

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 6 NOVEMBER 1968

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

QUESTIONS

GOVERNMENT COMMITTEES OF INQUIRY AND ROYAL COMMISSIONS

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

(1) How many committees of inquiry or investigation or bodies similarly constituted have been set up by the Government during the past five years?

(2) In connection with each (a) on what date was it set up, (b) for what purpose, (c) at what over-all cost and (d) who were the personnel?

(3) Have any final reports been received from these committees? If so, on what dates and what subsequent action was taken by the Government?

Answers:—

(1) "Seven. The following Committees of Inquiry and Royal Commission have been established under the Commissions of Inquiry Act since July 1, 1963:—(a) 1963—Committee appointed to inquire and report with respect to the salaries and allowances of members of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland and matters pertaining thereto; (b) 1963—Royal Commission appointed to inquire into allegations made against members of the Police Force in relation to the National Hotel; (c) 1964—Committee appointed to inquire into matters concerning the development of the livestock and meat industry; (d) 1964—Committee appointed to inquire into the Constitution of the Queensland Cane Growers' Council and cognate matters; (e) 1965—Committee appointed to inquire and report with respect to the salaries and allowances of members of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland and matters pertaining thereto; (f) 1966—Committee appointed to inquire into matters concerning the valuation of land in Queensland; (g) 1966—Committee appointed to inquire into the dealing by the Brisbane City Council with applications for the subdivision and use of land and the erection and use of buildings or other structures."

(2) "(a), (b) and (d). In each case notification of the date of establishment of each Committee, its Terms of Reference and the names of its members were published in the relevant *Government Gazette*. (c) Costs incurred in connection with each of the foregoing inquiries were as follows:—(a) 1963, £982; (b) 1963, £13,428; (c) 1964, £3,134; (d) 1964, \$246; (e) 1965, \$7,225; (f) 1966, \$11,245; (g) 1966, \$39,555."

40

(3) "Each of the reports in question was either tabled in Parliament or printed as a Parliamentary Paper and circulated with the exception of that relating to the constitution of the Cane Growers' Council, which concerned the domestic matters of a particular organisation. The Honourable Member should be well aware of any action subsequently taken on each Report by the Government."

DEPARTMENTAL INQUIRIES IN POLICE FORCE

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

(1) How many departmental inquiries are presently being carried out in the Police Force?

(2) Who are (a) the police officers under investigation and (b) the police officers carrying out each investigation?

(3) How many inquiries have been carried out during the twelve months ended October 31, 1968?

Answers:—

(1 and 2) "Investigations into departmental charges preferred against two members of the Police Force are at present being conducted by Inspector John George Strophair and Inspector Vallis Moore Barlow but it is not proposed to publish the names of the members of the Police Force so charged."

(3) "Four."

SUSPENSION OF EXPORT REGISTRATION, METROPOLITAN PUBLIC ABATTOIR

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

(1) When was the decision that the American market would not accept meat from the metropolitan public abattoir at Cannon Hill made known to him?

(2) What will be the result of the cessation of export to the American market?

(3) Was any prior warning given to him, the Abattoir Board or any other person in authority that the abattoir could lose its registration and, if no warning was given, why was such an arrogant attitude taken by the Commonwealth Primary Industry Department?

(4) If any warning was given, why was no prompt and official action taken to remedy the problem?

(5) Will he take immediate action in whatever form necessary to have registration for this market returned so as not only to protect the abattoir but also not put in jeopardy the livelihood of employees and the business operations of meat suppliers?

Answers:—

(1) "I was advised by the Chairman of the Board at 2 p.m. on Monday, 4th instant that the Board had received a telegram advising that its works would be taken off the United States list and consequently the United Kingdom list as from the close of business on Tuesday, 5th instant. This telegram was received by the Board at 1 p.m. on Monday, 4th instant."

(2) "The suspension does not affect the killing of sheep, calves or pigs. It is estimated that about 600 cattle per week may need to be killed at other works. However much of the meat from these cattle is sent interstate and the position is not yet wholly clear. This being so, whilst it is estimated that 100 employees, mostly casuals may be affected, this is considered to be the upper rather than the lower limit."

(3) "No. It must be understood however that all Australian meat works stand under the constant threat of losing their export registration for one or more overseas markets. The recent official delegation to the United States, arranged at short notice by the Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industry at the request of all Australian meat works, was fortunately successful in stemming an American demand for alterations in sheep dressing procedures which would have called for the expenditure of many millions of dollars on structural and plant alterations in Australian meat works and which, if insisted upon, would not have achieved, in expert Australian technical opinion, any improvement in hygiene. It must be recognised too that the Commonwealth Department of Primary Industry is in a difficult position in that it must take full cognisance of requirements set by overseas countries in relation to hygiene; and this being so, it must on occasions bow to overseas veterinary opinion. In this circumstance, no Australian meat works can have any continuing assurance that its export registration will not be suspended at short notice and as a result of a single flying inspection by an overseas veterinary inspector."

(4) "See (3). However, I would add for the information of the Honourable Member that, following the Government's decision to continue the present Cannon Hill works in operation for a further period of ten years and in the face of Board inability to get a satisfactory definition of the matter with his Department, I arranged some months ago with the Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industry for a hygiene 'stocktaking' of the works so that definite Commonwealth requirements could be matched in with alterations and improvements deemed necessary by the Board in relation to the Government decision to continue the works. This report on hygiene aspects has only

been recently received and has formed the basis of a programme estimated to cost in the vicinity of \$100,000. Some of this work has already been completed and some is awaiting final approval from the Commonwealth. The plant alterations presently sought by the Americans were included in this programme, and are estimated to cost about \$30,000. At August 31 last, about the time of the American inspection, an amount of \$8,800 had actually been spent. Since that date and up until Monday last when the Board's export registration was restricted a further sum of \$6,100 has been incurred."

(5) "See (4). I am very conscious of the immediate effect of the Commonwealth decision on the livelihood of abattoir employees. However I do not foresee any major difficulty in the works obtaining reinstatement on the United States list and consequently on the United Kingdom list. As a final observation I would add increasing experience is showing the need for caution in incurring major expenditure on hygiene objectives which are frequently the subject of differing inspectorial opinions. In this respect, it should be borne in mind that the term hygiene is frequently loosely used. Whilst all stock may be inspected prior to and during slaughter, slaughter floors and all gear scrupulously cleaned and fresh clothes supplied to employees daily, as is standard practice at Cannon Hill, an instance of inefficient inspection or a preference for a particular dressing procedure on the part of a veterinary official could well result in criticism of a works on the ground of unsatisfactory hygiene. I would assure the Honourable Member that every effort will be made to resolve the present situation in the shortest time practicable."

PUBLICATION OF LIST OF PERMISSIBLE VEHICLE MODIFICATIONS

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to an article in the *Townsville Daily Bulletin* of October 31 last, headed "Limitations on Vehicle Modifications", in which it was stated that the Chief Inspector of Machinery, Mr. A. J. Hilless, had prepared data setting out allowable limits for vehicle modification?

(2) If so, will a comprehensive and detailed list of permissible modifications be published and made readily available to the public who desire it, and if so, when and from where will the list be obtainable?

Answers:—

(1) "I am well aware of the article to which the Honourable Member refers, as it was released by me to the Press generally."

(2) "Copies of the Press Statement, and the recommended list of modifications, have been forwarded to the Secretary of the Queensland Automobile Chamber of Commerce and the Secretary of the Motor Traders' Association, with which is associated the Service Stations' Association, in the hope that these two organizations will publish data prepared by Mr. Hillless in their journals for circulation. The full text of the statement issued by me to the Press included advice that copies of the modifications, as recommended by the Chief Inspector, are available from him, and I table a copy of the Press statement and the enclosures thereto."

Paper.—Whereupon Mr. Herbert laid upon the Table of the House the Statement referred to.

CONTRACT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF OLD TOWN HALL SITE, BRISBANE

Mr. Miller, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Local Government,—

(1) Is he having inquiries made into Brisbane City Council's handling of Capital City Motels Pty. Ltd. contract?

(2) If so, will the inquiry cover the circumstances of both the extension of time for lodging the required deposit and also for submitting a satisfactory design and whether either of these decisions to extend a determined time limit were made or ratified by the full council?

(3) Will he report the result of the inquiries to Parliament in due course?

