Queensland

# Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

## Legislative Assembly

**FRIDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 1968**

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

## QUESTIONS

### FIRE PROTECTION IN SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS

(*a*) **Mr. Houston,** pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) Are fire extinguishers, fire hoses and sand buckets normal equipment in State schools? If not, why not?

(2) Is such equipment provided for Commonwealth science laboratories in high schools?

*Answers:*—

(1) "No. It was agreed, in discussions with technical officers, that the installation of fire extinguishers in schools could produce additional hazards. A teacher's primary responsibility, in the event of fire, is to save the lives of children rather than property. However, in the light of recent experiences, discussions with technical officers have been re-opened."

(2) "No. Principals have, however, been instructed to place sand buckets in each science laboratory."

(*b*) **Mr. Houston,** pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

(1) Who is responsible for ascertaining the availability of water for the protection of public buildings and property in case of fire?

(2) As a matter of urgency, will he have fire hydrants installed within school grounds in sufficient numbers and in locations to adequately cover all school buildings?

*Answers:*—

(1) "The Fire Brigade is responsible for ascertaining the availability of water for fire protection."

(2) "Fire hydrants are provided in town water reticulation systems for fire fighting at school buildings as well as private properties. Action is taken to provide fire hydrants at school buildings when the Fire Brigade advises that such provision should be made. It is not proposed to initiate any special action in this regard."

(*c*) **Mr. Porter,** pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

(1) Will he, in order to allay the fears of parents, inform the House of his Department's "strict requirements about fire-fighting equipment within schools" as announced in the Press of November 7 by his Under Secretary?

(2) Will he initiate action with other relevant authorities for the provision of fire hydrants close to school buildings?

*Answers:*—

(1) "In the event of a fire occurring in a school to vacate the school buildings is the most important thing to be done. So that this can be done quickly and safely alternate means of egress are provided. It is not the general practice to provide fire extinguishers as teachers are expected to devote their full attention to the evacuation of buildings and not to fire fighting in which they are not expert."

(2) "Fire hydrants are provided in town water reticulation systems for fire fighting at school buildings as well as private properties. Action is taken to provide fire hydrants at school buildings when the Fire Brigade advises that such provision should be made. It is not proposed to initiate any special action in this regard."

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(*d*) **Mr. Porter,** pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

What is the Government's present attitude regarding the installation of fire extinguishers in schools, following earlier indications that such installations were being considered?

*Answer:*—

"I refer to my reply to the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition."

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(*e*) **Mr. Donald** for **Mr. Lloyd,** pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Labour and Tourism,—

Will he take action to have Fire Brigade Boards undertake an immediate survey of Queensland schools, both State and private, with a view to ensuring that, wherever necessary and practicable, adequate water supply and fire hydrants will be available within school grounds?

*Answer:*—

"The provision of fire protection at schools is not a matter covered by *"The Fire Brigades Acts,* 1964 *to* 1966," which are administered by me."

### SUSPENSION OF EXPORT REGISTRATION, METROPOLITAN PUBLIC ABATTOIR

(*a*) **Mr. Houston,** pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Primary Industries,—

Further to his Answer to my Question on November 6, why are his statements contradictory to those of the Federal Minister for Primary Industry, who, in Answer to a Question, said that (*a*) the licence had been cancelled because structural difficulties and incorrect procedural methods at the abattoirs reflected in hygiene in the killing of meat on the

premises, (*b*) he had written to the Queensland Minister for Primary Industries in March, July and August that the licence would be cancelled unless repairs were made to the works and its procedural methods improved, (*c*) officers of the Federal Department had been negotiating with the abattoir since April, 1967, to have repairs and improvements effected in its procedural methods and (*d*) he refuted the suggestion that the abattoir had inadequate notification that the state of affairs was likely to arise?

*Answer:*—

"I will certainly admit to a difference of opinion with the Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industry. As I pointed out to the Honourable Member in my reply to his Question on November 6, 1968, all Australian meat-works stand under the constant threat of losing their export registration at short notice. I would add to this that the only alternative is to blindly accept all requests by the Chief Veterinary Officer (Commonwealth) and for his staff for the incurment of expenditures, minor or major, as would be necessary to satisfy them. These requests, I am sure, are intended to be constructive and are made with all sincerity. But experience has shown that many have proved to be impracticable or to have consequences more serious than those set out to be corrected. In most instances, points in dispute are settled amicably on the individual plants. In the present instance, whilst fault can be found with wooden stands, the introduction of metal stands on to slaughter floors continually being hosed down adds significant rust problems. The complete partitioning sought between the stock pens and the slaughter floor will certainly reduce the possibility of dust but it introduces the problem of unduly high temperatures on the slaughter floors to the considerable discomfort of employees. This fresh problem has then to be met by the installation of fans or punkahs. I might add that even in the last few days, when approached for advice as to where this partitioning was to be placed, there has been difficulty in obtaining a decision as to whether the sheep bleeding pens at the end of the slaughter floor were to be inside or outside the partition. Against this background, suspension of export registration at a day's notice does not constitute to my mind adequate notice although threats made in this direction could well justify an assertion that adequate notice had been given. I do not know whether the Honourable Member has quoted the Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industry correctly. Be that as it may, I received no communication from him in March, 1968. On the contrary, I wrote to him on March 7, 1968, advising him of the Government's decision to continue the present Metropolitan Public Abattoir in operation for a further period of ten years and enclosing a copy of the Board's report and recommendations to this end. This letter was not acknowledged until May 9, 1968, and asked that I make arrangements for the Board to discuss with the Veterinary Officer-in-Charge, Queensland, the implications of this decision as respects hygiene. These discussions were held on June 3, 1968, the outcome being that the Veterinary Officer-in-Charge, Queensland, undertook, at the Board's request, to submit a report on all matters of concern to the Commonwealth. I next received a letter dated July 27, 1968, from the Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industry advising me that these discussions had been held and further that Dr. L. B. A. Grace, a senior veterinarian from the British Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, had indicated that certain alterations should be carried out by December 31, 1968, to satisfy United Kingdom requirements. The Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industry was assured by letter dated August 6, 1968, that the matters raised by the Board as a result of Dr. Grace's visit, other than the mutton chain alterations, either have been or can be given the necessary attention before December 31, 1968, and that a final decision regarding the mutton chain is only outstanding by reason of certain issues being unresolved by his Department. The report of the hygiene 'stock-taking' was received by me on August 21, 1968, and as I indicated in my previous Answer formed the basis of a programme estimated to cost $100,000. The only advice received by the Board as to requirements requested by the Americans was that received after the export registration had been suspended this week. As a general observation on this matter, I would assure the Honourable Member that where there is mutual understanding and agreement between the Board and the Commonwealth inspection staff as to hygiene aspects and the method of satisfying them, any work requested is put in hand immediately."

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(*b*) **Mr. Tomkins,** pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Primary Industries,—

(1) Has he seen the statement in *The Courier-Mail* of November 7, attributed to the Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industry, that one of the main reasons why the export registration at Cannon Hill had been suspended was that contaminated sheep carcasses had been found in the slaughter room?

(2) Had these carcasses passed inspection at the time and, if so, by whom?

(3) Have either the United States or United Kingdom veterinary inspectors expressed dissatisfaction with inspection procedures?

(4) If the export registration of the metropolitan public abattoir has been restricted because of inefficient inspection procedures, will he take the matter up with the Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industry with a view to having it rectified immediately?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Yes."

(2) "The report concerning the suspension furnished by the Commonwealth Department of Primary Industry to the Board indicated that contaminated sheep carcasses had been noted on the slaughter floor and in the chillers. It is not known whether the carcasses complained of by the American veterinary inspector on the slaughter floor had passed the final wash and the subsequent final inspection point. Any carcass in a chiller, however, must have passed final inspection which at Cannon Hill is carried out by Commonwealth inspection staff. It is not perhaps generally appreciated that, in terms of hygiene, every live animal entering a slaughtering facility brings its own contamination in the form of inedible internal organs and their contents. It is first examined alive for disease and, if healthy, is then permitted to be slaughtered. Slaughtering and dressing consists of the progressive removal of inedible parts (i.e. the source of contamination within the carcass). This is done under the supervision of Commonwealth inspection staff until, at the point of final wash, all inedible parts have been removed and a clean wholesome carcass results. Condemnation of carcasses either for internal disease or for accidental damage during dressing normally takes place during the course of dressing, but as a final precaution all carcasses are submitted to further Commonwealth inspection after the final wash. It is a pertinent fact that no carcasses which are now alleged by the Commonwealth to have been contaminated at the time of the American inspection were in fact condemned by Commonwealth veterinary staff at that time."

(3) "Both Dr. Ekert of the United States and Dr. Grace of the United Kingdom indicated to Board officers that they were more concerned with dressing and inspection procedures than with structural design. I have no information beyond this."

(4) "Yes."

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(*c*) **Mr. Hughes,** pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Primary Industries,—

(1) Further to his Answer to a Question on November 6 relative to the suspension of export registration of the metropolitan public abattoir, will he indicate the extent which the reasons for this suspension will have on the killing, treatment and processing of meat for home consumption?

(2) Is the killing, treatment and processing at the metropolitan public abattoir of meat sold on the domestic market carried out in a 100 per centum hygienic manner and under conditions acceptable to all appropriate authorities and Acts? If so, will he give the necessary assurances to the public?

