the Minister mention the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Board. I am gratified to find that this board is already functioning. Its plans cannot be faulted. The Annual Report of the Department of Primary Industries for 1967-68 states that a comprehensive survey of potential hazardous areas has been undertaken, and that maps prepared as the result of this survey will show cultivated areas and types of crops grown and will be used in preparing recommendations relating to hazardous areas. In spraying from the air and on the ground, hazardous areas are those in which pockets of high concentrations of chemicals are retained for some considerable time. A change of wind or of atmospheric conditions can cause a great deal of damage to crops. The report also says that an area for testing the reaction of crop plants to the application of agricultural chemicals at various concentrations is being established. That is a very important aspect of every phase of agriculture, whether it be in pastures, small crops or crops like tobacco. From my knowledge of tobacco-growing and the infestation of army worms, I should say that spraying is an every-day occurrence. The poison that is released, whether it be into

the air or the ground, remains and creates a hazard. That is one aspect that concerns us greatly.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred to DDT. Professor Birch, to whom I referred the other day, warns that "we have already destroyed a lot of the earth and are polluting more of it every day. Virtually all living organisms are now contaminated with DDT. It is concentrated in the bodies of Americans to the amount of 11 parts per million." DDT and many other poisons are being poured into the atmosphere and the ground, and in concentrations that are increasing year by year.

Recently I read an article dealing with the "backyard" farmers' nightmare, nut-grass. It can be eradicated by a combination of chemicals that really frighten the people who manufacture them. We must watch their effect on crops. If we continue pouring them into the ground, letting them further pollute it and our streams, the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Board will be working overtime.

Mr. Muller: Nut-grass can be controlled with intense cultivation.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: Intense cultivation entails the minute cultivation of every area of land. If the hon. member cares to visit my area, where crops have to be rotated once in every three years, I should like his views on the control of nut-grass. It is impossible to control it.

Mr. Muller: I said "intense" cultivation. That is not intense cultivation.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: The farmers cannot undertake intense cultivation. Therefore, that method cannot be applied.

Mr. Muller interjected.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: I will not pursue the matter further. The farmers that I am speaking of cannot cultivate the land. It has to lie fallow so that they can rotate their crops every three years.

Mr. Muller: You have not the right type of men to do the job.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: Probably the hon. member for Fassifern was born 30 years too late.

Another matter that is causing a lot of trouble and that could be covered by this Bill concerns local authorities which, in many instances, are using chemicals indiscriminately to control weed-growth alongside roadways. In many instances operators using the poisons have been harmed. The area in which they are used is often hazardous because, in jungle country, with the road virtually a tunnel, the concentration lasts for a considerable time.

I ask the Minister to instruct the board to investigate this matter and see if an improvement can be effected in the distribution of chemicals to local authorities for the control of weeds on roadways. The present method is a quick way of doing it, but it is dangerous.

I hope that my few remarks will show the Minister how important this board can be, and the large amount of work that remains to be done. I hope that the measure creates a greater awareness of the dangers, and the need to control the use of the chemicals that are being released into the atmosphere and the soil.

Hon. J. A. ROW (Hinchinbrook—Minister for Primary Industries) (12.49 p.m.), in reply: I express my thanks to all hon. members who have taken part in this debate for their valuable contributions. It is obvious that they are familiar with the Act and, indeed that they have a knowledge of the ramifications of spraying and the dangers associated with it.

I was very pleased to hear the Deputy Leader of the Opposition say that he agreed with the proposed amendments and was quite happy about them. He referred to the fact that insurance is not available to a landowner who contracts with a sprayer. I pointed out that higher premiums would be required to provide that type of cover. A property-owner who wants spraying done can enter into a contract with the operator. If he has a loose contract he can resort to civil action. The hon. member made a very pertinent point, which should concern most thinking people, about the effect that continual spraying of insecticides, weedicides and herbicides has on our natural flora and fauna. While this Bill is not concerned so much with that aspect, the minds of many people are agitated about the ultimate effect of continually spraying, with DDT substances, crops like cotton and tobacco. I point out that the U.S.A. will not allow the importation of meat that contains chlorinated hydrocarbons.

The hon. member for Landsborough comes from an area from where the idea of controlling aerial spraying, and particularly ground spraying, originally emanated. The previous hon. member for Landsborough, Sir Francis Nicklin, was particularly concerned because of the growing of small crops in his area and also in the Redland Bay area. The present hon. member for Landsborough has made a close study of these proposals and the subject matters contained therein.

The hon. member mentioned particle size where there is spray drift. This is a matter of concern. We have already investigated the possibility of promulgating a regulation to control the droplet size. The manual will contain a section dealing with nozzle types and particle sizes.

As I said previously, we are the only State in which ground operators are controlled, and they are controlled only in the spraying of herbicides. This is a new enactment and naturally, to some extent, we are feeling our way.

The definition of a single aerial flight is relatively easy. It is from the time the plane leaves the ground to the time it gets back onto the ground. But the definition of a single ground operation is indeed a horse of a different colour, and we will have to look closely at it. It will be discussed with the underwriters in an effort to determine a satisfactory definition, which will then be spelt out in our regulations.