Answer.—

(1 to 3) "I have discussed this matter at some length with Mr. J. C. Slaughter, Executive Adviser to the Council and desire to inform the Honourable Member that I am satisfied that there have been prolonged negotiations between the parties beyond the control of the Council which is not unusual in matters of this nature."

SUBSIDIES PAID TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

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

(1) What is the present percentage rate of subsidy paid by the Government to local authorities for (a) sewerage, (b) water, (c) general work, (d) cottages for age and invalid pensioners, (e) hostels for waiting mothers at approved C.W.A. centres, (f) library facilities, (g) aerodromes in country centres and (h) electricity supply?

(2) If any of these subsidies have been discontinued by the present Government, what is the reason and what alternative has been offered to the local authorities concerned?

Answers.—

(1) "I table a statement showing full details of the approved subsidy scheme."

(2) "The subsidy relating to cottages for old age and invalid pensioners was discontinued in 1961. It was considered that provision of this class of housing was not ordinarily a function of local government. In addition, under the Commonwealth scheme of aid for this class of housing, local authorities received less favourable financial conditions than if a religious or charitable organisation undertook the function."

Paper.—Whereupon, Mr. Bjelke-Petersen laid upon the Table of the House the statement referred to.

HOUSING COMMISSION LAND AND HOUSES, CURRUMBIN CREEK AND BURLEIGH HEADS AREAS

Mr. Hinze, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

(1) How many allotments in the Currumbin Creek area are owned by the Housing Commission?

(2) How many houses are being built and what was the tender price for their construction?

(3) Is the Department negotiating the purchase of land at Burleigh Park Estate, Burleigh Heads?

(4) If so, does the Department intend to call tenders for the construction of houses for workers in the estate in this financial year and will tenders be called for more houses in the Currumbin Creek area in this financial year?

Answers.—

(1) "65."

(2) "Twenty houses; \$158,156."

(3) "Yes."

(4) "Tenders will be called to close in January for additional houses at Currumbin. On completion of negotiations in respect of Burleigh Park Estate, and when title is obtained by the Commission, tenders will also be called for houses on that estate."

INTRUSIONS BY FOREIGN FISHING VESSELS ON QUEENSLAND COAST

Mr. Wallis-Smith, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

In view of persistent reports by Queensland citizens of landings and poaching on our coast by foreign vessels, will he make urgent representations to the Commonwealth for (a) appropriate patrols consistent with defence requirements and (b) action necessary to ensure that such landings do not introduce exotic diseases

likely to prejudice the health of Queenslanders as well as cause epidemics among cattle and other animals?

Answer:—

"The Government has previously taken up with the Commonwealth Government the need for stern measures by that Government to prevent intrusions of the nature mentioned. I have no doubt that the Commonwealth is fully seized of the position. In addition, the Commonwealth Government has been urged to arrange early consultation between Commonwealth and State Departments with a view to organising effective patrols. I am awaiting a final reply to the State's representations."

ACCOMMODATION FOR HOMECRAFT
SECTION, ATHERTON HIGH SCHOOL

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

Further to his Answer to my Question on October 31 and as the Atherton State High School has been without a homecraft section in its grounds for ten years, a period longer than any other high school, how does he determine priority in such cases?

Answer:—

"When work priorities are being determined all factors relating to each listed project are taken into consideration. As homecraft accommodation in a relatively good condition is available in the grounds of the Atherton State School for use by students of the High School, other projects were afforded a higher priority."

WAGE RATES AT MITCHELL RIVER AND
EDWARD RIVER ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

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

In view of his statement that 80 per centum of Aborigines receive award wages, what is the present wage structure for Aborigines at Mitchell River and Edward River communities in their respective callings?

Answer:—

"As indicated to the Honourable Member for Townsville North in reply to a similar Question on September 10 last, normal Award conditions apply to certain positions at the various Aboriginal communities and these are held by persons irrespective of racial origin based on qualifications and ability. Assisted Aborigines, who wish to remain within an Aboriginal reserve, which is virtually a residential and training establishment as well as a rehabilitation centre, are provided with both training and allowances for their maintenance. My

Government has never undertaken to provide employment at full Award wages for all residents of reserves and indeed this would be virtually economically impossible when one considers the population densities. When vacancies occur within the Department's staffing establishment, every encouragement is given assisted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders to attain these positions and persons who have received training from the Department are encouraged to compete for normal Award wage positions available anywhere in Queensland. Aborigines at both Mitchell River and Edward River Communities are receiving training in various callings and receive weekly allowances as follows:— Police force, from \$13 to \$20 weekly; school, from \$7 to \$16 weekly; garage, from \$13 to \$16 weekly; office, from \$7 to \$10 weekly; construction, from \$7 to \$20 weekly; stores, from \$8 to \$16 weekly; general, from \$7 to \$16 weekly; stock, from \$7 to \$16 weekly; medical aid post, from \$7 to \$14.50 weekly. In addition, there are other beneficial components and factors as have been previously indicated in this House. My statement did not convey that '80 per cent. of Aborigines receive Award wages'."

SCHOLARSHIPS IN PUBLIC SERVICE

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

(1) With regard to the Public Service, in what fields will scholarships be offered for 1969 and which of the scholarships will be open to (a) males and (b) females?

(2) What is the commencing rate of pay per annum for (a) male clerks and (b) female clerk-typists with Junior passes and for each year thereafter up to and including ten years' service?

Answers:—

(1) "State Government scholarships will be offered in the following fields in 1969:—Science, agricultural science, veterinary science, industrial chemistry, medical laboratory technology, food technology, horticultural technology, rural technology, forestry, engineering, commerce, economics, medicine, dentistry, occupational therapy, psychology, social studies, teaching—Arts, science, commerce, rural technology; architecture, surveying, optometry. The aforementioned scholarships are open to males and the under-mentioned scholarships are also open to females:—Teaching—Arts, commerce, science; occupational therapy, social studies, optometry."

(2) "The salaries payable up to and including the tenth year of service to male clerks and female clerk-typists who are appointed after passing the prescribed

Public Service examinations held in conjunction with the Junior examination are—

Year	Male Clerks		Female Clerk-Typists	
	Per Fort.	Per Annum	Per Fort.	Per Annum
1st ..	\$ c 47.35	(1,235)	\$ c 40.85	(1,065)
2nd ..	55.05	(1,435)	48.15	(1,255)
3rd ..	63.65	(1,660)	53.55	(1,395)
4th ..	72.85	(1,900)	58.55	(1,526)
5th ..	83.05	(2,165)	72.50	(1,890)
6th ..	95.80	(2,498)	79.40	(2,070)
7th ..	100.60	(2,624)	82.10	(2,140)
8th ..	105.40	(2,748)	88.60	(2,310)
9th ..	110.20	(2,874)	91.30	(2,380)
10th ..	115.00	(3,000)	93.40	(2,436)
Age 21 ..	95.80	(2,498)	72.50	(1,890)

(Note.—The aforementioned salaries are based upon length of service, but salaries payable from the sixth year of service in the case of clerks and from the fifth year of service in the case of clerk-typists could vary according to the age of the officer.)”

SCHOLARSHIPS TO UNIVERSITY; RATIO OF FEMALE TO MALE STUDENTS

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

(1) How many women have studied at the University on scholarships in each of the years 1963 to 1968?

(2) What is the ratio of female students to male students on scholarships in each of those years?

(3) What is the present ratio of female students to male students at the University?

Answers:—

(1) “The number of women who have studied at the University with the aid of scholarships in each of the years 1963 to 1968:—1968, 1,929; 1967, 1,772; 1966, 1,488; 1965, 1,304; 1964, 1,225; 1963, 945.”

(2) “The number of female students with scholarships as a percentage of male students with scholarships:—1968, 51.2 per cent.; 1967, 47.7 per cent.; 1966, 41.9 per cent.; 1965, 40.5 per cent.; 1964, 39.7 per cent.; 1963, 36.5 per cent.”

(3) “During 1968 the number of female students as a percentage of male students is 45.7 per cent.”

STEERING COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION FOR THE BLIND

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

(1) What are the various types of work undertaken at the Blind Institute and how many (a) men and (b) women are employed in each of those categories?

(2) What are the names and occupations of the members of the steering committee set up to investigate matters associated with blind workers and what are the objects of the committee?

Answers:—

(1) “The various types of work undertaken at the Queensland Industrial Institution for the Blind and the numbers of blind workers are:—Brush making, 21 men and 4 women; re-caning chairs, 5 women; millet broom making, 8 men; basket making, 13 men; cane furniture making, 6 men; mattress and pillow making, 2 men; mat making, 10 men; cleaning, 2 men; storekeeping, 1 man.”