(3) If the Answer to Question (2) is in the negative, will he detail what steps are being taken or are proposed in order to rectify the matter?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) "All stock at Cannon Hill are continuing to be slaughtered to export standards, whether for home consumption or for export from Australia. This slaughtering is carried out under the supervision of Commonwealth veterinary and meat inspection staff. Other than the recent American complaint that such staff permitted contaminated sheep carcasses to leave the slaughter floor, and about which report I must have some reservations, I have no reason to believe that such staff are not carrying out their duties efficiently."

## ADVERTISING BY CAR-DRIVING SCHOOLS IN POLICE STATIONS

**Mr. Houghton,** for **Mr. Aikens,** pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

Are advertising brochures, pamphlets and literature of similar type issued by car-driving tuition firms prominently displayed at police stations, particularly in the traffic section? If so, is any check made to establish the *bona fides* and capabilities of the firms concerned and is there any limitation to the number of firms that can avail themselves of this free advertising medium?

*Answer:—*

"Advertising and educational literature issued by various motor driving schools is permitted to be displayed at police stations in order that copies thereof may be taken by interested persons, if they so desire. The matter of the display of this literature is solely at the discretion of officers in charge of police stations who, no doubt, would be aware of the standing and capabilities of the firms concerned. Provided there is no obstruction or inconvenience caused to the public, there is no limitation on the number of firms that are permitted to display literature of this kind."

EXPENDITURE BY DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ON ADVERTISING

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

(1) During each of the calendar years 1963 to 1967, both inclusive, and to date in 1968, how much has his Department spent in advertising through recognised trade and publicity media (*a*) internationally, (*b*) nationally and (*c*) intrastate?

(2) Has an evaluation been made of the advertising costs in terms of relative attraction to this State of overseas or national industries or the expansion of Queensland firms? If so, to what extent and with what result?

*Answers:*—

(1) "The Department of Industrial Development was not created until September 26, 1963. I might also add that departmental expenditure, in line with Governmental practice, is recorded on a financial and not a calendar year basis.

Accordingly, the following figures are supplied:—

| Year | International | National | Intrastate |
|---|---|---|---|
| | $ | $ | $ |
| 1963–64 | 1,832 | 2,364 | 721 |
| 1964–65 | 2,839 | 19,899 | 22,600 |
| 1965–66 | 18,068 | 33,646 | 33,957 |
| 1966–67 | 51,778 | 30,947 | 45,617 |
| 1967–68 | 39,346 | 25,420 | 52,271 |
| To Nov. 1968 | 4,443 | 5,233 | 753 |

(2) "Clearly it is not practicable to evaluate the results of the Department's promotional activities in the precise terms sought by the Honourable Member. Our advertising is designed to make the greatest possible impact. The many inquiries and wealth of correspondence directed to the Department as a result of our publicity efforts are in themselves striking evidence that the Government's promotional campaign is having the desired effect."

INTERNATIONAL SUGAR AGREEMENT

**Mr. Tucker,** pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) Has an actual agreement been signed as a result of the recent Geneva Sugar Conference? If so, how many nations are signatories to the agreement?

(2) If no agreement has been signed, what guarantee does he or the Commonwealth Government have that an agreement will be signed?

(3) Failing signed agreement, are any documents in existence binding the countries concerned to the signing of the agreement?

(4) Were the U.S.A. and the European Common Market countries represented at the negotiations? If so, have these countries been committed to the signing of the agreement?

*Answers:*—

(1 to 3) "No actual agreement has been signed, but delegates to the U.N.C.T.A.D. Conference in Geneva representing more than seventy countries adopted a draft International Sugar Agreement. The draft agreement will be open for signature until December 24, 1968, and instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval must be deposited by Governments by December 31, 1968. The agreement will enter into force on January 1, 1969, if by that date Governments holding 60 per cent. of the votes of the exporting countries and 50 per cent. of the votes of the importing countries have signified their acceptance."

(4) "The United States of America was not represented at the conference. The European Common Market countries were represented. No country is committed to the signing of the agreement. There are strong hopes that the United States of America and the E.E.C. countries will eventually become parties to the agreement which has been drafted to permit this."

POLICE PROTECTION, CAPE TRIBULATION–BLOOMFIELD ROAD CONSTRUCTION WORK

**Mr. Lonergan** for **Mr. Adair,** pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

Owing to the hardship experienced by members of the Baileys Creek and Cape Tribulation Development League in the final construction of the "missing link" between Cape Tribulation and Bloomfield, caused by certain residents in the area obstructing work being carried out, will he arrange for an officer of the Police Department to be in the area during the final construction of the road?

*Answer:*—

"Two members of the Police Force have already been detailed to ensure that no breach of the peace is committed during the construction of the road in the vicinity of the disputed area."

COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE FOR SUGAR INDUSTRY

**Mr. R. Jones,** pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) Has the Federal Government indicated what form of assistance, if any, will be extended to the sugar industry this year and, if so, what will be the declared over-all price for No. 1 Pool sugar in 1968?

(2) If not, will the interim delivery price increase from $64 to $68 anticipate an over-all price increase from last year's price of $84 to at least $96 per ton for the 1968 record sugar crop?

*Answers:*—

(1) "No."

(2) "No, the interim delivery price is not necessarily related to the final price."

DECLARATION OF CAIRNS STREETS AS MAIN ROADS

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

(1) Has a traffic survey been carried out in Cairns on the use of arterial and inter-suburban roads with a view to classifying certain of them as main roads? If not, why not?

(2) If so, will McCoombe, Alfred and Pease Streets, Collins Avenue, Anderson and James Streets, Reservoir Road and other thoroughfares be so declared?

*Answer:*—

(1 and 2) "No, but if the Council considers any of these roads of sufficient importance they will be given the opportunity to present a case for their inclusion in the next Road Plan Review to be made during 1969."

CONTROL OF COOLANGATTA AIRPORT

**Mr. Hinze,** pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) Is he aware that Tweed Shire Council, New South Wales, has indicated an intention to make a take-over bid for the Coolangatta Airport?

(2) As the Department of Civil Aviation and the Gold Coast City Council have been negotiating for over two years but without finalisation, is he prepared to intervene so as to ensure that the airport remains in the control of a Queensland local authority because of its great importance to the Gold Coast and the tourist traffic?

*Answer:*—

"In 1966 the Gold Coast City Council accepted an offer by the Department of Civil Aviation that the Council take over the Coolangatta Airport under the Local Ownership Plan. This acceptance was subject to certain conditions, some of which have not, as yet, been finalised as between the Council and the Department of Civil Aviation. It is my understanding that any take-over under the Local Ownership Plan could occur only if the agreement with the Gold Coast City Council were to lapse. I am certain that the Council is well aware of the importance of the Coolangatta Airport to the future of the Gold Coast and accordingly would not come lightly to a decision which could result in the control of this important terminal being transferred to another authority."

USE OF HORMONE-TYPE WEED-KILLERS

**Mr. Wallis-Smith,** pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Primary Industries,—

(1) In view of the warning issued by his Department regarding the danger of weed-killing sprays, will he table details of the hormone-type weed killers thought more dangerous, together with specifications of the types of spray nozzles deemed suitable?

(2) What action can farmers take to protect their crops from the likelihood of contamination, particularly as a result of the actions of other people?

(3) Is the position serious enough to warrant some research into the likely effect on human health through consuming crops treated by any of the sprays mentioned?

*Answers:*—

(1) "(*a*) The hormone-type weed-killers thought more dangerous are ester formulations of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T and mixtures thereof, Fenoprop, MCPA, MCPB, Mecoprop, 2,4-D B, Picloram, Diquat, Paraquat. (*b*) Equipment which will produce droplets larger than 100 microns in diameter is regarded as being satisfactory for distribution of these materials. Combinations of nozzle aperture size and shape, pressure, angle of distribution, etc., are so variable it is impossible to stipulate simple specifications. Manufacturers of this type of equipment publish catalogues detailing this type of information."

(2) "(*a*) Where possible avoid their unnecessary use; (*b*) Take heed of precautions listed in the warning referred to by the Honourable Member; (*c*) Follow instructions on label; (*d*) Ensure that equipment used for distributing these preparations is thoroughly cleansed before use for other purposes, or better still restricted to this use; (*e*) With regard to actions by other people little can be done except to encourage co-operation through the recognition of common benefit."

(3) "Research in this field is being carried out actively on a world-wide basis and my officers are kept fully informed."

ARCHER CREEK BRIDGE APPROACHES, KENNEDY HIGHWAY

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

(1) Have plans been completed for alterations to a section of the Kennedy Highway approaching Archer Creek Bridge?

(2) When will the work commence?

*Answers:*—

(1) "A proposal has been finalised for benching of cuttings on the approaches to Archer Creek bridge to improve visibility."

(2) "It is proposed to start the work immediately."

### Alleged Deficiencies in Aboriginal Deposits, Mt. Garnet

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

(1) How many personal accounts were involved in the recent Mt. Garnet case concerning a considerable sum missing from Aboriginal deposits?

(2) Have all the accounts which were affected been adjusted and has action been taken to see that there is no repetition of the irregularities?

*Answer:*—

(1 and 2) "As this matter is still before the court, it is *sub judice* and I do not propose to make any comment."