The hon. member for Nudgee expressed concern about the qualifications required of commercial spray operators. I can understand his concern, because he comes from an area in which small crops are grown. The qualifications of aerial operators are defined in section 12 of the Act and those of ground operators in section 16. I assure him that these people will not be given certificates unless they have pretty solid qualifications.

Section 35 provides that a person may use the chemicals only if they are registered under the Agricultural Standards Act for the purpose for which they are registered, in accordance with the directions and recommendations for use, in conformity with the registered composition, and taken from containers to which is attached the registered label of the chemical. The Standards Branch is particularly insistent on this, and it has to approve of all chemicals used in Queensland. We have an Agricultural Standards Branch and committee to deal with this.

The education of operators is covered in the Aerial Operators' Chemical Rating Manual for aerial spraying, and will be in the operators' manual for ground spraying. The qualifications will be gained by examination by the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Board, and the details of the qualifications will be included in the regulations.

The other point that the hon. member raised, which has been the subject of discussions between him and me, was the damage arising from the drift from the premises of a chemical manufacturer. This is not covered specifically in either the Act or these proposals. The Act can be used for the purpose of carrying out investigation. Men have been sent to make such investigations, but so far, I must confess, they have not been conclusive. I have some notes on this matter that I shall later give to the hon. member for Nudgee. If it can be determined that the source of the damage is a chemical manufacturing plant, it would be reasonable, I think, to expect the manufacturer to accept responsibility for it. He is already covered by a common-risk policy. As has been pointed out, one of the difficulties with most of the definitions is pinning responsibility onto a manufacturer. I shall give some reasons for that later.

The hon. member for Fassifern spoke in his usual competent style. He said that he often received from people in his electorate samples of plants and specimens showing evidence of disease. I believe that that situation will be resolved by the provisions of the Bill. As soon as anybody becomes suspicious of chemical action on plants or animals on his property he can call in the standards officer, who will make an examination. A lot of money has been spent on chemical apparatus for use in determining the chemicals that cause this type of trouble, and so giving aggrieved persons some evidence on which to act.

The Department of Primary Industries will not assess the value of damage; this has been, and I believe always will be, the function of the insurer. The department will determine whether damage has been done, and possibly the source of it. However, I emphasise the word "possibly".

I explained the education of operators in my introductory speech. A person will become qualified to do this work by passing an examination based on the manual.

With regard to the insurance premiums, they are, like all insurance premiums, difficult to ascertain with certainty. All aerial-spraying operators are currently working—and were even before this legislation was introduced—under insurance cover, in many cases in excess of the $30,000 prescribed in the Act. We have knowledge that in some southern States the insurance premium for the type and amount of cover now being provided is approximately $200 per annum. Operators have not objected to that amount. All the conditions of the insurance have been the subject of agreement with the insurance underwriters. The premiums for ground operators will be the subject of discussion with the under-writers, since ground distribution relates to Queensland only, and the amount of the insurance policy for ground operators will be determined by regulation.

The other matters raised by the hon. members for Warwick and Tablelands I can deal with quite effectively at the second-reading stage.

Motion (Mr. Row) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

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

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

FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

Hon. J. D. HERBERT (Sherwood—Minister for Labour and Tourism) (2.16 p.m.): I move—

"That a Bill be introduced to amend the Factories and Shops Acts 1960 to 1964 in certain particulars."

The proposed Bill deals solely with amendments proposed to the Trade Descriptions Section of this Act, which is contained in Part X, relative to textile labelling and the branding of footwear.

With respect to the amendments proposed concerning textile labelling, the Australian Agricultural Council, strongly supported by the Australian Wool Board, approached the Ministers for Labour in each State, who administer textile-labelling legislation, for amendments to be made to enable textiles containing the specialty animal fibres, namely, mohair, cashmere, alpaca, llama, vicuna, and camel hair, blended with wool to be described as "wool" under this legislation. At present, textiles may be described as "wool" only if the wool content is not less than 95 per cent. If it is less, then all of the fibres in the fabric have to be specified. This percentage requirement will still obtain for synthetic fibres. The Australian Agricultural Council and the Australian Wool Board agree that, when any of the specialty animal fires mentioned are blended with wool, the fabric may still be described as "wool" provided its wool content is not less than 80 per cent. The reason given for this approach was that it will increase the sale of wool on the international market.

The legislation relating to textile labelling is uniform in all States, and the Customs and Excise Regulations also conform therewith.

It is reported that this request has been made as a result of considerable pressure, which is being exerted on the International Wool Secretariat by textile and clothing manufacturers throughout the world, to allow mixtures of wool and specialty animal fibres to be included in the Wool Mark programme. In fact, the advice received is that all major wool-producing countries, with the exception of Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Mexico, and Belgium, already permit blended wool fabrics composed of wool and the specialty animal fibres mentioned to be described as "wool". It is further reported that action similar to that now being proposed in Australia is being taken by New Zealand and South Africa, and that Mexico and Belgium also have the matter in hand.

The views of the Textile Council of Australia were obtained when this proposal was being discussed, and the council stated that it had no objection to the proposal but, at the same time, suggested that the term "all wool" be accepted as an alternative to "pure wool", the latter term already being included in the Act.