(2) “The Committee set up to investigate the existing facilities for training and employment of the adult blind comprises the following:—Mr. K. Stone, solicitor (chairman); Mr. K. W. Hooper, M.L.A.; Mr. M. Bryce, physiotherapist; Mrs. M. Dickenson, housewife; Mr. A. Lobb, principal, School for the Deaf; Mr. E. E. Norman, Assistant Under Secretary, Department of Health; Mr. V. Handran, accountant, Department of Health. The Committee’s terms of reference include:—An investigation of the function of the Queensland Industrial Institution for the Blind; an investigation of vocational training leading to employment placement of blind people; an investigation into the desirableness of the establishment of an Adult Blind Education Department; consideration of the need for the establishment of a permanent committee to advise on all aspects of adult education and employment of the blind.”

NOISE NUISANCE AT BUILDINGS USED FOR UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS

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

Further to his Answer to my Question on October 23, has his attention been drawn to the complaint of a University student in *The Courier-Mail* of November 5 regarding excessive noise of heavy traffic interfering with the concentration of students undergoing examinations in the wool pavilion, Brisbane Exhibition Grounds? If so, will he have the position investigated with a view to having improvements made?

Answer:—

“Yes, but the University has advised that no complaint has been received from the students who have been sitting for examinations in the Wool Pavilion in the Exhibition Grounds. The University is aware of the occasional noises from passing trucks but the Chief Supervisor advises that the noise has not been excessive. During the year the University conducted an extensive survey with a view to securing an alternate examination centre. The Wool Pavilion is being used because more

suitable accommodation could not be obtained. There is at this time a shortage of buildings in Brisbane suitable for examination purposes."

ELECTRICAL TRADESMEN, RAILWAY
DIESEL SHED, CLONCURRY

Mr. Inch, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

(1) How many electrical tradesmen are employed in the Railway Department's diesel shed at Cloncurry and what are the hours of work laid down for them?

(2) What was the average weekly amount of overtime worked by electrical tradesmen employed in the shed in the year ended June 30, 1968, and what was the cost?

Answers:—

(1) "Two electrical tradesmen, one working 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. and the other 3 p.m. to 1 a.m. Monday to Friday and two hours each on Sunday."

(2) "The average weekly overtime per electrical tradesman employed in Cloncurry diesel shed for the year ended June 30, 1968, was 18½ hours equal to \$46.99."

FLOUR AND BREAD PRICES

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

(1) Is any further rise in the price of flour, and subsequently bread, now proposed? If so, to what extent will the price of the commodities rise and for what reason?

(2) If no rise is contemplated, will he give an assurance that a full inquiry will be made by the Prices Commissioner should any rise in the price of bread be indicated?

Answers:—

(1) "I have no information on this matter."

(2) "The Honourable Member is well aware that the prices of flour and bread have been decontrolled in this State since February 1, 1967. However, should any such rise eventuate, and the Honourable Member can furnish me with details of specific cases, in regard to which he alleges the increase would mean that excessive profit would be made, I shall give further consideration to his request. I also mention that the Deputy Commonwealth Statistician, since February 1, 1967, furnishes me regularly, at the end of each quarter, with a comparison of the price levels of meat and other foodstuffs as operating in all capital cities. This survey indicates that, since flour and bread were decontrolled, the price of bread in Brisbane has continued to compare favourably with the prices being charged in the other capital cities."

PURCHASE OF LAND FOR HOSPITAL
PURPOSES, WYNNUM DISTRICT

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

(1) Has any Government officer or member of the South Brisbane Hospitals Board made approaches to property owners adjacent to land on the corner of Wynnum Road and New Lindum Road, Wynnum West, held in trust by the South Brisbane Hospitals Board, with a view to selling their land?

(2) If so, on what date were the owners approached and what are their names and addresses?

(3) If not, has any approach been made by any officer to land owners in the Wynnum district during 1968 to sell their land for hospital purposes?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) "Departmental Officers and Officers of the South Brisbane Hospitals Board have carried out investigations of an area of land bounded by School Road and New Lindum Road in the Wynnum-Manly area to determine its suitability for hospital purposes. As a result of these investigations the South Brisbane Hospitals Board was authorised to obtain options for the purchase of land and negotiations are presently being carried out by the Public Curator on behalf of the Hospitals Board. As I have indicated previously in this House the South Brisbane Hospitals Board has been authorised to acquire land in the Wynnum and Inala areas so that suitable sites will be available for the establishment of additional hospital facilities as and when the need arises."

ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC POLICE, MANLY
DISTRICT

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

(1) In view of the statement in *The Courier-Mail* of November 4 that Manly Esplanade has become a dangerous speedway, is he aware that only one motorcycle traffic officer is on duty for eight hours daily including week-ends, thus allowing the speedsters to keep a check on the movements of the "lone ranger"?

(2) Will he urgently consider having extra police patrol the area 24 hours a day in an endeavour to overcome the unnecessary killings?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "It is true that there is one police motor cycle traffic officer attached to the Wynnum Police Division. When he is not on duty, other police attached to that division undertake patrols either by motor vehicle or on foot. The Honourable Member is assured that the position in this Division, as in other Divisions, will be

closely watched to ensure that adequate attention is given to traffic matters and responsibilities."

SCHOOL RAIL-MOTOR SERVICES,
REDLYNCH TO CAIRNS

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

(1) Has the cancellation of 36, 37, 40 and 41 rail motors, the morning and afternoon school rail-motor service between Redlynch and Cairns, been investigated? If so, what was decided?

(2) Will the school service be consolidated with the running of the Mareeba 72 and 73 rail motors? If so, has consideration been given to safety provisions for approximately 160 primary and secondary-school children and to the normal roadside and destination passengers on the service being confined to children within the unit's accommodation of approximately 93 passengers?

(3) If not, in order to retain the existing daily service, will he give an assurance that parents who have children commuting daily to school by rail from the areas will have no cause for anxiety, and/or by domicile be less favourably treated financially or otherwise by the need for arranging alternative school transport for their children?

Answers:—

(1) "The Honourable Member is in error when he states that these rail motor services have been cancelled."

(2 and 3) "All rail motor and train services are reviewed from time to time in regard to the efficiency of their operation and comfort of passengers. The services referred to by the Honourable Member were reviewed in May of this year. The submissions made by the Honourable Member will be kept in mind should these services come up for further review."

DISALLOWANCE OF QUESTION

Mr. R. Jones (Cairns): Mr. Speaker, the question of which I gave notice yesterday relative to foreign fishing vessels operating within territorial waters off North Queensland does not appear on the Business Paper. Would you mind explaining why that is so?

Mr. SPEAKER: I shall make inquiries for the hon. member. I have a recollection that it was referred to me and it was found to be almost identical with a question asked by the hon. member for Tablelands.

PAPER

The following paper was laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

Balance Sheet, etc., of the Public Curator of Queensland, for the year 1967-68.

FORM OF QUESTION

Mr. R. Jones (Cairns) having given notice of a question—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I advise the hon. member that there is no necessity—indeed it is not permitted—to quote lengthy extracts from newspapers. Apparently the hon. member has included in his question quite a lengthy extract from a newspaper. That is not permissible, and I will have a look at the first part of the question. The extract is not necessary to make the question intelligible.

FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

Debate resumed from 1 November (see p. 1178) on Mr. Herbert's motion—

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

Mr. BROMLEY (Norman) (11.36 a.m.): To my way of thinking, although this is simple amending legislation, nevertheless it is tremendously important. We all know that the scope of the debate was opened wide by the hon. member for Clayfield, although I do not wish to deal with some of the matters that he raised in his speech. His reason for moving his amendment was obvious to most of us. Probably he wanted to widen the scope of the debate because he was sour that the Estimates of the Department of Labour and Tourism are not coming up for discussion. It seems to me that the hon. member has been dying to have a shot at the Minister, and that was the only way he could do it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind the hon. member that the amendment has been dealt with. The discussion should now centre on the measure before the Committee as introduced by the Minister.

Mr. BROMLEY: I agree. That is why I said in my opening remarks that that is what I intend to do. However, I felt that I was quite within my rights in commenting on what the hon. member for Clayfield said and his underlying intention in moving his amendment.