### Housing Commission Houses, Rockhampton

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

(1) How many Housing Commission homes have been built in Rockhampton in each of the years 1963 to 1968 for (*a*) rental, (*b*) sale on Housing Commission land and (*c*) sale on owner's land?

(2) How many rental Housing Commission homes have been built for industrial companies, naming the company, the number of homes for each company and the average rental?

(3) What is the average deposit required for the purchase of a Commission home on (*a*) Housing Commission land and (*b*) owner's land?

(4) What is the number of homes at present for rental by the Commission in the electorates of Rockhampton South and Rockhampton North?

(5) When will a start be made on the construction of roads and the reticulation of water in the proposed housing estate at Thozet Road, North Rockhampton?

*Answers:*—

(1)—

| " —— | Rental | Sale | Owner's | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1963–64 | .. | 15 | 7 | 22 |
| 1964–65 | .. | 11 | 16 | 27 |
| 1965–66 | 11 | 5 | 8 | 24 |
| 1966–67 | 7 | 34 | 10 | 51 |
| 1967–68 | 6 | 11 | 13 | 30 |
| Totals | 24 | 76 | 54 | 154 |

Housing Agreement moneys diverted direct to housing societies provided a further 101 houses, making an overall total of 255."

(2) "Central Queensland Fabrications Pty. Ltd. 6 houses, average rent $12.33; Queensland Co-operative Milling Association Limited 5 houses, average rent $12.55; North Queensland Flour Mills Pty. Ltd. 2 houses, average rent $11.63."

(3) "(*a*) The deposit is $500 or the difference between $8,000 and the sale price of the house and land if such difference exceeds $500. Applicants who select a Commission site and arrange to have a house erected for purchase also select the house design and nominate items for the specification. The deposit will vary according to such choice. (*b*) The Commission can lend up to 90 per cent. of the value of the house and land with a maximum loan of $8,000. The borrower contributes the difference, if any, between such loan and the cost of the house."

(4) "The Commission has 217 State rental houses in Rockhampton."

(5) "Six houses have already been erected on this estate and tenders will shortly be called for four more. Satisfactory arrangements have been made with the Rockhampton City Council in regard to water and sewerage and it is proposed to proceed with road construction early in the new year."

### Land Reclamation Work, Manly Jetty Area

**Mr. Harris,** pursuant to notice, asked The Treasurer,—

(1) What area is at present being reclaimed in the vicinity of the Manly Jetty?

(2) When will the project be completed?

(3) For what purpose will the land be used?

(4) Has any club, sporting body or other organisation applied for a lease of the land?

*Answers:*—

(1) "Two acres."

(2) "The dredging and pumping to reclamation are expected to be finished by December 31, 1968."

(3) "The site being reclaimed will be used for public purposes such as for launching ramps, car parking and recreation."

(4) "Requests are on hand from boating organisations to lease areas in this vicinity and it is planned to reclaim land for this purpose seawards of the present reclamation area at a future date when finance is available."

INSTALLATION OF WARNING DEVICE, FLORENCE STREET LEVEL CROSSING, WYNNUM

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

In view of the increased vehicular and pedestrian traffic, particularly during peak hours, from Bay Terrace and Edith Street to Florence Street railway crossing, will he give further urgent consideration to the installation of boom gates or red flashing warning lights at this dangerous crossing?

*Answer:*—

"The programme for the installation of warning devices at railway crossings for the financial year 1968-69 has already been decided, but does not include Florence Street, Wynnum Central. If the road authority concerned will meet the cost, and subject to the availability of the equipment, there would be no objection to boom gates being provided. 'Stop' signs are provided at this level crossing."

FINES FOR TRAFFIC BREACHES

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

How much money has been collected in each of the years 1964 to 1968, both inclusive, in fines for (*a*) drink-driving convictions and (*b*) all other breaches of the Traffic Acts?

*Answer:*—

"Fines imposed as a result of drink-driving convictions and other breaches of the Traffic Acts are remitted along with other fines, etc., directly to the Treasury from the point of collection under a general heading of 'Fines and Forfeitures'. As a result, the information sought by the Honourable Member is not readily available and to ascertain these particulars would involve considerable time and cost which I consider would not be justified."

INSTALLATION OF WARNING DEVICE, PALM AVENUE LEVEL CROSSING, SHORNCLIFFE

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

In view of the dangerous traffic hazard existing at Palm Avenue railway crossing, will he consider requesting Brisbane City Council to install flashing warning lights at the crossing as early as possible? If not, why not?

*Answer:*—

"If the Brisbane City Council desires flashing warning lights installed at the railway crossing at Palm Avenue, Shorncliffe, and will meet the cost of such installation, then, subject to the availability of the necessary equipment, the Railway Department would have no objection to the provision of the facility. 'Stop' signs are provided at this level crossing."

ISSUE OF PROVISIONAL DRIVING LICENCES

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

Has his attention been drawn to the leading article in *The Courier-Mail* of September 25, headed "How do we beat inexperience"? If so, has consideration been given for provisional driving licences to be issued to junior car drivers and, if not, why not?

*Answer:*—

"This Question should be directed to my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Transport, who administers "The Traffic Acts"."

## PAPERS

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

Reports—

Insurance Commissioner, for the year 1967-68.

Health and Medical Services of the State of Queensland, for the year 1967-68.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

The Fisheries Acts, 1957 to 1962.

The Racing and Betting Acts, 1954 to 1967.

## FORM OF QUESTIONS

**Mr. MELLOY** (Nudgee) having given notice of a question—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member for Nudgee appears to have asked a similar question previously, of which he is in possession of the answer. Such a practice is not permissible.

**Opposition Members:** No.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member has made that admission by the wording of his question. I shall look more closely into the matter.

**Mr. BROMLEY** (Norman) having given notice of a question—

**Mr. BROMLEY:** The same thing applies to traffic fines. I cannot find where they are shown, either.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member will please submit his question without comment.

## POLICE SUPERANNUATION BILL

INITIATION

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah —Premier): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to

consolidate and amend the law relating to the provision of superannuation benefits for members of the Police Force, to make provision for their families and for other purposes."

Motion agreed to.

## FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

### SECOND READING

**Hon. J. D. HERBERT** (Sherwood—Minister for Labour and Tourism) (11.38 a.m.): I move—

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

In case hon. members may feel that there has been undue haste in holding the second reading so soon, I would stress that the request received from the Wool Board was that this amending legislation be introduced by 1 November so that these amendments might operate as from 1 January, 1969, in order that the Wool Board may be able to take full advantage of them in its wool-promotion programme for 1969.

All State Ministers for Labour have agreed to introduce these amendments as soon as possible, whereupon the Department of Customs and Excise will immediately take similar action.

On the introduction of this measure I gave a detailed explanation of what was involved. Amongst other things, I mentioned that, from inquiries made, consumer protection councils in certain wool-consuming countries in the Northern Hemisphere had no objection to the inclusion of specialty animal hairs in the definition of "wool".

The Secretary of the Commonwealth Department of Primary Industry has since forwarded a copy of a letter he has received from Mr. Vines, the then Managing Director of the International Wool Secretariat, on this matter. Amongst other things, Mr. Vines stated—

"I am informed that necessary amending legislation is in train in New Zealand and also in Belgium where it is expected to take effect shortly. In the case of Switzerland it transpires that the difficulties which existed in 1966 were really a matter of interpretation of the existing laws. This has now been cleared up and there is no longer any problem in that country. There is still, I think, a consumer problem in Mexico but this is expected to be eliminated within the present year when the labelling Regulations are due to be reviewed. In the case of South Africa, I understand the intention is to follow the Australian Legislation when this is amended.

"In the meantime, as you will understand, the I.W.S. has been under tremendous commercial pressure from dozens of manufactures in all the major countries of the world to permit the inclusion of up to 20 per cent. of rare animal fibres with sheep's wool in the pure virgin wool fibre content regulation for Woolmark. This has been so for two reasons. Firstly, because in all those countries from time immemorial the textile and garment industries have been accustomed to being permitted to do this under their own national regulations. Secondly, because in many cases, and this is particularly true of women's wear, ranges of products are produced such as, e.g. a range of ladies' dresses and top coats in which the majority of the models are pure virgin sheep's wool, but a few are pure virgin sheep's wool plus some small admixture of mohair or other rare animal fibres.

"The problem in these cases has been that only part of such ranges could qualify for Woolmark and, by inference, those not so qualified appear to be of lesser quality whereas, in fact, the inclusion of small percentages of expensive rare animal fibres has had the effect of ennobling the product rather than debasing it.

"Rather than omit the Woolmark from these items there has been a tendency for manufacturers to leave the Woolmark off the whole range and this is very much against the interests of our promotional programme and, of course, the interests of the woolgrowers for whose benefit the programme was designed.

"We were, therefore, compelled, a few months ago (in March, 1968) to agree that in all those countries where the law permits, which is most of the countries of the world, up to 20 per cent. of rare animal fibres may be included in pure virgin wool products qualifying for the Woolmark.

"Naturally none of these products will be permitted to bear the Woolmark in Australia until labelling legislation in your country is, as we hope amended.

"However, it is obviously desirable that there should be uniformity throughout the world as soon as possible and I hope it will soon be practicable for the necessary amendments to be made to the Laws of all Australian States."