Inquiries were made from the Dry Cleaners' Association of Queensland as to whether the proposal would create problems in dry cleaning, and advice was received to the effect that no real problems would be created, provided that the animal fibres in question possessed similar characteristics to what would conventionally be regarded as wool, which would be the case with animal hair, animal wool, and so forth.

The Queensland Chamber of Manufactures also advised that it had no objection to the proposal generally or to the use of the words "all wool" as an alternative to "pure wool". The chamber also expressed the opinion that, as the specialty animal fibres mentioned are more expensive than sheep wool, many manufacturers will, no doubt, wish to disclose the amount of these fibres in any mixture. The views of the Queensland Chamber of Manufactures and the Dry Cleaners' Association of Queensland were identical with those of similar organisations in other States.

The Wool Board conducted research, with a view to ascertaining whether the inclusion of all or any of these specialty animal fibres in a blended wool fabric would be likely to produce an allergy to the wearer. The advice subsequently received was that there was no cause for alarm in this regard. This opinion was also supported by the Queensland State Department of Health.

The Secretary of the Commonwealth Department of Primary Industry has reported that the managing director of the International Wool Secretariat has informed him that consumer protection councils in certain principal wool-consuming countries in the Northern Hemisphere had been consulted and that these bodies had no objection to the inclusion of specialty animal hairs in the definition of "wool".

In view of the fact that the proposal is unanimously supported by the Australian Agricultural Council, of which all State Ministers for Primary Industry or Agriculture are members, and by all State Ministers for Labour, irrespective of the political party in power, and that there is no objection by industry to the proposal, it is proposed to amend the textile-labelling description legislation of this State to—

(a) regard as wool fabrics those containing a blend of wool with specialty animal fibres (that is, only mohair, cashmere, alpaca, llama, vicuna and camel hair) provided that the mixture is of at least 80 per cent. wool and not more than 5 per cent. of any fibre other than wool or specialty animal fibre;

(b) permit the manufacturers, as an alternative, if they so desire, to specify the actual fibre content of fabrics composed of a blend of wool and the specialty animal fibres mentioned;

(c) accept, as an alternative to the term "pure wool", the term "all wool";

(d) provide that these provisions shall come into effect as from a date to be proclaimed.

The Wool Board has requested that these amendments be enacted as soon as possible, and that they operate as from 1 January, 1969, in order that the Wool Board may take full advantage of them in its wool promotion programme for 1969.

Similar action, as above, is being taken by State Ministers for Labour in each State and by the Department of Customs and Excise.

I now refer to the amendments proposed concerning the branding of footwear.

The legislative provisions concerning the branding of footwear have been the subject of extensive examination by permanent heads of State Labour Departments over a period in the light of the great changes which have been made in the manufacture of this product, the contents of which in many cases now consist of substances or materials other than leather, or a mixture of both.

As a consequence, these officers unanimously recommended, for the consideration of State Ministers for Labour, that certain amendments should be made.

State Ministers for Labour considered these recommendations at the conference held in July, and unanimously approved of them, as follows:—

(a) Synthetic materials: If the sole is not of leather, it shall be described as either "non-leather" or "synthetic", unless a true description of the material or materials is used. At present, the legislation requires the use of a statement describing the materials comprising the sole. This is considered to be unsuitable, mainly because of the multiplicity of combinations of synthetic materials now available.

(b) Action to be taken so that it shall not be necessary to describe the insole, which is required to be done at present. This request has been made by the industry on the ground that generally it has not been the practice to do so although the Acts in each State presently require it. The footwear industry for many years has been using a high proportion of composition materials for insoles, and it was not believed that there is any advantage to the public in stating the composition of the insole. I doubt if anybody ever closely examines any brand on footwear to see whether the material used in the manufacture of the insole is stated.

(c) Action be taken to remove the present exemption from the branding of rubber soles. As hon. members are no doubt aware, there are various compositions as well as rubber being used today in the manufacture of soles, and it is considered that if soles are rubber they should be required to be branded as such.

(d) Names other than true names: That as an alternative to the use of the manufacturer's true name,—

(i) it be permitted to use the manufacturer's business name registered under the laws of the State, where the registered business name is the sole property of the actual manufacturer of the footwear;

(ii) trade names and trade marks be not permitted.

(e) Metal used in the heels of women's shoes to be exempted in the same way as wood is already exempted. Here again, there is extensive use of metal in the heels of ladies' shoes and nothing is gained by way of protection of the consumer in requiring its use to be branded on the shoe.

All State Ministers for Labour agreed that these amendments should operate as from 1 July, 1969, but, in order to avoid amending legislation should it be necessary to amend this date, the Bill provides that these provisions shall come into force as from a date to be proclaimed.

In arriving at this unanimous decision, State Ministers for Labour considered the views expressed by various organisations in the States, and the only real objections to what is proposed came from the Tanners' Associations in Queensland and Victoria. Those objections related to the proposal not to make it necessary to describe the materials of which the insole is composed.