During the early part of the debate the hon. member for Carnarvon gave us a Scottish version on his thesis on wool, which proved to be very interesting to those hon. members who were listening to him. He referred to the booklet "Safer from Fire", which I think is an excellent publication. Those who produced it should be commended. I obtained 25 copies of it from Miss Tellick, of Melbourne, the public relations officer of the firm that produced the booklet, and I distributed them to various organisations, such as creche and kindergartens and schools. It

contains some very good material and I believe that it is supported by the Standards Association.

I was tremendously interested to hear what the hon. member for Ipswich West had to say on this legislation. She outlined a very interesting viewpoint from a woman's angle. I am sure that she was speaking for the mothers and housewives throughout the State. Her remarks were indeed commendable.

The Minister referred at length to the meaning of the words "flammable" and "inflammable". It seems to me that the meaning of these two words should be publicised. People should be given a more detailed explanation of the meaning of the terms "inflammable" and "flammable". The booklet to which I have referred states—

"It is important to note that the two words 'flammable' and 'inflammable' mean the same thing."

I knew this to be so, but I checked with the dictionary just the same, and found that, on page 709, "flammable" means "to set on fire", and, on page 1001, "inflammable" means "susceptible to combustion", etc, so that the two words have precisely the same meaning. More understandable terms could be used for the benefit of the public in this respect. Instead of saying that something is not inflammable or flammable, perhaps we could say that it is fire-resistant. I suggest that some thought be given to this matter.

It is of concern to me that women sometimes have to buy a larger size in clothing or footwear because of the possible shrinkage in some of the materials used in their manufacture. According to a television programme on Channel 2 which I saw recently, there appears to be a welcome trend by some manufacturers to cater for the needs of tall women who require special sizes in clothing and footwear. This is a step in the right direction. Because of wrong branding, purchasers buy wrong sizes or wrong types of material. There are difficulties, too, in purchasing clothing and footwear for large men who might have long arms and big feet.

The Minister said that the branding of footwear is necessary. We on this side of the Chamber agree with this, especially when substances other than leather are used in manufacture. Today many synthetic materials are used in the manufacture of footwear and other articles of clothing, a good deal of which is rubbish. The hon. member for Ipswich West said that housewives sometimes buy footwear that is incorrectly branded, and that this footwear wears out in five minutes. This cheap imported rubbish should not be allowed on the market unless it is clearly branded so that members of the public can examine it and know what they are buying. Parents who have to continually buy shoes and other articles of clothing for their children incur high costs because rubbish is used in their manufacture and they disintegrate. Many people have told me that they cannot afford to keep on replacing clothing which seems to last only five minutes.

The Minister mentioned the objections of the owners of tanneries to being forced to brand footwear. We can understand their attitude in this respect. This emphasises my recent suggestion relative to the establishment of a consumer protection council in Queensland. False advertising would then be controlled to a certain extent, and some protection would be given to the public.

Mr. Ramsden: Who do you suggest would make up the council?

Mr. BROMLEY: Unfortunately I cannot give the hon. member for Merthyr a dissertation on my thoughts on that matter when dealing with the Bill now before the Committee. If he is trying to divert me from the principles of the Bill—

Mr. Ramsden: No, I am not. I think you are a pretty genuine bloke, and I am just seeking your ideas on this matter.

Mr. BROMLEY: I would say briefly that at least housewives should be represented on such a body.

The Minister said that the types of wool and animal fibres should be specified exactly on the material in which they are used. I agree with that, and consider it to be of very great importance. However, it appears to me that some manufacturers, both here and overseas, are more concerned with pulling the wool over the eyes of the public than with including wool in some of the goods they manufacture. I take it that this amending legislation has been approved in all States and is to be more or less standard throughout Australia?

Mr. Herbert: Yes.

Mr. BROMLEY: It is good to have that assurance. The fact that dry-cleaning and washing can ruin some fabrics establishes the need for correct marking and branding. Because of today's high cost of living, many women have to go to work, and, because they have not time to do all their laundry at home, many clothes are now sent to dry-cleaners. It is therefore absolutely essential that articles be branded accurately and clearly so that they will not be harmed in dry-cleaning or washing.

Recently I attended an occupational safety convention at Rockhampton, and I was very interested in many of the things displayed there. Footwear, gloves, protective clothing and other types of wearing apparel were on show, and I was most concerned to notice that much of it was manufactured overseas. Most of the footwear, for example, was branded "Made in Hong Kong," "Made in Canada," or "Made in U.S.A." Whilst at that convention I did not see any article of protective clothing, gloves or footwear marked "Made in Australia." I was most concerned about that, because efforts are being made to build up an export trade and to get across to the public the need to buy Queensland-made goods.

This legislation points out the need for manufacturers to mark correctly on their products the type of material contained in them. Although the articles to which I have referred were no doubt good ones and were branded with the country of origin, they carried no markings to indicate whether they were made of rubber, synthetic material or animal fibres. As I say, the fact that they were branded as products of other countries worried me, particularly as we in this country are trying to build up export industries.

I know that I cannot deal with anything other than the matter contained in the amending Bill, so I shall curtail my remarks. Honourable members on this side of the Chamber will study the Bill, but I have no doubt that its provisions will meet with their approbation. I shall reserve further comment till the second-reading stage.

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (11.51 a.m.): The measure now before the Committee, as do many other measures that are introduced into this Parliament and, indeed, into other Parliaments, simply sets out what the Government, the Parliament and the people desire to have done. However, it then falls down on the job of implementing the wishes of Parliament and the people. I know that the Minister can be very expansive if he so desires, and I should like him to tell the Committee just how it is proposed to see that the people will be protected adequately under the proposed Bill.

A case came to my notice in Townsville recently in which a big, reputable firm, without any complaint from a customer, returned a large consignment of shoes, not to the manufacturer but to the importer. The manager of the firm told me that the shoes were absolutely worthless, that they were rubbish, and that he would not have them in his store at any cost or sell them at any price.

Now, knowing some of the importers for what they really are, it is quite possible that that returned order will merely be passed on to somebody else. If the proposed Bill provides, as I understand it does, that the manufacturer's name must be placed on every article covered by the Bill, that, of itself, means nothing. In the case of goods that come in from overseas, the importer's name should also appear. What is the use of buying a pair of shoes made by Jimmy Chung Tu of Hong Kong, when in all probability such an oriental gentleman does not exist? If one knows the name of the firm that imports the goods into Australia, one can pin-point the person responsible for unloading shoddy material onto the unfortunate people of Australia.

It is abundantly clear that there is more fraud and chicanery and more sharp practice indulged in in the clothing and footwear trade than there is in any other trade in Australia, or, for that matter, anywhere else. It is amazing how many people come here and employ all sorts of queer people and use

all sorts of synthetics. With the tremendous technological developments that have taken place in recent years, it is astonishing how a synthetic material can be made to look like the genuine article.

Mr. Hanson: "Shoddy-droppers".

Mr. AIKENS: That is a very common name for them. I thank the hon. member for Port Curtis for going back down the misty avenue of the years and using a phrase that I thought had gone out of, shall I say, production. This is a trade in which there are many "shoddy-droppers"—the clothing trade, the hat trade, the footwear trade, especially as it involves children's footwear.

Take a hypothetical case. What will happen if a mother goes into a store and buys a pair of shoes marked as having been made by some manufacturing firm either interstate or overseas and later takes them back to the retailer? The retailer agrees with her that the shoes are absolutely worthless and made of rubbish. What possibility is there, then, of that retailer's being recompensed? I know that some retailers are honest enough to refund the money to the purchaser in order to maintain good business relations. But what possible chance has such a retailer of getting his money back from either the manufacturer or the importer?

Mr. Row: They usually get it back. They return the goods to the wholesaler, who usually refunds the money.

Mr. AIKENS: Yes, but sometimes the wholesaler will not refund it. I had a case concerning a pair of men's shoes which a man brought to me. I took them back to the retailer in Townsville, who said to me: "I am rather surprised that this has occurred in this particular make." They were made by a Queensland manufacturer, by the way. He said, "These people usually turn out a good article. I will refund the man his money, and I am absolutely certain that I will be given credit for the shoes when I return them to the manufacturer." That is all right when it is a Queensland manufacturer and a reputable firm, but how are we going to stop what the hon. member for Port Curtis so succinctly described as the "shoddy-dropper"?

I do not know what powers our industrial inspectors have. If they do not already have these powers, I think they should be vested with them—

Mr. Bennett: It is in the Act.