As I mentioned on the introduction of this measure, the proposed amendments are in accordance with what has been agreed to unanimously by all State Ministers for Labour and the Department of Customs and Excise, and those in regard to wool have the full support of the Australian Agricultural Council and the Wool Board.

**Mr. BROMLEY** (Norman) (11.44 a.m.): The second reading of this Bill has been brought on in rather a hurry, as the Minister said. It was not introduced and printed until Wednesday and we had no indication that the second-reading stage would take place today. As soon as I heard that the Minister was going to move the second reading today

I had a look at the Bill. After all, notice of introduction of the Bill appeared on the Business Paper for a couple of weeks.

**Mr. Herbert:** That was done at the request of the Commonwealth department, to give them time to look at a further amendment that they were considering. It was later decided not to go ahead with it. That request was made to all the States.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** I thank the Minister for the information. I felt like saying, when the Bill was brought down, that the Minister had no "sole" whatever—the Bill, of course, deals with leather goods and shoes—but perhaps some of the blame should be laid at the door of certain members of the Minister's own party because at the introductory stage they endeavoured to delay the Bill's passage.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! Will the hon. member please discuss the provisions contained in the Bill?

**Mr. BROMLEY:** I am discussing them; I am leading up to the reason for the Minister's haste in bringing on the second reading. I propose to discuss the Bill, and I do not intend to delay the House for long. I feel that in the Committee stage the Minister——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! We are not interested in the Committee stage at present. We are interested in the second reading of the Bill.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** Very well, perhaps I had better not say that the Minister should have brought his members to "heel" and given them a "lacing".

I studied the Bill very quickly this morning when I knew it was coming up for the second reading, and on behalf of the Opposition I am prepared to give full credit to the Minister for its introduction. It is a very important Bill.

I listened with interest to the Minister's opening remarks. He said there was to be a wool promotion campaign early in 1969. I said at the introductory stage that promotion of an export industry such as wool was tremendously important and it is perhaps because of pressures brought to bear on the Government that this amending legislation has been brought down. Whilst the legislation generally is quite good, there are one or two points in it that I should like the Minister to clear up for me when he replies. I do not intend to go through the individual clauses, but will refer to the Bill broadly. It seems strange that in its early clauses the Bill makes provision for varying dates of operation for various sections. I could not quite follow that at all, so perhaps the Minister could explain it. As I say, I shall not go through the Bill clause by clause until we reach the Committee stage, but I want to speak on the Bill in broad outline.

It seems to me that one of the main purposes of the Bill is the promotion of the use of wool, and that one of its secondary purposes is the rewording in modern terms of names given to synthetic fibres. At one time, of course, synthetics were not used in footwear manufacture; rather was leather used. The Bill clarifies the meaning of obvious poor-quality materials, and the public will benefit from that provision. However, what does concern me is the effective policing of the legislation without some urging of the public to complain to proper authorities when a matter for complaint arises. A need exists to embark upon a campaign of advertising through mass media, perhaps through the Press, to point that out to the public for their own protection.

Some of the provisions contained in the Bill differ very little from those contained in the Act. However, the Bill contains a provision to stamp the words "ALL LEATHER SOLE" in a conspicuous place upon any boots or shoes whose soles consist entirely of leather. That is an important provision.

I am rather concerned about the importation of some goods used in the manufacture of certain commodities. The health of the public is something that should be considered. The Minister said that some imported animal fibres were of better quality than those produced in Australia. I could mention the beards that are imported for use by "Father Christmases" at Christmas-time. They are manufactured from animal fibres. In fact, I think the Minister would look rather charming in one of them.

**Mr. Herbert:** I have enough hair on the top of my head.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** The Minister is fortunate in that respect, but we cannot all have brains and hair, too. The Minister is lucky that he has the hair.

It is true that the Customs and Excise Department will assist in the protection of the public by its quarantine procedures. I have with me a booklet issued by the International Labour Conference, and in it reference is made to susceptibility to occupational diseases when contact is made with imported materials. As the Minister has pointed out, the Customs Department will provide its assistance in the matter of prevention, and I hope that further assistance will be provided by the quarantine authorities.

**Mr. Herbert:** The Customs Regulations cover quarantine matters.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** I am pleased to hear that, because that matter does concern me in my interest in the welfare of the workers. Of course, occupational diseases are attracting the attention of many pepole who hold responsible positions in the community. The importation of animal fibres can bring with

it outbreaks of a number of exotic diseases, and the public should be adequately protected against such outbreaks.

Returning to the Bill, I notice that it amends the definition of "sole". In effect, with one or two exceptions, the Bill is more or less the same as the Act, although I think it clarifies the position.

This legislation is to be uniform throughout the Commonwealth. I believe that we need greater uniformity in legislation covering the passage of goods between the States under section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution. Goods imported from other countries often contain poor-quality materials. Standardised legislation throughout the Commonwealth on this matter will produce better results, as people will be protected from themselves.

I particularly noticed the other day that the Minister referred to "inspectors". They would be especially effective in dealing with occupational diseases. I do not intend to depart from the provisions of the Bill,——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. BROMLEY:** I am not departing from the provisions of the Bill.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister did not mention "inspectors" in his second-reading speech. The Bill deals with only two principles; they relate to the labelling of goods.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** Very well, Mr. Speaker. We have dealt with the labelling of goods but I wanted to point out that, in the labelling of goods, it is imperative to have inspectors to make sure that the labelling is carried out.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The debate in the second reading of a Bill does not relate to general matters; it relates only to the amendments contained in the measure. If the hon. member persists in trying to introduce extraneous matter I will have to ask him to discontinue his speech.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did not want to introduce extraneous matter at the introductory stage,——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. BROMLEY:** And I do not intend to do so now.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I have informed the hon. member that he can deal only with the principles of the Bill. We are not considering what happened at the introductory stage. I listened very carefully to the Minister's second-reading speech and he did not mention anything other than the two principles contained in the Bill.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** I am following what the Minister said. I made a note of his remarks. He mentioned the reason for haste, the wool-promotion scheme, the International Wool Secretariat being under pressure in the export drive, animal fibres used in production of these things, and, according to my notes, he also mentioned the importance of some of these animal fibres. I will not stray from the principles of the Bill. Apparently I am not going to get an opportunity to outline my thoughts. I have indicated my full support of the Bill, and I have said that I do not intend to speak on any of the clauses, although I could deal with them at length, out of respect to the Minister and his desire, and that of the other Ministers for Labour, to have this Bill passed. But surely I am entitled to my 40 minutes. Whilst I may not use my time now, I can spend plenty of time discussing each clause.

I made notes of what the Minister said, but as you, Mr. Speaker, are going to adopt that attitude, probably quite rightly so——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member is accusing the Chair of improper practices. I ask him to please withdraw that remark.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** No, I am not accusing the Chair. I said, "rightly so". I was not imputing any improper remarks.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member will please either continue with his speech on the principles of the Bill or resume his seat.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** Very well. It obviously appears that I do not get a fair go in anything I talk about.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member has repeated the assertion that he does not get a fair go. I ask him to withdraw the remark.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** I withdraw the remark, and I will resume my seat after saying that I think this legislation to amend the Factories and Shops Act meets with the approbation of hon. members on this side of the House, although at this stage I am not particularly happy about things.

Motion (Mr. Herbert) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 to 7, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

## FORESTRY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING

**Hon. H. RICHTER** (Somerset—Minister for Local Government and Conservation) (12.1 p.m.): I move—

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

I was gratified at the reception to the introduction of the Bill and the interest shown in it by hon. members. It was pleasing to note that the Opposition is not opposed in principle to the introduction of the Bill and I

trust, now that hon. members have had an opportunity to study the Bill, that it will be accepted as a forward step in the management of national parks in Queensland.

From the introductory debate there would appear to be some misconception on the part of some hon. members concerning the general functions of the national parks, and doubts were expressed on whether they would be typically Australian and would provide protection to the Australian fauna. I should like to emphasise that it has always been a fundamental part of the management of national parks in Queensland that they should be kept in their natural condition to the maximum possible extent, and that there should be complete protection of animal and plant life on them. The Bill under consideration at present does not depart from this cardinal principle in any way.

It should be clear that the main part of the Bill deals with the management of national parks. It does not alter the basic criteria for areas suitable for this form of reservation which, as stated in section 29 of the Forestry Act, are to be areas of scenic, scientific, or historic interest. I repeat that it does not alter the basic principle of management which is that the national parks shall be kept in their natural condition to the greatest possible extent. It follows from this that an area which has suffered considerable disturbance will be less attractive for reservation as a national park.

What the Bill does set out to do is to provide the necessary legislative machinery for giving certain areas specialised management where circumstances warrant this action. I should like to emphasise that last phrase, "Where circumstances warrant this action".

It is intended that the Conservator of Forests should recommend the declaration of a special purpose area only when special circumstances exist which make this desirable, and only when sufficient is known about the particular area for this recommendation to be made on a sound basis. It is likely that many parks will remain unclassified for a considerable time to come because they are remote and little visited, and, hence, specialised management is not warranted.

Likewise, parts of certain parks may be classified into one or more of the special purpose areas proposed under this Bill, but the larger part may remain just as unclassified national park. In this sense there are in effect, six, not five, categories as follows:

> Primitive area; Primitive and recreation area; Recreation area; Scientific area; Historic area; and Unclassified national park.