However, the Footwear Manufacturers' Association in all States agreed to the proposed amendments, and State Ministers for Labour, after carefully examining the position, unaminously agreed that the amendments mentioned should be made.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition) (2.26 p.m.): On the Minister's statements it would be very hard for anyone to object to the Bill, and the Opposition will support its introduction. Any action that can be taken to foster the use of wool should be supported, so long as it is kept in mind that such action should not result in members of the public being sold articles different from those that they believe they are purchasing. The branding of articles as to their composition has never been easy for members of the public to understand. Nowadays, with so many trade names associated with synthetics, we can buy an article and notice that it is branded "Pure Wool" or "Pure Cotton" or that it consists of a combination of one of them with certain other materials. It is usually very difficult for a purchaser to know what the other material is.

Everyone can recognise wool, cotton and silk, and I am sure that most women are conversant with the well-established trade names. However, a lot of new trade names are coming out, particularly to describe synthetics, and I am sure that it is very difficult for people to know their composition and wearing properties. The proposed amendment is a welcome one if it is intended to classify an article that is made up of over 80 per cent. of sheep wool in order to distinguish it clearly from other materials. People will understand that the bulk of the substance is wool and will have the wearing and washing qualities of wool.

I take it that the amendment will apply to the composition of material and that it will not be open to some smart person to produce an article composed of three or four materials, one of which is not wool, and to brand the article as a woollen garment. I take it that that is not the Minister's

intention and that if that sort of practice is engaged in it will be quickly stamped out.

Mr. Herbert: The labelling is of the textile, not of the manufactured article.

Mr. HOUSTON: I agree with the Minister, but, as he knows, quite a lot of manufactured articles, such as suits, for example, are branded as wool or pure wool, or something of that description. Shirts, which are manufactured articles, are branded with the amount of pure material and amount of synthetic material that they contain.

I am glad to see that the Minister has considered the effect that certain fibres have on people who suffer from allergies. Even a small percentage of a certain material can cause discomfort to many people.

Mr. Herbert: This applies particularly to synthetic materials.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is so. I am glad that the Minister has covered this point in his remarks, because it is a factor that should be considered above all others.

The big worry with footwear is not so much the designation of what the footwear is made of, but its quality. Unfortunately some of the footwear sold today is nothing more than junk, although the price may appear very reasonable. Far too many people are not getting quality for their money. Every year, just after Christmas, footwear is brought to my attention because of the poor quality of children's shoes.

It may be necessary for an appropriate authority to investigate the quality of some of the synthetic materials that are used in the uppers and soles of shoes. I have been shown shoes that I am certain were not made of leather. After a few days' wear they had cracked and broken, although when purchased they looked quite presentable.

This matter is not strictly covered by the legislation, but if the Department of Labour knows that defective material is being used in the manufacture of shoes it has an obligation to let the public know that the material does not stand up to our climate. I do not know if that would interfere with trade, but in the public interest we should let it be known when these materials are defective.

The use of leather in soles and uppers should be fostered, because the leather industry is a local industry and leather has proved itself over the years. Although its wearing quality may not be quite as good as that of some of the synthetics, it is certainly more comfortable for general use.

The trade-names provision fits into the general pattern of honesty in advertising to ensure that brand names are known. In footwear manufacture, more than anything else, it is very difficult to determine who is the manufacturer.

I shall leave any further comments until the second-reading stage, by which time we will have had an opportunity to find out from the organisations referred to by the Minister what they have to say. We will also have sifted any evidence we have on whether manufacturers are doing the right thing.

Mr. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon) (2.33 p.m.): I support the measure, and take advantage of this opportunity to assure the wool-growers and consumers generally of the desirability of the provisions of this legislation dealing with wool. The Leader of the Opposition put his finger on one of the causes of much of the concern when he drew attention to the Minister's statement that precautions had to be taken to examine the other animal fibres for allergy. The wool trade generally, and more discerning consumers, are conscious of the problems that arise with synthetics such as allergies and the undue perspiration that can be caused by synthetic clothing—for example, socks—which are not entirely suitable for heavy work or work in hot conditions.

The wool industry is our largest earner of export income and we must investigate all ways to improve and promote wool, not only to counter the squeeze caused by lower prices and higher costs but to permanently establish a better image for wool. Despite the declining prices in the last few years, I have retained confidence in wool. The wool industry has been confronted with problems previously but it has always fought its way back. It is a solid product that has "produced the goods" that people want and stood the test of time.

Mr. Duggan: I agree with what you have said, but do you think that by the establishment of this Wool Mark you are tending to make wool too exclusive and expensive a product, which might tend to reduce the demand for wool?

Mr. McKECHNIE: I agree to a large extent, but I think that there is a need to promote this specialist market. At the same time, we all know that the important market is the popular market, the every-day person's market. While supporting the Wool Mark's approach to the more expensive markets, I agree with the remarks of the hon. member for Toowoomba West that a greater effort should be made to catch the popular market and so achieve a greater consumption of woollen materials. That is the volume market.

Mr. Hanson: The teenagers are the ones who are spending.

Mr. McKECHNIE: As the hon. member for Port Curtis says, the teenager market is the volume market and is one of the markets we must aim for.