Mr. AIKENS: I am surprised to hear that assertion from the hon. member for South Brisbane. As a matter of fact, I was astonished to hear his voice. I think it is the second time his voice has been raised in the Chamber this session.

Mr. Bennett: It's a pity you did not ask a question about dilapidated politicians like yourself when you were asking a question about cabs this morning.

Mr. AIKENS: Even if I am a dilapidated politician, so long as I am different from the hon. member for South Brisbane I will be a very happy man. What he is as a politician I just do not want to be. I want to be the antithesis of him politically and I will then be happy—this parliamentary nomad who drops in here about once or twice a session.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: The hon. member for South Brisbane interjects that it is in the Act. He did not wait to find out what it is that is in the Act; he simply said, "It is in the Act."

Mr. Bennett: For your information, sections 60 and 61 deal with shop hours, despite a decision by this Parliament the other day when I was here.

Mr. AIKENS: As usual, the hon. member for South Brisbane is quoting from the wrong Act. He is quoting from the fish and chips Act, and I would not be surprised if he quoted from the rags, bags, bones and bottles Act.

This is what I want to know: what power has an industrial inspector in Queensland to go into any place where goods are manufactured for sale—goods such as clothing, footwear, hats and so on—and inspect the materials that are being put into those articles as well as the articles themselves after they have been manufactured or while they are being manufactured? If the power exists in Queensland—and I would not be surprised that it does—for an industrial inspector to go into a Queensland establishment to make sure that no shoddy commodity is being used in the production of an article for wear and that it is reasonably well produced, what power will industrial inspectors have to go into establishments interstate, such as in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and so on? Above all, what power will they have to go into a warehouse, which may be a bonded warehouse, and inspect the stuff that is being brought in from overseas? That is the most important thing. If our industrial inspectors have the power to go into a manufacturing establishment and examine the material that is being used and the type of workmanship that is being turned out in order to protect the Queensland purchaser, have they the same powers to go into a warehouse, a bonded warehouse or an importer's premises where no manufacturing takes place, where it is not a shop or factory within the meaning of the Act—I hope the hon. member for South Brisbane can understand that point—and examine goods that have been brought into this country for sale to our unfortunate people?

Mr. Hanson: Quite a number of retail organisations handle only "seconds", you know.

Mr. AIKENS: I am not trying to excuse, shall we say, the shufflers in the retail trade. I am merely dealing, at the present time anyway, with reputable retail firms who

unfortunately, from time to time, have unloaded upon them, shoddy stuff from manufacturers, and particularly from importers when the manufacturers are interstate. If the Minister can tell us what powers the industrial inspectors have, for instance, to go onto wharves or into warehouses, whether they be bonded warehouses or not, and inspect goods and articles before they are sent out into the retail trade, then I will be very happy.

I know that our industrial inspectors have no powers in other States, so I ask the Minister what arrangements he has made with the other States to enter into more or less reciprocal agreements so that industrial inspectors in those States can enter warehouses in order to ensure that the goods manufactured in them and sent to Queensland are of first-class quality.

I am quite happy that the Minister has introduced this measure, but I have been in this Chamber long enough to know that many well-meaning measures that are introduced, many measures that look well and read well in theory, are absolutely useless in practice. I know, too, that on some occasions legislation is introduced and goes into the Statute Book in an endeavour to protect people against robbery and exploitation, but when it comes to the implementation of the particular Act our hands are tied—we are handcuffed and gagged.

I am about to conclude my remarks. I know that the hon. member for South Brisbane wants to stand up and "bung on a turn" in the hope that his name will appear in the Press so that the people will think he attends Parliament regularly, and I will give him the opportunity of doing that.

Mr. Bennett: What about last night?

Mr. AIKENS: I was here last night.

Mr. Bennett: No, you weren't.

Mr. AIKENS: Then the hon. member is as blind as he is stupid. I was sitting in the Speaker's lobby and spoke to the hon. member when he was entering the Chamber. I was surprised to see him and said, "Has the court closed?" He said, "Yes. The jury has retired." That was at 8.15 last night.

Let the Minister tell us in plain, unambiguous and easily understandable terms how, when this Bill becomes law, the people will be protected under it. I am concerned not only about goods that are manufactured in Queensland but also about goods that are manufactured in other States. Most important, how will the people be protected against "shoddy droppers", the importers who are filling our warehouses with shoddy goods from overseas?

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) (12.3 p.m.): While this important measure was being debated last Friday afternoon the House was adjourned in very peculiar circumstances at about 3.15 p.m. Just before the adjournment the hon. member for Clayfield, rising to

debate the issue before the Committee, introduced the matter of shopping hours and suggested, if I remember rightly, that that matter be taken out of the hands of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission and be dealt with by Parliament under the provisions of some Act.

To say the least, it was rather unusual to hear the hon. member for Clayfield say that certain things should be taken out of the hands of the Industrial Commission. Quite often we have heard him say that we must abide by the decisions of the Commission.

Mr. Murray: You would not suggest that the Industrial Commission fixes the drinking hours, would you?

Mr. TUCKER: I am not prepared to debate that matter at the moment. The hon. member for Clayfield did raise this matter, and it was peculiar to hear him do so. Quite often he deprecates the fact that workers by their actions sometimes differ from arbitration tribunals.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I draw to the attention of the hon. member for Townsville North the fact that the amendment has already been dealt with by the Committee. I have extended some latitude to him in allowing him to mention it, but I should be very happy if he would return to the matter that is being debated before the Committee.

Mr. TUCKER: Mr. Hooper, I know that you ruled the hon. member for Clayfield out of order at that stage, and that he then moved an amendment to add the words "and for other purposes", in an endeavour, apparently, to widen the scope of the debate. I know that you ruled his amendment out of order.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind the hon. member that the Committee negated the amendment. Maybe the hon. member was not aware of that fact. I ask him to get back to the matter that is being debated.

Mr. TUCKER: With due respect, if it were negated then, I say that the hon. member was originally right in moving the amendment. Sections 60 and 61 of the Act—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The provisions of the Bill introduced by the Minister deal specifically with an amendment to section 10 of the Act. That is what we are dealing with at the present time.

Mr. TUCKER: That may be so, Mr. Hooper, but you ruled the hon. member out of order when he moved his amendment to add the words "and for other purposes".

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment was accepted by the Chair.

Mr. TUCKER: That is as I see it. However, I advert to the fact that there are within the Act certain sections on which, quite clearly, the hon. member would have been

able to speak, after he moved the amendment, yet he was not allowed to speak about them.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind the hon. member for Townsville North that the hon. member for Clayfield spoke for his full time, and that the amendment was put to the Committee and negated. I now appeal to the hon. member to deal with the provisions introduced by the Minister.

Mr. TUCKER: I will, but by the same token the hon. member for Clayfield will be castigated this afternoon in the Government caucus for raising this matter.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the hon. member for Townsville North pursues this line I will have to deal with him. I ask him to continue with his remarks on the provision introduced by the Minister relating to section 10 of the Act.

Mr. TUCKER: Surely I have the right to ask why this debate was adjourned at 3.15 p.m. on Friday when we had at least another hour and a half to go. I am making the point that suddenly, at 3.15 on Friday afternoon, the Treasurer moved that the debate be adjourned.

Mr. Herbert: You should have voted against the adjournment if that is the way you felt. That was the time to register your complaint.

Mr. TUCKER: I have every right to register my complaint today. At that time on Friday afternoon we had any amount of time to continue the debate, but for some unknown reason it was adjourned. I am asking today why suddenly, at 3.15 p.m. on Friday, the debate was adjourned. There must have been a cogent reason. I think we have every right to ask why the debate was not allowed to proceed, and why the hon. member for Clayfield had such great difficulty in getting a hearing.

Quite frankly, like other hon. members, I have no real argument with the measure before the Committee. That is one reason why it would have appeared foolish for us to seem to oppose its introduction. It could have been construed by those who are not so politically minded as we are that we were opposed to it.

A pressing need exists in the community for articles to be branded as outlined by the Minister. My daughter purchased some material that she thought was wool, or a similar material, and she had it made up into a dressing gown. When wearing it one morning it touched one of the lighted gas flames on the stove. The flame travelled up her arm and into her hair in a flash—in a matter of seconds. We found to our cost that that material was certainly not what it appeared to be. It was labelled "wool" but it had certain synthetics in it that made it very combustible.