For the purposes of the legislation, however, the sixth category does not require special mention.

The Leader of the Opposition pointed out that the maximum of 400 acres of recreation area in any one park would be sufficient, if it included accessible areas. This of course is the intention. In fact it is proposed that this classification of recreation area will be applied only to the relatively small areas actually used for the provision of picnic and camping facilities and the access to them. On these small areas it is necessary to carry out a greater degree of disturbance than is necessary or desirable on the rest of the park.

The areas immediately adjacent to these picnic and camp grounds may well provide a form of recreation, in that they will be the areas of undisturbed bushland to be visited by the people using the picnic grounds. These areas may be served by graded walking tracks and have certain other facilities such as signs, look-outs and fireplaces, but they will not have the more intensive development of facilities as in the declared recreation areas. These adjacent areas may be declared as primitive and recreation areas, or left merely as unclassified national park. It is less likely that they would be declared as scientific or primitive areas.

It is difficult to find ideal names to give these special-purpose areas, and I trust that hon. members will appreciate that much thought has been given to this problem. The names proposed, though they may not meet unanimous approval, do have certain advantages.

The name "primitive area" is preferred to the alternative name of "wilderness area" used in the United States, partly to differentiate from this because the terms are not strictly equivalent, and partly to emphasise the basic aim of keeping these areas in their primitive state, that is, in a state of nature undisturbed by the influence of modern man.

Likewise, "primitive and recreation area" is intended to convey the sense that the area is being kept largely in a primitive state while being used for outdoor recreation. By inserting "and" in the name it is intended to indicate that it is the "area", not the "recreation", that is primitive. It is very desirable to provide easy access to some of the areas that are kept in their primitive condition. This is already done in many of the existing parks, and comes in for much favourable comment.

The classifications of "scientific area" and "historic area" are quite straightforward.

The Leader of the Opposition inquired whether encouragement would be given to the preservation of our natural species of animals and birds in primitive national parks, and whether it is proposed to carry out any restocking with koala bears. In fact, all Queensland national parks play a valuable part in preserving our native animals, including birds, by protecting them and providing living space for them. However, restocking of such areas would not in general be

carried out as it entails considerable problems and, with respect of koalas in particular, it would be a matter for the Department of Primary Industries, as I indicated to him at the time.

The Leader of the Opposition also referred to the importance of health standards generally, and the cleanliness of toilet facilities in particular. He mentioned that in some places amenities had deteriorated to a shocking extent. I am sure that he was not referring to any Queensland national park, and I can assure him that in any recreation area declared in the future the very high standards adopted by the Forestry Department will be maintained. This high standard that is preserved is very frequently praised by visitors to the parks.

I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr. NEWTON** (Belmont) (12.9 p.m.): Opposition members feel that the principles contained in the Bill constitute an endeavour to protect the national parks of this State. We felt that the Bill did not go far enough to cover all national parks and we were concerned about areas not defined by the legislation, but the term "unclassified area" would cover those parts of national parks not covered by the classifications contained in the Bill.

In order to examine all the deletions that the Bill makes from the Act, we have to read almost the whole of the Act, and members of the Opposition who have studied the Act and the Bill have noticed quite a number of other things that cause them concern in the sections that are being amended.

Admittedly, the question of finance arises in any consideration of the provisions of the Bill relative to the management of national parks. This possibly is the answer to some of the questions that have come to the minds of hon. members on this side of the Chamber, because it is obvious from some of the proposed deletions that there are ways in which revenue can be obtained from national parks. The sale of goods and the borrowing of material from scenic areas and national parks and the questions of licences, permits, and so on, are covered by the Bill, and if the sections of the Act were implemented fully, a certain amount of revenue could be obtained to offset the cost of management of national parks in this State.

The new classification clearly defines the part or parts of national parks that may be set aside for specific purposes, and the Bill also makes it quite clear that, when the provisions contained in the Bill become law, scenic areas will become national parks. It also allows the amalgamation in national parks of areas that, under the provisions of the Act, are known to be of scientific or historical interest, and those areas are defined more clearly.

I remind the House that, of the 102 sections in the Act, 47 sections are being amended. It is true that 43 of the proposed amendments are of a machinery nature and relate to the deletion of the words "scenic area", and a number may also be tied up with other proposed amendments. Although the Opposition does not intend to broaden the debate and refer to matters that were not covered by the Minister's introductory speech, hon. members on this side of the Chamber are really concerned to ensure that the new classifications proposed in the Bill cover fully the position of the Minister and the Conservator of Forests. I express that concern because there is no question that, throughout the Act, the Conservator of Forests is charged with a heavy responsibility relative to the national parks in Queensland, and it will be his responsibility to see that the principles contained in the Bill now under consideration are implemented after they become law.

The Bill deals with the granting of permits to people who wish to carry out particular scientific or historical work and, at the same time, protects the areas concerned against unnecessary disturbance. I mention that particularly because I do not intend to deal specifically with unclassified areas. Its provisions also cover the position of the Conservator of Forests or any of his officers or employees who are covered by the existing Act.

It appears quite evident to us that the protection we were looking for is fully provided by section 32 of the Act. One of the principles will be that certain actions will not be allowed in a primitive area. That was one of our main bones of contention at the introductory stage. We were concerned about just what effect the new classifications would have on land being set aside by a Government department, for tourist, mining or other purpose, but we now find that under the new principles this position will be fully covered.

Many problems have been raised with us by the general public. In this morning's "Courier-Mail" we read the report of a case before the Warden's Court about 2,000 acres of land on Moreton Island to which we referred at the introductory stage. That is the sort of thing that causes the Opposition concern.

We are doubtful about one aspect of the classifications of primitive areas and recreation areas, particularly recreation areas. The Bill mentions 400 acres, or 50 per cent. of the area. We want to know the position relative to scenic areas under 400 acres that will become national parks.

**Mr. Richter:** That 400 acres is the maximum.

**Mr. NEWTON:** If it is the maximum, can we take it that anything that up to the present has been set aside as a scenic area will automatically become a national park irrespective of size? Say, for instance, it was 5 acres, would that become a national park?

**Mr. Richter:** Only 50 per cent. can be taken, with a maximum of 400 acres for a large national park.

**Mr. NEWTON:** So small acreages of 10, 20 or 30 acres will become national parks?

**Mr. Richter:** Yes.

**Mr. NEWTON:** We wanted to make quite sure of that because it did not seem to be too clear from what the Minister had told us.

We believe that scientific areas have been fully protected because the Bill contains certain principles which will give the Conservator of Forests the powers necessary to make sure that the things we are trying to eliminate will not be possible under the Bill. We said earlier that we would possibly raise some questions about the classifications but, on going through them, it is evident that they are fairly clear with the possible exception of "historic area". For some unknown reason it is not nearly as clearly defined as are the other areas. The Minister might have some explanation for this and he might be prepared to elaborate on it in his reply. He has said today that some of the classifications have been retained, but we question the meaning of this one.

We all agree that the points raised relative to protection of animal life have been cleared up. The Bill ensures, in its amendment of certain terms, that anything that was previously omitted is now fully covered.

The Bill affords the further protection of a number of forest products. The sale for profit of forest products has greatly concerned members of the Opposition, because in a number of the Bill's clauses mention is made of the sale of forest products and the Minister's power to provide assistance to local authorities and other organisations relative to roads in their areas. Instead of providing some people with facilities for making profits from the sale of forest products, the Government should ensure that our national parks are preserved.

Of great importance is the management of the newly designated areas that are defined in the Bill. The management of national parks is an important responsibility, and depends to a great extent on the availability of finance and the means that the Conservator of Forests will have at his disposal in carrying out this work.

As members of the Opposition indicated at the introductory stage, we are greatly concerned that, when certain portions of national parks are designated as particular areas and have signs erected in them to publicise their designation of "historic area", "scientific area", or "primitive area", a number of unscrupulous people will enter those areas and disregard the signs, and do exactly what we do not want them to do.

Whilst members of the Opposition did not object to the introduction of the Bill and agreed with its principles in endeavouring to preserve our national parks—and I indicate that we will allow the passage of the Bill through its second reading—we will have a good deal to say in the Committee stage about clause 24. Whether we are successful or not at that stage, we intend to put forward our submissions relative to that clause.

As the hon. member for Salisbury and I have indicated, our main concern is that the Minister for Mines and the Minister for Labour and Tourism will exert their influence in the matter of preserving national parks. The first consideration must be the public interest, and members of the Opposition will endeavour at the Committee stage to ensure its recognition. We fully realise that clause 24 will have far-reaching effects, but, irrespective of what the Minister for Local Government and Conservation and the Conservator of Forests may desire to do, sometimes their hands are tied.

The Bill ensures that the sale of Aboriginal artefacts will be covered. We think that is a good idea.

The Opposition will not oppose the Bill at this stage, but we will have something to say in the Committee stage on the one matter that I mentioned.

**Mr. DEAN** (Sandgate) (12.26 p.m.): I should like to make a few comments on this very important legislation. At the outset, I indicate that I will confine them to an area of State importance, if not national importance, not far from Parliament House, known as the Botanical Gardens. As the State Government, we are not giving this area the necessary protection.