My confidence in the wool industry was strengthened in Japan on the recent parliamentary mission to south-east Asia. From talking to those people, it was apparent to me that Japan was confident that it wanted more wool and could handle it better. The fact that wages in Japan are rising steeply

is working in favour of wool, and puts it more within the price range of synthetic fibres.

Mr. Houston: Finer materials are now produced in Melbourne.

Mr. McKECHNIE: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that remark. There is no doubt that we must cater for the demand for the finer wools, both here and abroad. Throughout Australia we have swung a little too much to the coarser, stronger types of wool. The demand today is for the very fine, and, more so, the medium wools that should fulfil the need, as was drawn to my attention by the hon. member for Toowoomba West.

Synthetic fibres have not lived up to the extensive and expensive propaganda and advertising campaigns conducted for them. People gradually have become aware of the fact that they are not all they are supposed to be. Consequently there is a swing, in the United States and Japan, back to wool, which is something on which we can depend.

The industry believes—I do not think any section of it is out of line with this—that the addition of certain other animal fibres, provided they do not exceed 20 per cent., will enhance wool and will lend a certain attractive quality to it. I could not agree more with the hon. member for Toowoomba West that possibly, by the addition of these fibres, we are catering for a more elite and expensive type of market. Nevertheless, that is one that we have to cater for as well as the others.

As there is some doubt as to which animals other than sheep grow wool, I went to the Parliamentary Library this morning and found that, according to the Encyclopaedia of Science and Technology, wool is described as, "The fibres from sheep, Angora goats, camels, alpacas, llamas and vicunas." We know most of those animals. Later on I shall deal briefly with the alpacas and vicunas because to most people they are an unknown quantity, particularly as to their economic value and the wool they carry.

Wool has other wonderful advantages over other fibres, namely, in the field of dyeing, its ability to retain softness and strength when wet, and its ability to absorb considerable quantities of water and yet keep the wearer warm. In addition, it can hold hydrocarbons, such as dieldrin, to make it permanently mothproof.

Problems can arise in the blending of wool with other animal fibres because wool has a different composition altogether from that of hair. Hair has a hollow centre and a smooth exterior, and is produced by one single follicle in the skin of the animal, whereas wool is produced by two follicles. It is a solid fibre with a scale-like external structure, which allows it to grip for weaving, and it also has the ability to absorb dyes in these scales. It has a solid core or medula in the centre, surrounded by the corticle cells, whose long fibres overlap and give wool its grip and elasticity.

Hon. members can therefore see that it is desirable to keep wool as near to the pure product as possible. In other words, the wool content should be kept as high as possible. Admittedly sheep, particularly those in the stronger breeds, have some hair, up to 10 per cent., included in their wool. Whilst these other animal fibres are admitted in blending, sufficient wool must be retained to keep all the advantages of dyeing, retention of strength when wet, and retention of warmth when wet, and 80 per cent. of wool is considered a safe content. In other words, if more than 20 per cent. of other fibres is used, there is a risk of loss of some of the desirable properties that only wool possesses.

As the Minister pointed out, most of the other animal fibres are dearer than wool, so I do not think there will be much tendency to add too much of them, nor do I think that they will break into many of the fields in which wool is used.

One of the things on which I should like the Minister to advise the Committee is whether reprocessed or re-used wool qualifies to be classed as "all wool". I hope not.

Whilst that is one question that exercises my mind, my main concern is that wool retains its reputation for safety against fire. Many people who have died from burns would be alive today if they had been wearing woollen clothes. During the bush-fires in Victoria we heard of men surviving by wrapping themselves in blankets while the fire passed over them. Even in motor-car or aeroplane accidents in which fires occur, a person clothed in wool has a better chance of survival than one wearing flammable clothing.

My chief concern is for the safety of children. I think most hon. members received a little booklet recently from Fibre Makers Ltd., entitled "Safer from Fire". That booklet states that, from 1958 to 1962, 125 children under 13 years of age were admitted to the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne after their clothes caught fire. I stress that those were the admissions to only one Australian hospital. Naturally, the looser type of clothing worn by girls is more susceptible to fire than is the clothing worn by boys, and of the 125 cases mentioned 93 were girls and 32 were boys. Of the 11 who died of burns, nine were girls and two were boys. That shows that whilst the lighter, flimsy type of night-dress or clothing worn by girls may look attractive, it carries the risk of catching fire. Ninon over none-on certainly is appealing. Wool may not be as attractive, but at least it is safer and softer.

As most people know, wool has low flammability; rayon has extremely high flammability. There are, of course, a number

of grades in between. In fact, as the Leader of the Opposition said, there are so many makes and brands of synthetics that it is physically impossible for anyone who is reasonably "in the know", let alone ordinary people such as ourselves, to tell which is flammable and which is not. Consequently, one has to assume that most of them are flammable.

In addition, some of the man-made fibres and synthetics are treated with anti-flammable substances to make them safe. I understand that, although they are reasonably safe when they are new, the action of detergents and washing powers removes their anti-flammable qualities. Thus, a person wearing a garment made of material such as that may be given a false sense of security; in fact, after it has been washed a number of times, he may be living in a fool's paradise.