I find myself completely in accord with the provision requiring labels to show the percentage of wool and other fibres incorporated in material. We should be able to determine when a material is synthetic. My main point today is that it was not right to adjourn this debate at 3.15 p.m. on Friday last.

Mr. BENNETT (South Brisbane) (12.10 p.m.): I never cease to be amazed and disappointed to see so regularly in this Parliament, which is supposed to set the future of the State by our discussions here, that the debates are always cabined, cribbed and confined. This is the last session of this Parliament before the next election. It is obvious that the Government does not propose for one moment to call Parliament together early next year, as it should, so this is the last opportunity we have to discuss prospective legislation. After all, just look at the Business Paper. The Notices of Motion and Orders of the Day are practically trivial.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for South Brisbane is not making a Budget speech, I hope. I suggest that he—

An Opposition Member: He has a grievance.

The CHAIRMAN: It is not a grievance. I hope that the hon. member for South Brisbane will also keep to the proposal before the Committee.

Mr. BENNETT: If you refer to my Budget speech, Mr. Hooper, you will find that my time was far too short.

However, we are now discussing an amendment to the Factories and Shops Acts and, as I said before, it would seem imperatively important—I say this as a parliamentarian and a lawyer—that in amending certain legislation we should surely, in all common sense, amend it properly, in all aspects requiring amendment. And if an hon. member has a legitimate submission to make on other provisions of the legislation, the rules of Parliament should not be abused to contain his discussion to the amendment, because this is the last time this Parliament will ever see the Factories and Shops Acts.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope that the hon. member for South Brisbane is not reflecting on the Chair in any way by his remarks. If he is, I ask him to withdraw them.

Mr. BENNETT: Far be it from me to reflect on the Chair. I have never been known to do such a thing. I do reflect on the Government and say that I am disappointed at the attitude of the Government in the way it has arranged the business of Parliament this session.

If any technicalities are to be used against me in the few remarks that I wish to make about the proposed amendment to this legislation, I move the following amendment, not to add the words "and for other purposes", as that has been dealt with, although I think that I could move it again, as it was dealt with on another day, but to—

"Add the words—
'and another Act'."

I move that amendment, because I think that if members want to consider the hours pertaining to factories and shops they should be entitled to do so. Volume 8 of the recent reprint of the statutes contains the original Factories and Shops Act and all the amendments to it between 1960 and 1964, and Part VIII deals specifically with the hours of business in shops.

I have no concluded or confirmed opinion as to what the hours might be or should be. But I do know that there are many consumers and shoppers who would prefer, say, to shop late on Friday night.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I draw the hon. member's attention to Standing Order 163. For his edification I shall read it. It reads—

"The Committee shall consider such matters only as have been referred to it by the House."

The hon. member for South Brisbane would be well aware that the amendment introduced by the Minister has been referred to the Committee by the House, and that it deals only with factories and shops—not with shopping hours.

Mr. BENNETT: With the greatest of respect, Mr. Hooper, I think that your ruling is completely wrong. It shows an ignorance of the law because—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to withdraw that remark or to resume his seat.

Mr. BENNETT: I withdraw the remark in view of your direction. The Standing Order you referred to reads—

"The Committee shall consider such matters only as have been referred to it by the House."

and the matters that have been referred to it by the House are amendments to the Factories and Shops Acts.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member has made the statement that I made previously, and he has made a correct statement—an amendment to the Factories and Shops Acts only, and no other Act.

Mr. BENNETT: In relation to that amendment, I am saying that we are entitled to do what we have done on many occasions before. I can quote the legislation to you. As a matter of fact, the Factories and Shops Acts amend, have amended, and

have referred to the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. I refer you to section 60 of that Act.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the hon. member continues in this vein, I shall have no option but to ask him to resume his seat. The amendment moved by the hon. member for Clayfield has been negatived by the Committee, and we are now dealing with an amendment to section 10 of the Factories and Shops Acts. If the hon. member continues in this vein, I shall have no course but to ask him to resume his seat.

Mr. BENNETT: I sincerely hope that you do not apply the gag in the dying stages of this Parliament.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for South Brisbane will resume his seat.

Mr. BENNETT: I move—

“That I be further heard.”

I will have my say in this Parliament even if you intend to put me out.

Question—That the hon. member for South Brisbane be further heard (Mr. Bennett's motion)—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 20

Aikens	Melloy
Bennett	Newton
Bromley	Sherrington
Dean	Tucker
Donald	Wallis-Smith
Duggan	Walsh
Hanson	
Inch	
Jones, R.	<i>Tellers:</i>
Jordan	Harris
Lloyd	Wood, P.
Mann	

NOES, 35

Armstrong	Lickiss
Beardmore	Loneragan
Camm	Low
Campbell	Miller
Carey	Porter
Chinchen	Ramsden
Cory	Richter
Delamothe	Row
Fletcher	Smith
Herbert	Sullivan
Hewitt, N. T. E.	Tomkins
Hewitt, W. D.	Tooth
Hinze	Wharton
Hodges	Wood, E. G. W.
Houghton	
Hughes	<i>Tellers:</i>
Jones, V. E.	Kaus
Knox	Pilbeam
Lee	

PAIRS

Houston	Rae
Hanlon	Chalk
Davies	McKechnie
O'Donnell	Muller
Byrne	Newbery

Resolved in the negative.

Mr. WALSH: I rise to a point of order. Having already indicated that an amendment has been moved and rejected, Mr. Hooper, will you tell me whether you are ruling that no further amendment may be moved?

The CHAIRMAN: No.

Hon. J. D. HERBERT (Sherwood—Minister for Labour and Tourism) (12.24 p.m.), in reply: I intend to reply to hon. members who made a reasoned contribution to the debate.

The Leader of the Opposition, who opened the debate for the Opposition, did make a reasoned contribution. He asked a couple of minor questions, one of which was whether, as the proposed Bill applies to the composition of material, it could be used to avoid labelling of made-up articles. The proposed amendment does apply to the composition of materials relative to the mixture of animal fibres that they contain.

The hon. member for Carnarvon also made a reasoned contribution to the debate—one would expect that from a man of his type who is involved in the industry—and gave evidence of having done considerable research into the subject. He questioned the possibility of re-used wool being classed as “all wool”. That might happen in some countries, but it would not be economically feasible to re-use wool in this country. Therefore, I do not think that question will worry us particularly. As a matter of fact, this legislation will have far more impact in the countries that produce animal fibres in considerable quantities, and that, of course, does not happen in this country.

The hon. member for Ipswich West said that 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. This is already covered in the existing legislation under section 76 (2), and rightly so. Of course, this amendment makes no difference at all to the legislation as it relates to the use of synthetics; this is purely for animal fibres.

The hon. member for Ipswich West and the hon. member for Norman both mentioned flammable clothing. There has been considerable discussion in this Chamber, extending over a long time, on this matter, and, on 18 October last, I tabled in the House the report of the Australian Standards Association on flammability of fabrics. The work in this direction is well advanced but it is certainly taking a long time to bring it to fruition. I have seen flammable tests with a number of materials and some of the materials that have been used in the past for night-wear are extremely dangerous. The hon. member for Ipswich West mentioned some of the materials of which she has had experience and I can only say that we have been fortunate in this State. Because of our climate we do not have the open fires that are common in the South. If we did we might have tragedies similar to those experienced down there.

Mr. Bromley: I have asked quite a number of questions about this Standards Association.

Mr. HERBERT: I have some further comments. The hon. member for Ipswich West spoke also of the regulations covering footwear, pointing out that the name of the manufacturer is not known. That is the very thing the Bill sets out to correct. Manufacturers will not be permitted to use trade names or trade marks.

The hon. member for Norman spoke about tanneries. I did not say that tanneries objected to the branding of soles. What they objected to was the discontinuance of branding of insoles. That was the extent of their objection to this particular legislation.

I feel that in my answers to the hon. member for Ipswich West I have covered many of the points submitted by the hon. member for Norman.

The hon. member for Townsville South brought up the policing of the provisions. Factories and shops inspectors, of course, police these provisions, and complaints received by them are investigated, but I have been informed that there has not been a complaint regarding incorrect branding of footwear for at least two years. It is at least two years since the department has had to deal with a formal complaint in this particular field.

Mr. Bromley: Didn't the hon. member for Wavell object at one time to the branding of leather?

Mr. HERBERT: I do not know whether that would come into this discussion, but the powers of inspection, of course, are contained in section 11 and they are quite extensive.