**Mr. Richter:** That is not a national park. You are talking about parks and gardens, an entirely different thing.

**Mr. DEAN:** In supporting the hon. member for Belmont, I thought that while we are dealing with this legislation I might be able to bring this matter to the Minister's attention. I have fears similar to those expressed by the hon. member for Belmont about the Minister's powers, under this legislation, to control activities which at times seem to interfere with the preservation or conservation of areas that are vitally important, not only to the present generation but also to posterity, as national parks and historical areas, and areas of scientific interest. I will not pursue this subject, but I hope that at some time in the future the Minister will assume control of the Botanic Gardens.

**Mr. Richter:** We do not control them now.

**Mr. DEAN:** I know that we do not, but we did at one time. We should control that very valuable area so that we can protect it for posterity. It is being shockingly desecrated as a result of motor vehicles being driven through it. I have been wanting to raise this matter for a long time, and I make no apology for doing so. Our national parks are of great importance, and in my local-authority days I was very interested in park lands.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** (Mr. Hooper): Order!

**Mr. DEAN:** I am talking about park lands now. I have been worried about them for some time.

I hope my remarks will strike a chord with the Minister in his deliberations with his officers, and that some day he will consider regaining control of that area.

The provisions of the Bill will certainly effect an improvement. I hope that the Minister takes notice of the advice to be proffered by members of the Opposition in the Committee stage to effect an improvement in the powers vested in the Minister so that he can have the final say in implementing the provisions of the Bill. They provide future safeguards to protect our park lands and national parks.

My notes deal mainly with the individual clauses of the Bill. Having made that brief reference to the Botanic Gardens, and having touched on the principles of the Bill, I shall wait until the clauses are dealt with in Committee to amplify what I have said and perhaps give fuller vent to my feelings.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON** (Salisbury) (12.31 p.m.): It is becoming increasingly clear in these modern times that in the very near future, when we have reached the stage where automation and mechanisation must bring about shorter working hours and a shorter working week, there will be great demand for recreational areas. While this battle lies ahead of the population in its quest for a shorter working week and more leisure time, it is evident that we are moving swiftly towards this goal. In 25 years' time, or even if it is 50 years, the working week will be much shorter than it is at present, and there will then be a great demand for recreation areas in which citizens can profitably and pleasurably spend their leisure hours.

**Mr. Richter:** I mentioned that in my introductory remarks. You agree with me, do you?

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** I could not agree more.

This demand will be heightened to a greater degree in South-east Queensland by the great aggregation of population that will occur there within the next 15 years. The marked urban sprawl makes it necessary, facing the possibility of a shorter working week, to preserve now adequate areas in which citizens may enjoy their leisure time.

The Bill is timely. Our previous concept laid down, in no uncertain manner, that it was undesirable that national parks should be disturbed. However, because of this pressure for recreational parks it has become necessary for a reappraisal of our thinking. I think that the Minister and hon. members will agree that this flows on largely from the experience in the United States of America. Only this morning, when I was making a quick check of some notes, I found that the demands made on recreational areas in America, with its large population, are almost fantastic. They speak there in terms of the billionth visitor to a national park.

**A Government Member:** They have stringent anti-litter laws, too.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** That is true, and I hope to deal with that matter later.

I am disturbed, when considering the right and proper use of national parks, at the recent move to commercialise them. I do not think that this is a good thing. After all, the prime purpose of a national park is the preservation for all time of representative types of our environment. It is easy for these places to become eroded or to deteriorate once there is general traffic through them. In my experience, this has been exemplified to some extent in the Carnarvon gorge. If one strolls along the walking tracks in national parks, even those that are fairly rigidly policed, one can see quite marked deterioration for some yards adjacent to the tracks. If there is increased use of the tracks, particularly if national parks are commercialised to any great degree, their deterioration will be hastened.

I believe that setting aside areas of a primitive nature will ensure the survival not only of plant species but also of many birds and animals which, although they have not become extinct, have at least become rare.

**Mr. Richter:** You provide them with a habitat, too.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** Yes. Some birds and animals face difficulty in surviving because of their slow rate of reproduction. One common Queensland scrub bird is the Albert lyre bird and, like the Superb lyre bird, it has a slow rate of reproduction. To ensure the survival of these types of fauna, there must be wilderness or primitive areas in which they can be left undisturbed. I read only recently that research work carried out by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, particularly by Dr. Harry Frith, has shown that, although the mallee fowl is becoming rare, it is relatively easy to ensure its survival by leaving it undisturbed in a primitive area. I believe that establishing areas of habitat for birds and animals, by the declaration of primitive areas, is a very necessary step, and I support that principle of the Bill.

There will be a great demand for areas to be used for the purpose of recreation. For that reason, I feel that serious consideration must be given to the provision of what I might call survival areas for wild life, as the areas set aside for recreation need not necessarily be the choicest parts of the countryside. All that is necessary is that they allow people to feel that they are in the country. In the United States it was found that when areas were opened, particularly choice areas, they deteriorated very quickly, and it was

decided in that country that, although it was necessary to provide recreation areas, they need not be the choicest samples of the environment. Opposition members agree with the provision concerning recreation areas.

I completely agree with the principle that permits for scientific study in wilderness areas should be issued only to people who are pre-eminent in a particular field of study. If the issuing of permits was not confined to such people, there would be a clamour for permits by all sorts of people interested in subjects such as botany and biology. In recent years we have had visits from overseas people who are highly qualified in subjects such as botany and biology, and I believe that, in the interests of scientific understanding throughout the world, permits should be issued only to persons eminent in their fields. This is a very desirable and sensible provision.

**Mr. Richter:** I think you should include reliability as a qualification, too. If a person is not reliable and he destroys things, he will not get a second chance.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** I could not agree more. I think there is general agreement on both sides of the House that the preservation of these areas is of the utmost importance in Queensland's complex of national parks.

The Bill provides, of course, that persons with lesser qualifications will be permitted to enter a wilderness recreation area, and that will ensure that a person with ordinary academic qualifications will be able to carry out the studies that he wishes to carry out. As my colleague the hon. member for Belmont reminds me, university students should also be permitted to enter many of these areas and carry out studies.

**Mr. E. G. W. Wood:** Would you agree with the leasing of certain areas so that kiosks or other public catering facilities could be provided in recreation areas?

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** Well, no matter what decision the Government of the day or the Conservator of Forests makes relative to the opening of recreational areas, I believe that all the provisions of the law should be enforced rigidly, because such areas deteriorate very rapidly if they are not cared for properly.

The non-returnable carton is a blight on our community. It creates problems not only in the maintenance of roads—hon. members are aware of the litter that accumulates on roads—but also in the maintenance of recreation areas. Some time ago I read the report of the President's Scientific Committee set up in the United States of America by the late John F. Kennedy after the book "Silent Spring" had been published. The author of that book more or less awakened the nation to the problems of pollution, and so on, and the findings of that Committee—I do not wish to transgress too far on this point, Mr. Speaker—were that non-returnable containers had created such huge problems, particularly relative to recreation areas and national parks, that scientists should seek ways in which to produce a dissolvable container that can, in fact, be used as part of the contents.

**Mr. Dewar:** It will be like an ice-cream cone. You will drink the bottle too.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** That is so. That may sound fantastic and "way out", but non-returnable waste is reaching such proportions that scientists in America are searching for a method of eliminating it.

I make it perfectly clear to the hon. member for Logan, who interjected earlier, that the Conservator of Forests and the Minister must insist that all laws are enforced rigidly to ensure that the construction of a cafe, a kiosk, or whatever is permitted to be built, does not contribute to the deterioration of the area.

As is my colleague the hon. member for Belmont, I am very concerned about the references in the Bill to forest products and the sections of the Act that allow the payment of subsidy to certain local authorities or Government departments to enable them to carry out roadworks, etc., relative to the sale of forest products in certain areas. I hope that we have not yet reached the stage in our approach to national parks where, to develop those parks, we must look to revenue from within the parks themselves to carry out the necessary work.

I have re-read the debate on the proposal to excise an area of land at Shute Harbour for Conway National Park, which took place back in 1962 or 1963, when I was a very young and inexperienced member of this Parliament, and I am very concerned about what I consider to be a dangerous precedent in this matter. On that occasion an area of 500 acres was excised for the Conway National Park and ostensibly for developing Shute Harbour to allow for the departure of vessels to various off-short islands.

What disturbed me after I re-read that debate was that when this area of 500 acres was excised, 100 allotments of it were immediately thrown open for freeholding. The thought occurred to me, "Are we going to sell our national parks in this way to meet the cost of providing a road or to help defray the cost of developing Shute Harbour?" I hope that the intention behind the legislation at that time was not to sell land under freehold tenure to pay for developing Shute Harbour or to meet the cost of the road into it. If the Government does this, it is creating a very dangerous precedent in the proper consideration of what "national park" means. Like my colleague the hon. member for Belmont, I am very concerned about this reference, firstly, to the definition of forest products, and secondly, to the fact that section 52 deals with the position of subsidising any department of the Government, local authority or person to the extent that the Conservator of Forests thinks fit in the construction, improvement, maintenance, operation or protection of roads or any other

means of access necessary for the proper marketing of any forest products or for the management of any State forest, timber reserve, national park or scenic area. We might be misconstruing this reference and it might apply only to State forests.