In a report dated 25 September this year, the Standards Association of Australia issued a statement on the flammability of fabrics from which children's clothing may be made. I am pleased that the Minister for Labour and Tourism laid a copy of that report on the table in this Chamber. However, when I studied it I found that it is only an interim report, and I await with interest a more detailed report on the flammable materials from which clothing may be made.

Turning to the rarer animals whose wool or fibre has been included in the 20 per cent. blend, I point out to the Committee that the vicuna is a type of llama. It is one of the two wild South American representatives of the camel family, and it lives in the Andes, in the region bordering on perpetual snow. Its wool is soft and fine, of a lustrous nature and long in staple, and, therefore, it is suitable for blending with wool. It has a long fibre that can be built into a yarn, and its addition to merino wool imparts a full, soft handle, and, consequently, gives a greater value to the blend. Therefore, it is to wool's advantage to have it included as a wool fibre. As has been mentioned several times in this Chamber, the raw price of vicuna is far greater than that of wool, so it is not a serious competitor of wool but, rather, a specialty addition.

The alpaca is a cloven-footed animal of the Andes. It is closely related to the llama but is more sheep-like in size and appearance. It ranges as far south in South America as Tierra del Fuego, and it is kept in flocks by the Indians and bred and looked after, I understand, in the same manner as are the domestic sheep in that country, or, for that matter, in this country. The wool is long and glossy, usually brown to black, and makes fine, durable clothing. Consequently, it has a desirable, if limited, use in wool blends.

As the Minister has said, the proposed Bill has the support of the Australian Wool Board, the Australian Agricultural Council, and the various wool-growers' organisations throughout Australia, including the United Graziers' Association in Queensland. I have much pleasure in supporting this legislation, and I look forward to its application Australia-wide.

Mrs. JORDAN (Ipswich West) (2.50 p.m.): I have not a great deal to say on this Bill, but there are a few matters to which I should like to refer. Firstly, I think that the proposed legislation is very desirable in that people—particularly mothers who have to buy clothing for the family—will know the components of the material they are buying.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to the fact that men's clothes are often branded to show the components of the material from which they are made. This applies in many cases to women's and children's clothing, both to material by the yard and to made-up garments. Indeed, these days we often see labels denoting the composition of the material in a garment and, in many cases, also the type of washing or cleaning that the garment requires. The label often states whether the garment should be washed or dry-cleaned only.

Quite a few materials are blends of wool and other fibres, the origin of which I do not know, but when garments made from them are washed they shrink so much that they become unusable. This applies particularly to children's clothes. I have had women bring garments to me which have been washed only once and have shrunk to such an extent that, unless there is a younger member of the family who can use them, they are quite useless as they are too small for the child for whom they were bought. This also happens with quite a few materials bought by the yard. When they are taken back to the retail store from which they were bought, the purchasers are informed that they carry no guarantee. Indeed, quite often when the clothing is examined it is found to bear no brand or any indication of its composition. I think that even though animal fibres are blended with wool, if the material is branded "All Wool" it will still give an indication of its composition.

As to price, many of these other animal fibres are much more expensive than wool, so I do not think there will be a great deal of difference in price. The price of wool will be the predominant factor in determining the over-all price.

I think that women nowadays have learned, because of the use of synthetics, to look for labelling of materials, and when buying materials, either in the form of made-up garments or by the yard, most of them will look to the label or ask the shop assistant about a guarantee. Generally, along the selvage of the material there is a marking stating whether it is guaranteed and usually advising as to its washability—whether it is to be washed in cold water, luke-warm water, or dry-cleaned only. Sometimes from bitter experience women learn that they have bought the wrong type of material for the purpose for which they wanted it, particularly from the point of view of wear. For instance,

children's clothing is subjected to very hard wear, as is work clothing for both men and women. Women have learned over the years just what materials stand up to hard wear and hard laundering, and, as I said, they look for these labels. Indeed, most manufacturers of clothing now put labels on it.

Mr. Hughes: It should be the law to have the quality of the material and its fibres marked on everything.

Mrs. JORDAN: I agree with the hon. member for Kurilpa. That should apply not only to wool but also to all other materials, particularly synthetic materials. Manufacturers should be compelled to disclose what is in their materials, because so many synthetic materials are manufactured that a person cannot keep track of them. Many of them are hard-wearing and crease-resistant, and, when treated, become good materials.

The fire-resistant qualities of materials, particularly those used in the manufacture of children's clothing, concern us all, and particularly mothers. As the hon. member for Carnarvon said, wool is fairly fire-resistant. It burns very slowly if it is set alight. Of course, the same thing can be said of some synthetics.

In the booklet that all hon. members received, and to which the hon. member for Carnarvon referred, I was surprised to read that flannelette was highly flammable. I had thought that it was one of the safe materials. I feel that many mothers would think, as I did, that flannelette is not such a highly-flammable material. Insufficient publicity is given to these matters. From time to time we read that consumers' organisations and women's organisations are campaigning for greater use of fire-resistant materials: however, the public Press contains nothing to acquaint people with the fire-resistant qualities of certain materials. The distribution of that kind of information is left to publishers of booklets, which have a limited circulation, so consequently the majority of the people who should be acquainted with these facts are not aware of them.