The legislation is going to be uniform in all States, as to both the labelling of textiles and the branding of footwear, and the States have a reciprocal arrangement on the policing of the provisions, so that people cannot use the State border to avoid their responsibilities. That is one of the reasons, of course, for this type of legislation.

Mr. Aikens: Will they have power to go into the warehouses of importers?

Mr. HERBERT: The inspectors have fairly wide powers. It would depend entirely on the circumstances of the case at the time. The customs and excise regulations are also identical with the legislation in the States, so it would depend on whose field it was in. The customs and excise people have a very keen interest in the material that is brought into the country.

For the information of hon. members I will table a document showing the international wool symbol, which has been used for many years. As a matter of fact, at the moment I am wearing a tie with the Wool Mark on it. The symbol is an integral part of the International Wool Secretariat's wool-promotion campaign. This Bill is aimed mainly at allowing the countries that are

interested in that campaign to continue in the promotion of wool, which is one of our major exports.

Mr. Bromley: I take it that the Wool Mark has a world copyright?

Mr. HERBERT: My word! There is no possibility of its being misused in any shape or form. It has already been used to a considerable extent, and the proposed Bill will assist in its further use in promoting the sale of wool, which will be to the benefit of not only our primary producers but also our processors of that commodity.

Whereupon the hon. gentleman laid the document on the table.

Motion (Mr. Herbert) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

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

RURAL FIRES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. V. B. SULLIVAN (Condamine—Minister for Lands) (12.33 p.m.): I move—
“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

As I outlined during the introduction of this Bill, two main amendments are proposed. One is to correct the anomaly as to responsibility for issue of permits in respect of lands adjoining forestry areas which are within a special fire zone and also within a fire warden's district; the other is to provide for a conditioned prohibition on the sale, use and possession of fireworks. The other clauses are to effect a tidying-up of the Act and are minor in nature.

The increased representation on the Rural Fires Board, as indicated during the introduction of the Bill, is to be implemented under the existing provisions of the Rural Fires Act. Amendments thereof in this regard are not required.

During the introductory stage of the Bill I informed hon. members of the existence of a fire emergency in the south-eastern portion of the State, during which all open fires were prohibited. The crisis has now been temporarily eased, but it is worth noting that during the emergency hundreds of fire-fighters in bush fire brigades stood by on the look-out for fires, and it was only their vigilance that enabled a fairly tight control of the fire situation to be exercised. Particularly hard hit were the forestry areas where, I understand, 2,000 men were occupied in some way with fire-fighting, observation or control.

It is interesting to note that during the emergency a proposal was made that rockets be used in connection with certain organised celebrations on a national park in South Queensland. This proposal was made by a

responsible body, which, of course, accepted the ban on the use of rockets. We were able to impose the ban because the area was within a state of fire emergency. The Bill will give the Rural Fires Board the authority to control these displays during periods which, while not justifying an emergency, are nonetheless hazardous.

In a recent telecast Mr. C. Easton, Chairman of the Victorian Fire Authority, and Mr. A. G. McArthur, Chief Research Officer of the Forestry and Timber Bureau, Canberra, emphasised the value of hazard-reduction burning and the need not only to promote this activity but also to conduct more research into how best it may be carried out. As I pointed out previously, the additional staff being considered for the board will enable an extension of this aspect of fire protection as well as an ever-increasing registration of bush fire brigades.

The Leader of the Opposition asked about the relationship between fires deliberately lit and fires from causes unknown. The number of fires listed from unknown causes is always high, partly because causes are genuinely unknown and partly because it is not always possible to carry out detailed investigations. The significant factor is the distribution of known fire causes, since we may reasonably expect that the same factors will appear in similar proportion among fires of unknown origin. Taking figures of known causes in years of high fire hazard (say, 1951), it is noted that about 10 per cent. start from lightning (these are mainly in the western sheep areas, where lightning causes about 80 per cent of fires), about 1½ per cent. from cigarette butts, etc., 3 per cent. from railway engines (this may change with the introduction of diesel motors), and 80 per cent. from burning operations of some sort. The remaining percentage is covered by miscellaneous causes.

In other words, fires that are lit by people are, by a considerable margin, the main cause of wild fires. Naturally, it follows that if we can exercise control over the lighting habits of our citizens we will go a long way in bush-fire prevention. This is the duty and function of the fire warden, and all our pre-fire organisation is based on his activity.

The hon. member for Carnarvon said that by passing greater control to an appointed fire warden it will be possible to achieve a greater understanding of the problems of the adjacent landholder. It is our aim to secure the appointment of more and more wardens so that the observance of the Act will present no hardship to any rural landholder.

Mention was also made of the necessity to provide firebreaks in the form of cultivation. It would seem likely that in the Arcadia Valley, for example, many landholders will be cultivating to achieve a higher stocking. The location of such cultivation in situations where it will also achieve maximum value as

a firebreak is one of the results of the exercise in the Arcadia Valley, which was referred to by the hon. member for Barcoo.

The Bill, I feel sure hon. members will agree, commends itself for favourable consideration. Since its introduction a couple of weeks ago we have been through a period of fire danger. On a number of occasions we have had to impose restrictions on the lighting of fires in the open. The position is being watched very closely at this moment. The calamitous fires in Tasmania have been referred to, and since the introduction of the measure similar fires have been experienced in southern New South Wales, although there has not been such a great loss of life there as in Tasmania. However, I think 30 homes were destroyed.

Such fires tend to make us more aware of our responsibilities in the control of fires. They also make us aware of the benefits to be derived from rural fire brigades. From time to time we should grasp the opportunity to bring to the notice of those brigades the need to check their equipment. I am a member of a bush fire brigade and I know that in a wet season, when there is no real fire danger, although the equipment does not become exactly out of order, it is not maintained properly. When a fire does break out, which is usually pretty suddenly, the equipment needs to be in good order so that the fire can be attacked at a moment's notice.

Mr. TUCKER: Who provides the equipment for the bush fire brigades and the rural fire brigades?

Mr. SULLIVAN: It is provided through the State Stores Board by the Rural Fires Board, and the particular rural fire brigade is responsible for its maintenance. It is distributed at strategic points in each board's area so that it is readily available if there is an outbreak of fire in any area.

I feel that this proposal will be acceptable to all hon. members, and I commend it for their favourable consideration.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH (Tablelands) (12.41 p.m.): Members of the Opposition have no fault to find with this Bill. In fact, we say that in some instances it does not go quite far enough. It achieves what the Minister hopes. It has cleared up a number of anomalies. The Forestry Act Amendment Bill eliminates some terms, and in future "scenic areas" will be known as "national parks". This Bill, too, amends the Act to omit any reference to "scenic areas".

The Minister mentioned the lull in activities and awareness of rural fire brigades that occurs from time to time. While rural fire brigades might be looked upon as a type of poor relation in our fire services, they are important. A provision should be inserted in this Bill to ensure daily maintenance or daily checking of equipment. In other States I have seen equipment lying idle on the outskirts of small towns. The people there knew quite well that the engine of the truck would

not start and that portions of the hoses that were exposed to the sun's rays day after day could well be perished. It is far too late to check on that sort of thing when a fire breaks out.

The Bill deals with flammable substances such as wax matches. On a number of occasions there have been calamities following the use of cigarette lighters to light fires, and this causes a great deal of trouble. I suppose that they could be covered by the proposal dealing with flammable matter that could be used to start fires. How often, when somebody is trying to light a fire with a cigarette lighter, is the lighter tipped downwards, with the result that the fluid spills everywhere and the person using it ends up with a burnt hand and a fire out of control. This can happen easily. Wax matches have always been looked on as a bugbear because they can explode in a person's pocket, and the Bill prohibits their sale in special fire zones. With present-day transport, matches could be brought from far-distant places by a person who is not aware that he is in an area where this restriction is imposed.

The causes of fire mentioned by the Minister are quite interesting. He mentioned that 80 per cent. result from burning off. The public should be made aware of the dangers of setting fires, irrespective of how well they think they have them covered. The tinder-dry state of the countryside and the absence of moisture in the atmosphere are things not perhaps known to the person who strikes a match to do some burning off, and before he knows what is happening the fire is racing along the ground and he is helpless to contain it. The Minister is well aware of the dangers of indiscriminate burning off.