**Mr. Richter:** I will clear that point up.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** I will be happy to hear it. It is the duty of the Opposition to probe every one of these matters. We want to satisfy ourselves that there is not some loophole in the legislation that would allow for the type of thing I have mentioned, that is, the selling of part of our national parks merely to provide finance for their development.

Again, the Opposition is concerned about the clause in the Bill that amends the section dealing with the proclamation of national parks. Other speakers, including my colleague the hon. member for Belmont, dealt with our fears and alarm relative to the influence of other Ministers, particularly the Minister for Mines, Main Roads and Electricity, in the declaring of national parks. The Bill lays down a certain provision under which a national park can be declared, and we feel so strongly on this matter that it is our intention in the Committee stage to move an amendment that we feel is not only in the interests of the people who control national parks in this State and are responsible for carrying out the necessary surveys and investigations in desirable areas, but is also in the best interests of the community generally. I shall leave my comments on that matter until the Committee stage, when we will be moving an amendment.

It is very evident that because of the exercise of undue influence, particularly by the Minister for Mines, many areas of the State's national parks, or many areas that should become national parks, will lie in abeyance because objection is lodged by that Minister. Members of the Opposition see the declaration of national parks as being in a state of suspended animation, in which nobody seems to be able to do anything because an objection has been lodged by the Minister for Mines.

Possibly the most notable example of that relates to the area north of Noosa known as the Cooloola Sand Mass. During the debate on the Estimates for the Department of Mines, the Minister for Mines made a statement that was entirely misleading. It would appear that the general public have accepted the fact that the matter of the national park in that area has been completely resolved. This is by no means the case. I see the Minister for Conservation smiling: I know that he entirely agrees with me. The public have gained the wrong impression from the statement made by the Minister for Mines when he said—

> "For a very appreciable time I have had under consideration the matter of coloured sands fringing the Cooloola Sand Mass. Following protracted discussions with the companies concerned, namely, Queensland Titanium Mines Ltd. and Cudgen Rutile (No. 2) Pty. Ltd., which hold authorities to prospect, I have now been informed that those companies have offered immediate surrenders of some 1,000 acres for national park purposes."

I question whether those companies are surrendering 1,000 acres for national park purposes when the only thing they hold is an authority to enter and prospect in an area that is Crown land. It is not within the province of the companies concerned to surrender it; it already belongs to the Crown.

**Mr. Smith:** It was a nice gesture.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** The hon. member for Windsor may be, in his own estimation, an eminent barrister, but in matters such as this he is a babe in the woods.

Members of the community believe that this matter has been resolved. Let me point out to them that the area referred to in the Minister's statement represents only about one-twentieth of the area covered by the Forestry Department's plan to provide a national park. I raise this matter because I believe that the public are convinced that the whole matter has been resolved, when nothing is further from the truth. My personal fight is only beginning, although I have consistently raised this matter in this Chamber over the last two years.

Let us be quite clear about what the companies have done. They have merely surrendered their right to enter and prospect on this land. I mention this matter to illustrate that in this Chamber the portfolio of Minister for Conservation—and in no sense am I being personal—has not been raised to the status that it should enjoy. The true concept of conservation is nothing more or less than the wisest possible use of our resources, whether they be land, trees, animals, seaside resorts, or any other resources. This discussion about national parks brings to light the fact that the Minister for Conservation does not enjoy the status in his Government or in this Parliament that such a Minister should enjoy if we give full meaning and value to the principle of conservation.

The Minister, in his infinite wisdom and with the concurrence of capable, qualified officers of his department, can decide that the best use of an area lies in its declaration as a national park, reserve or scientific area, but his whole object can be brought to frustration point because another Minister, particularly the one who at the time holds the Mines portfolio, decides to lodge an objection because he has reason to believe that the area in question may be located within the bounds of a mineral field. If we accept that the true concept of conservation embodies the wisest possible use of our resources, it will be seen that the Minister for Conservation does not enjoy his proper status

in this enlightened age, when everyone in the community is beginning to realise the need to conserve all our resources.

The opportunity should have been grasped in this legislation to amend further the section that is being amended to delete the description "scenic area". The Minister for Conservation, and indeed Cabinet, should be given an opportunity to overcome the impasse that occurs time and again when a move is made to declare an area as a national park. I hazard a guess at this stage that with the dropping of the concept of national parks containing 1,000 acres or more, many small areas could well be classified in the next four or five years—and I hope that happens—because they have outstanding features or beauty, or are areas that could be wisely and well used as recreation areas. On this basis the Minister could continually reach an impasse because other Ministers object to the declaration of national parks, particularly if the Minister for Mines suspects that an area has some mineral resources.

I am not now making a personal attack on any Minister. However, I am attacking the principle embodied in the legislation that will frustrate the Minister for Conservation, who, after receiving expert advice, is convinced that the wisest possible use of a certain area of land lies in its being declared as a national park, but is then forced to leave the matter in abeyance until a way out can be found.

I could possibly use to great advantage the remaining five or six minutes at my disposal, but as it is now 1 o'clock and as I shall have an opportunity to discuss these matters further in Committee, I am prepared to wind up my second-reading speech at this point.

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

**Mr. DEWAR** (Wavell) (2.15 p.m.): I have a few words to say on this Bill because the conservation of our forests and wild life has been very dear to my heart throughout my life. I do not disagree with the sentiments that I believe the hon. member for Salisbury sought to propound, although I do perhaps disagree with the way in which he sought to express them.

The hon. member said that the status of the Minister for Conservation should be raised. It seems to me that the basis of his argument is wrong. When all is said and done, a Minister gains his status from the portfolio that he administers. Surely, then, it becomes a matter for the Government of the day to determine the status with which it desires to clothe a particular activity of government. It is in that regard that status must apply. If the Government of the day believes that conservation warrants and merits the highest attention and degree of consideration, that status is created by the Government. It does not, in my view, bear any relationship to any particular Minister. He draws his status from the standards that the Government sets on its activities.

**Mr. Sherrington:** I was not referring to the Minister; I was referring to the portfolio.

**Mr. DEWAR:** I do not disagree with the sentiments that I consider the hon. member expressed, but I think he put the emphasis the wrong way round. The emphasis must be placed by the Government, which determines whether or not it is interested in conservation as a prime factor. Having decided that, if the Government accepts that conservation is something that must at all times be given due consideration, all other things should become secondary to conservation.

The hon. member for Salisbury spoke of the litter, including non-returnable containers, that creates problems in our national parks and other places. It is wrong to develop the attitude of mind that has been evident ever since the soft-drink interests started using bottles that have no cash refund on return. In the result, there has been a spate of smashed bottles on our highways and in our parks and other places.

It is wrong to pin the blame on the containers themselves. Surely the people who are handling the containers are at fault. The attitude of a person who smashes a bottle in a park, with the result that some child might cut his foot, or throws a bottle from a car racing along the highway, with the result that a following motorist might get a puncture, is no different from that of a person who deliberately throws a rock through a shop window. They are persons of the same type. A person who, with a smile on his face, souvenirs a towel from a railway carriage is no different from a thief who goes into a house and steals a towel from a lady's bathroom.

Let us not fall into the trap of blaming the object that has been created when the whole responsibility for what happens to it must be sheeted home to the individual whose attitude of mind is such that he is prepared to use or misuse it.

The Bill, which covers quite a multitude of things, has my entire support, and I commend the Minister, the Government, and the Conservator of Forests on its introduction. The declaring of certain areas of national parks as historic, primitive, and recreational are steps in the right direction. The Bill deals with many things, including forest products and their definitions. It covers vegetable growth, honey, all forms of indigenous animal life, nests, bowers, shelters, fossil remains, Aboriginal remains, artefacts, and so on. Because I have a deep and abiding interest in all forms of animal life and all things that God has given us to enjoy, I see this type of measure as certainly a step in the right direction.

I have made a study in recent years of what has happened in other countries which have been remiss in their attitude to the conservation of animal and bird life, and the story is indeed a sad one. Ours is a young country which still has an abundance of animal and bird life, and we are in a position to heed what has happened overseas and take all possible steps to right, before it is too late, some of the wrongs perpetrated against our animal friends some 100 years ago.

Last night I watched on television a film entitled "Winged World". I made a point of being at home to see it. It is not the first film of this type that I have seen, and it may be of interest to those who were here and not at home watching the programme to learn that there have been some 8,600 varieties of birds in the world, and in recent years 200 varieties have become extinct. Those varieties evolved over many millions of years before the coming of man. The film showed how birds evolved from the lizard. The tail was squared off and stubby wings were formed, on the end of which were hooks, and this half-lizard and half-tree-like animal clung to the leaves with those hooks. Through the evolutionary process the stubby wings grew to fully-formed wings, and the tail of solid flesh became one of feathers. The bird had evolved. No fewer than 8,600 varieties made up the bird life of the world.

The film showed in graphic detail the evoluntionary processes which caused life to change. It is not necessary for mankind to enter the scene, because evolution proceeds without him. In graphic form the film showed pictorially what has happened on an island, the name of which I have forgotten.