The Minister should look at that kind of publicity and promote a greater use of it. As I have said, I was surprised to learn that flannelette was highly flammable, particularly as I know that it is used to a great extent in the manufacture of babies' clothes, girls' night-dresses and boys' pyjamas. The Minister should look at this aspect of the matter.

I do not know whether the manufacture of footwear comes under the Minister's control, but I should like to see the guarantee of material used in footwear taken much further. Nowadays there are many brand names of shoes, but the manufacturer is not known. In recent times the quality of some children's shoes has been very poor. Cases arise where a mother will buy a pair of shoes for her child, the child wears the shoes to school, and the sole comes away from the upper of the shoe on the first occasion that it is worn. The mother will take the shoe back to the retail store at which she purchased the shoes, and is told that no difficulty will be experienced in replacing the shoes. Of course, the shoes have to go back to the manufacturer, and he eventually sends a new pair to the store.

Often some weeks pass before the mother can get a replacement pair of shoes. I know of one instance where a mother bought shoes for her child, and on the first occasion that they were worn the sole came apart. The mother took the shoes back to the store, and then had to wait for five weeks before getting a replacement pair of the same brand. When she received the new pair of shoes she gave them to her child to wear to school, and after the child wore them twice the sole came apart. The mother took that pair of shoes back to the store, and was again told that they would be replaced. On this occasion she waited six weeks for the replacement pair. She got a third pair of shoes of the same brand and, as far as I know, that pair was all right. But she had to wait 11 weeks to get a decent pair of shoes for her child, and it was a very well-known brand of children's shoes. The store would not refund her any money or let her take another brand costing the same amount. She was forced to wait until the manufacturer replaced the shoes. What a shocking state of affairs!

The same troubles arise with the soles and heels of well-known brands of women's shoes. Very few stores will replace them without first returning them to the manufacturer. Even with a known brand, women are often told, "That is just unfortunate," and they are stuck with a pair of shoes that they have to take to a bootmaker to have a heel put back in place.

The Minister referred to the practice of putting metal in the heels of shoes and said that it was not necessary for that fact to be stated on the shoes. Some women's shoes do have metal in the heels, and I think that is a good idea. For a time, when women wore narrower heels made of wood, the heels snapped off after very little wear. Quite often that happened very shortly after they were bought. If a woman had an account with a store they might not even have been paid for. I think that metal in heels provides greater durability than wood.

When introducing the measure the Minister said that the manufacturer's name, and not the trade name, would have to be shown on shoes. That is a very good idea, because even retailers have great difficulty at times in ascertaining the name of the manufacturer so that they can return a shoe to him. By requiring that the manufacturer's name be stamped on the shoe there will be a greater

tendency for him to have to take pride in the article and for it to be a better-quality article, even to the extent of a guarantee.

I compliment the Minister on this phase of the legislation, because when the manufacturer has responsibility the customer will get a better deal. The manufacturer will not be able to hide under a trade name, which very often cannot be tracked down.

Mr. MURRAY (Clayfield) (3.3 p.m.): As we are discussing an amendment to the Factories and Shops Act, and as the Minister's outline of the measure has met with the approval of the Committee, I think I should take advantage of this opportunity to mention a couple of matters relating to the Act generally. I suggest to the Government that we should remove from the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission the responsibility of fixing trading hours for shops. This idea is not new—it has been suggested previously—but there is no reason why we should not keep thinking about it and, I hope, do something about it.

Mr. Bennett: But your Government won't do anything.

Mr. MURRAY: Perhaps I could get the assistance of the hon. member for South Brisbane. No doubt he has given some attention to this matter. I believe it is the clear responsibility of the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I draw the attention of the hon. member for Clayfield to the fact that the matter of trading hours does not come under the Factories and Shops Act. In fact, it comes under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. I am sure he knows that quite well. The hon. member has also heard the introductory remarks of the Minister, to which I listened very carefully. I did not hear the Minister mention anything about trading hours. If the hon. member would be kind enough to keep within the ambit of the Minister's remarks, I would be most grateful.

Mr. MURRAY: I did not hear the Minister mention trading hours either. I do not say this cynically, but sometimes one finds small matters in a Bill that were not mentioned by the Minister in his introductory remarks. Normally we wait, with keen anticipation, until the Bill is printed to have a look at these things.

I could perhaps assist you, Mr. Hooper, by reversing the procedure to the extent of saying that factories and shops surely come within the ambit of this measure and that factories and shops, although controlled by another body not related to this measure, could nevertheless be discussed, because factories and shops are controlled by hours. I hope that you will let me develop this a little. I do not intend to be at all contentious. I say this because, generally speaking, the Government does accept the responsibility of fixing hours for liquor trading.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Clayfield is reminded that this particular proposal amends section 10 of this Act to cover textile labelling and the branding of footwear. I again ask the hon. member, and appeal to him, to keep the discussion within that field.

Mr. MURRAY: To allow me to go a little further, I move the following amendment:—

"Add the words—

'and for other purposes'."

Mr. Bennett: You are making the Chairman feel hot.