The Minister also mentioned the use of pastures as fire-breaks. I cannot altogether agree with him on that point. Where there are irrigated or improved pastures there are headlands in which there is often rank growth along fences. I have seen this in many places. Often the growth along headlands is forgotten in the work of harvesting or maintaining pastures, and the headlands can become a means of channelling fires from one area to another. This is most noticeable, particularly in areas where pastures are being grown for hay, seed or grazing purposes. In many instances boundaries are fire hazards, and it is not quite correct to say that improved pastures will act as fire-breaks.

Strict precautions against the outbreak of fire should be observed along railway lines. I do not go so far as to say that the removal from service of steam locomotives will eliminate all danger of fires along railway lines. It is well known that along the whole 1,043 miles of railway line to the North burning off is done as part of the maintenance work on the line. Sleepers are renewed and the old sleepers are stacked beside the line, and a stack of them will burn for 24 to 48 hours. If no fire-breaks are provided on land within the fences along railway lines or just outside

them—and very rarely are they—the danger of fire remains along the entire length of line. Those who travel to the North by air at this time of the year see evidence of fires all along the way, and many of those near railway lines could have been started in this way.

Although the steam locomotive is going out of service, the danger of fire on railway property still remains. There is always the possibility of fire starting from cigarettes thrown from trains. Although it is impossible to throw anything out of an air-conditioned train, there is only one train of that type running north and one running south at a time, and the danger still remains from the possibility of passengers or crew members on other trains throwing cigarettes onto dry grass. One of the best means of reducing the fire hazard would be strict enforcement of preventive measures along railway lines.

The periods of fire danger vary considerably, and I think that the Minister would be well advised to maintain a complete ban on the lighting of fires during dangerous periods instead of lifting bans and then reimposing them. When bans are lifted and reimposed people do not always know whether they are on or off. Although that uncertainty might provide an excuse for some people, it is still not sufficient excuse for the loss of lives, homes and stock which frequently occurs in southern States. The country cannot afford such losses, nor can it afford the destruction of grass and trees that grow on properties. Once the earth is exposed to the ravages of sun, wind, and rain, erosion is hastened, and the land that we wish to preserve is destroyed. Fire provides the best means of exposing the earth and accelerating erosion.

At present, Mr. Speaker, it would almost make you cry if you saw sections of the range beside Cairns, which, as all hon. members know, is the Mecca of tourists in North Queensland. People land at the aerodrome and see a section of the mountain at Edge Hill blackened, with only rocks and stones showing. Fire is an annual event there, and, as Queenslanders and parliamentarians, we should be taking every step possible to assist the Minister and his departmental officers to bring about any change that might prevent the damage and carnage that is caused annually by fires.

The Opposition has no fault to find with any of the provisions contained in the Bill; in fact, it welcomes them. However, hon. members on this side of the Chamber would like to see the Government go a little further and be a little firmer in its attitude. If penalties are mentioned, they should be mentioned in big, black letters, and the provisions of the Act should be policed and penalties imposed.

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) (12.52 p.m.): I have no serious quarrel with the Bill, which I think contains many desirable provisions.

While the Minister was making his second-reading speech and mentioning places such as Arcadia Valley, there came to my mind the devastation that fires cause annually on Magnetic Island, in my electorate. I am particularly conscious of what has happened to the flora and fauna on that island.

The Minister said that, to the best of his knowledge, the vast majority of fires are lit intentionally. That may be true of the fires on Magnetic Island; I hope it is not. However, year after year, as the Minister said, this is a period of high fire danger. In the last few weeks, warnings against the lighting of fires have been issued in the southern portion of the State. Almost inevitably, some person will set fire to portion of Magnetic Island at this time of the year and the annual devastation will begin.

In the years that I have been a member of this Assembly, I have noticed that fires have removed a great deal of the undergrowth in the forests and around the trees on Magnetic Island. This has deprived the fauna of protection and, consequently, it has been driven farther away or has been destroyed as the fires advance. A colony of koala bears on Magnetic Island is a great tourist attraction, and each year fires place those koalas in great danger. I do not say that they have been annihilated completely, but in some instances rangers have found the bodies of small koalas at the bottom of trees after fire has passed through an area.

I mention that not only because many trees—and there are some very beautiful trees on Magnetic Island—and much natural beauty is destroyed, but also because homes built in a rural setting on the island are in great danger. I am very conscious of the threat that fire poses to people who have built homes in that setting.

There is a bush fire brigade on Magnetic Island—the Minister may prefer to call it a rural fire brigade—which operates out of Picnic Bay. There are about four bays on the island, but the bush fire brigade on Magnetic Island has attempted to set up its headquarters in Picnic Bay but it has experienced difficulty in obtaining land for that purpose. I made representations to the Minister on this subject and I raise it again today. The brigade is doing a magnificent job if it is able to quell outbreaks before they really get started and race across the island, sometimes with the speed of a trotting horse. It is doing a big job for the island, but its members have become frustrated at being unable to get land from the department on which to build headquarters. They chose a piece of land fairly close to police headquarters on Picnic Bay because they felt they should be closely in touch with the policeman on the island. I believe this is a correct attitude, because it is to the policeman on the island that reports of outbreaks of fire initially come. He would therefore be able to direct the bush fire brigade to the outbreak quickly and to get those volunteers

who live in the vicinity of Picnic Bay to move to the outbreak in the most expeditious manner.

As I say, I raise this matter again today so that the Minister might look into the provision of land for this very important purpose. These people are working very hard. The Minister has mentioned that they have been given equipment, and I think they have provided themselves with further equipment, but they have reached the stage where they say, "We give our service voluntarily; we are not helped very much by the fire brigade on the mainland; we look after all the insurance companies' assets on the island; yet we do not seem to be able to get very much assistance in the way of equipment and particularly in the provision of land for headquarters."

Now that the Minister is aware of this complaint, I feel that he may possibly look into the matter and provide the needed land fairly expeditiously.

Mr. Sullivan: We are setting aside a reserve.

Mr. TUCKER: I am very pleased to hear this, and I am sure the fire brigade on Magnetic Island also will be pleased. It will be to the advantage of everybody on the island.

Hon. V. B. SULLIVAN (Condamine—Minister for Lands) (12.58 p.m.), in reply: I think that both the hon. member for Tablelands and hon. member for Townsville North have indicated their acceptance of the Bill. Some of the points they raised are of interest. I should like to mention the concern expressed by the hon. member for Tablelands, who spoke first, relative to fires caused by trains. We are aware of this danger. We are appointing representatives of the Railway Department and of the Main Roads Department to the board, and we have invited the United Graziers' Association to nominate a member also.

I do not fully agree that restrictions imposed on the lighting of fires should be retained for lengthy periods. My general experience over the years has been—and this has been so with the Rural Fires Board—that if restrictions are imposed and retained, people tend to forget about them. What we have done in recent weeks is to impose the restrictions for a few days and then, because of weather conditions, we have lifted them. They may have been off for a few days and then we have reimposed them. With wireless communications as they are today, people are kept aware of the dangers whereas they might otherwise forget completely about them.

The hon. member mentioned his concern about the Cairns area. We know this is a real problem area where bushfires are concerned, with the magnificent tropical vegetation coming right down to the canefields and thus to cane fires. However, the Forestry

Department and the Main Roads Department are carrying out experiments with what are known as "match-trap breaks".

The matters that the hon. member mentioned are being looked at very closely by the board. He mentioned the use of improved pastures as fire-breaks, but he misunderstood me on that point. I was talking about the planning of vast areas of cultivation—and I did mention the Arcadia Valley—in such a way that they can be used, not as fire-breaks, but in a way that will be of great assistance in the control of fires. I am aware of the problems that exist on headlands and the way that fires can creep up them. With the number of dry seasons that we have experienced, there are plenty of areas in which the only feed available is on the headlands and not in the paddocks.

The hon. member for Townsville North also agrees that what we are doing is a definite attempt to make people generally more aware of the dangers of fire. He knows what the board is doing in this regard. He expressed concern about the position on Magnetic Island, and I indicated to him that within a few weeks we propose to make a reserve available for the rural fire brigade there. He is concerned about people who build houses in the hills on the island. As I outlined at the introductory stage, a similar problem has existed for many years in the Dandenong Ranges in Victoria, and Tasmania was faced with the same problem when that State experienced disastrous fires last year. I warned of the dangers that exist in Kenmore and other fringe suburbs of Brisbane, in which people tend to build houses in a rural setting. I do not blame them for that, of course, as they can derive added pleasure from such a setting.

Motion (Mr. Sullivan) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

Clauses 1 to 9, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

The House adjourned at 1.4 p.m.