Mr. MURRAY: I am not flammable yet. I shall avoid, as far as possible, any problems in this matter. I want to repeat that the Government should accept the responsibility for the hours of shops and factories. Surely this will meet your requirements in this regard, Mr. Hooper. Our laws are unnecessarily restrictive.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment moved by the hon. member for Clayfield does not cover trading hours. The question of hours is dealt with in another Act. I ask the hon. member to keep his remarks completely within the ambit of the Factories and Shops Acts.

Mr. MURRAY: I am disappointed. I shall certainly not dissent from your ruling in this regard. My own sincere feeling is that, when discussing factories and shops, we can at least discuss the hours that control them.

Mr. Bennett: Parliament has power to amend one Act by another Act. That is my legal opinion.

Mr. MURRAY: I knew that the hon. member for South Brisbane would help me. First round to the Minister. No doubt we will have another opportunity to discuss this matter, because it cannot be left as it is. The law is wrong in this regard. It does not meet public requirements.

One matter that I am sure I can discuss is section 11 of this Act. I am delighted that my friends the hon. members for Windsor and South Brisbane are in the Chamber, because they have a professional knowledge of this matter which will be of assistance to hon. members. Section 11 deals with the powers of inspectors. We have just been discussing an excellent Bill, introduced by the Minister for Primary Industries, and entitled the "Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Bill".

Hon. members will recall that there were provisions in that Bill which very sensibly controlled the powers of inspectors and kept them at a level consistent with the protection of individual rights and the exercise of the Act. We find in Act after Act the old, almost pro forma, requirement setting down the powers of inspectors which have been accepted for years and years, and here they are written into the Factories and Shops Act in section 11. When it was suggested a year

or so ago, at the time that the original Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Bill was before Parliament, that the same powers be included in that legislation, the Government sensibly and properly allowed an amendment.

I think all members will agree that gone are the days when it was necessary to give to inspectors powers that are not given to the police. I do not want to canvass this matter in detail; all that I want to say is that those days are, I hope, gone for ever. There may be times of emergency in which it is necessary to introduce some powers for people other than police officers, but those provisions should be short lived and remain on the Statute Book only for the period for which they are required. Gone are the days when powers of inspectors, such as those included in the Factories and Shops Act, should remain. I believe that each Minister has a very clear responsibility to have all the Acts under his administration closely examined to make sure that provisions granting such powers to inspectors are really necessary.

I raise this matter now to suggest to the Minister that he has the opportunity on this occasion to amend the Act now before the Committee to bring it into line with the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act. I think the hon. members for South Brisbane and Windsor would agree that the provision that I mention in the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act could well be included in so many other Acts now containing such wide powers. Section 11 of the Factories and Shops Act reads—

> "(1) In addition to all other powers and authorities conferred upon him by any of the other provisions of this Act, an inspector may at any time—
>
> (i) enter, inspect, and examine any place used or intended to be used, or which he has reason to believe is used or intended to be used, as a factory or shop, or any part thereof;"

It then goes on to provide that a person must make statements if an inspector requires him to do so, and so forth.

The same type of provision was included originally in the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Bill, but the Minister quite rightly agreed to its amendment, and I suggest that the Factories and Shops Act should now be amended similarly.

Mr. Porter: You want to break down the overbearing power of officials.

Mr. MURRAY: I think that that is what we all want to do. We do not want to see people vested unnecessarily with powers. This has always been an anomaly, and many hon. members have addressed themselves in this Chamber to the fact that inspectors have been given powers that are not possessed by police officers.

Section 34 (2) of the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act reads—

> "(2) No provision of subsection (1) of this section or of section forty of this Act shall be construed so as—
>
> "(a) to oblige any person to answer any question or make any statement which answer or statement would or would tend to incriminate him;"—

I think that the hon. member for South Brisbane, with his professional experience, will agree with that—

> "or (b) to render any person liable to a penalty for failure to make such an answer or statement."

Another provision that I believe is useful—again I think that the hon. members for South Brisbane and Windsor will agree with me—is this—

> "Subsection (1) of this section shall not authorize any of the persons mentioned in that subsection to enter and search without the permission of the occupier any dwelling house or any part used for residential purposes of a building unless that person does so under the authority of a search warrant."

Subsection (4) says—

> "If it appears to a justice of the peace, upon complaint made on oath by any of the persons mentioned in subsection (1) of this section, that such person has reasonable grounds for believing and does believe that any aircraft"—

I am never quite sure how one would put an aircraft into a house—

> "or ground equipment or agricultural chemical which such person reasonably believes to be used or to be intended to be used . . ."

and it clearly tidies the matter up.

I believe that that is the sort of sensible amendment that hon. members should now ask the Minister to consider introducing to the Factories and Shops Act. I suggest to the Minister, therefore, that he give very serious consideration to doing so. As the Government goes along, I should like to think that it will take action to tidy up its Acts. I think it does intend to do that, but all these things take time. Wherever possible, offensive provisions should be removed from Acts, and I ask the Minister to let hon. members know what his thoughts are on that subject and whether he will have a good look at the provision to which I have referred and possibly bring down a Bill to amend it.

Amendment (Mr. Murray) negatived.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 3.20 p.m.