**Mr. Sherrington:** Galapagos.

**Mr. DEWAR:** That is right. Cormorants have a very great capacity for diving and catching fish. In Japan, fishermen tie cords around the cormorants' necks and the birds dive into the water, fill their great gullets with half a dozen fish, and are then drawn to the surface and the fishermen take the catch. In the Galapagos Islands, however, because food has been there in abundance cormorants did not have to fly to search for it, and over hundreds of years the wings of cormorants have, by evolutionary process, atrophied. They can no longer fly. That shows how nature has developed the species and cast off certain aspects of the species that are no longer needed.

I reiterate that man is out of his element when he begins interfering in fields in which nature can well do without his help. If the House wants a perfect example of the need for conservation of this type, it need look no further than the history of Colorado, in the United States of America, or the eradication of the American bison—the plains buffalo—which swarmed all over the country many years ago. A struggle is now going on to preserve the species.

**Mr. Sherrington:** The carrier pigeon was the best example.

**Mr. DEWAR:** I intend speaking about the ravages of man.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member for Wavell is dealing more with the conservation of fauna than the conservation of flora or forests.

**Mr. DEWAR:** That is so, Mr. Speaker, I am not referring to the clause, but if you look at page 2 of the Bill you will find that it deals with animal and bird life.

I do not intend to spend a great deal of time on this point, but I wish to stress the need for conservation. I referred earlier to the history of Colorado. About 100 or 150 years ago, early settlers in the State found that the American lion, the cougar, was attacking their flocks. They declared war on the cougar and shot him in great numbers. In fact, they succeeded in wiping him out. Within a decade, the deer, which had been the natural food of the cougar, increased so greatly in number that in dry spells, having eaten out all the grass, they endeavoured to invade the farms of the settlers who had wiped out the cougar. The deer were then forced to attack the trees—a deer standing on his hind legs can reach up about eight or 10 feet—and they so denuded the trees of their lower foliage and bark that the trees died. The result was landslides into the Grand Canyon and the Colorado River. An erosion problem, which it has been almost impossible to correct, was created simply because the early settlers decided that they did not want to have the cougar killing one or two of their sheep.

**Mr. Wallis-Smith:** You should not upset the balance of nature.

**Mr. DEWAR:** As the hon. member for Tablelands says, one should not upset the balance of nature. Man, the animal with the highest intellect, is the only animal that threatens the existence of animal life on this planet. No matter what species of animal one looks at, one will not find any other species that endeavours to wipe out its own kind. That happens only in the case of human beings. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, nature proposes but man disposes.

The thought that I wish to leave with hon. members is that, having in mind the wiping out of the red kangaroo and many of the other native animals of this country, we should think well before moving into a field about which man knows nothing—the field of the evolution of life and the effects that upsetting the balance of nature may have—because the animals of the world are not ours to dispose of. They are given to us in trust, and it is our bounden duty to preserve them for the generations that follow us.

In conclusion, I support the Bill absolutely. The amendment foreshadowed by the Opposition may be a step in the right direction, with one exception. I fail to see how

it will strengthen the provision that hon. members opposite hope it will strengthen by leaving out reference to the Conservator of Forests. Surely the recommendation of the Conservator of Forests, who is the man in charge of and responsible for administering the Acts and ensuring that the national parks of our State are properly looked after, should be sought in relation to anything that the Governor in Council seeks to do with them.

Apart from that, I believe that what the Opposition seeks to do is a good thing. I can only agree that every step must be taken to see that before any decision is made in relation to our forests, the Governor in Council gives due thought to the effects that some other Act might have on the preservation of our forest life.

In conclusion, I make a plea that the magnificent reserve at Mt. Coot-tha, a reserve of some 3,500 acres, be tackled on the basis that is its due. I have been to King's Park, in Perth, to control which a trust has been set up by the Government. You, Mr. Speaker, have moved around the world, and as a nature lover I think you would have done as I have done and looked at the parks in other parts of the world. I think you will agree that one will rarely find anywhere in the world a finer example of park land than King's Park in Perth.

I believe that the 3,500 acres of land that is presently set aside for park purposes at Mt. Coot-tha—it is ideally situated as an area for breathing space within the city and one to which people could retire on hot week-ends—must be preserved for posterity as park land. At the present time half of this land is freehold in the control of the Brisbane City Council and the other half is Crown land deeded in trust. I believe that the only way to achieve what I suggest is for the Government to set up a trust to control the reserve so that this fine area of land may be enjoyed by the many millions who will pass through this city in years to come.

**Hon. H. RICHTER** (Somerset—Minister for Local Government and Conservation) (2.33 p.m.), in reply: I should like to reply to a few of the comments on this Bill. I shall deal with the Opposition's foreshadowed amendment at the proper time.

First of all, I should like to thank the hon. member for Wavell for his wholehearted support of the Bill, and also the hon. member for Sandgate.

**Mr. Sherrington:** Is that a relief to you?

**Mr. RICHTER:** I think the hon. member was relieved, too.

I should like to clarify a few points raised by the hon. member for Belmont and the hon. member for Salisbury. They both referred to the sale of forest products on national parks, and the question of getting revenue from quarry material. The idea of selling forest products on a national park area is quite incompatible with the principle of national parks. Something that the hon. members perhaps have not noticed is that the principal Act places a complete prohibition on the sale of forest products from national parks. I think the hon. member for Salisbury mentioned this and said that it possibly referred only to State forests.

**Mr. Sherrington:** I wanted to be satisfied in my own mind that it referred to State forests.

**Mr. RICHTER:** I refer the hon. member to section 46 of the Act, which provides—

> "The Conservator of Forests may from time to time under, subject to, and in accordance with the provisions of this Part of this Act sell, on behalf of the Crown, any forest products or quarry material the absolute property of the Crown save forest products on National Parks and Scenic Areas."

That is a total prohibition, and I think the hon. member can set his mind at rest.

The hon. member for Belmont inquired about the designation of historic areas. Their designation is deliberately not spelt out because they can vary from time to time. The principle that is envisaged is the preservation of Aboriginal relics and other things that have a historic interest. The areas will be fairly small, but it is our job to protect them and look after them as much as we can. We do not wish to interfere with the provisions of the Act that relate to the preservation of Aboriginal relics.

**Mr. Sherrington:** The areas will be very vulnerable to abuse because of their smallness.

**Mr. RICHTER:** That is right; but they do have to be protected, and that is what we want to do.

Those are the only points to which I wish to reply.

Motion (Mr. Richter) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 to 10, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 11—Repeal of and new s. 29; Power to set apart and declare National Parks—

**Mr. SHERRINGTON** (Salisbury) (2.37 p.m.): I now formally move the following amendment—

> "On page 3, lines 25 to 27, omit the words—
>
> 'Subject to section 24 of this Act, the Governor in Council may from time to time on the recommendation of the Conservator of Forests'
>
> and insert in lieu thereof the words—
>
> 'Where in doing so the Governor in Council considers the public interest is best served, the Governor in Council may from time to time'."

In doing so, I reiterate that the Opposition committee that studied the Bill in detail was very concerned at what appears to be a lack of real strength in the Minister for Conservation, who is responsible for administering this Act, when a dispute exists over what might be termed correct land usage.

This clause refers to section 24 of the Act, which lays down certain lines of procedure that must be followed when the Conservator of Forests makes a recommendation to the Governor in Council for the setting apart under and for the purposes of the Act of any Crown land or any other land which may be so set apart. The Act provides that a recommendation shall not be made except under and in accordance with the provisions of that section.

Without detailing to the Committee the complete context of section 24 of the Act, let me briefly cover a situation in which the Conservator of Forests considers that any area of land referred to should be set aside as a national park. He shall refer the matter to the Land Administration Commission for advice.

The section then provides—

> "Furthermore, where the interests of any other Department of the Government of this State are affected by any proposal . . . the proposal shall also be ascertained and considered by the Conservator of Forests."

It then provides that if the Land Administration Commission, upon any such reference as aforesaid, advises that it does not concur, the Minister may then refer the matter to the Chief Commissioner of Lands and the Conservator of Forests for joint investigation.

The key to the Opposition's desire to move this amendment is to be found in subsection (3), which says—

> "No recommendation for the setting apart of any such lands situated on a goldfield or mineral field shall be made without the approval of the Minister for Mines or other Minister of the Crown for the time being charged with the administration of the Mining Acts."

I said in my second-reading speech that I believed that the Minister for Conservation does not enjoy the status to which he is entitled. The hon. member for Wavell joined issue with me on this, but if he cares to question the use of the word "portfolio" that is all right with me. However, it is quite evident that the Minister for Conservation, with the authority that he has to set aside and declare national parks, does not enjoy the status that he should.

I can best illustrate my point by once again referring to the Noosa area. Because varying amounts of rutile sands and other minerals have been found in the area, its declaration as a national park is being vetoed by the Minister for Mines through the power vested in him by section 24 of this Act. In such matters we should be guided by the best use to which the land in dispute can be put, whether it be as a national park or a forestry reserve, or whether it should be devastated by sand-mining operations for the short-term return that will flow to the Government. In this instance an assessment of the short-term return to the State by way of recoverable minerals, balanced against the long-term benefits to the State if the area was set aside as a national park for a future tourist industry, clearly illustrates that in the long term the best use of the land is to declare it a national park. However, because of the authority vested in the Minister for Mines by section 24 of this Act, he can veto this proposal because it is on a mineral field.

I hazard a guess that the whole question of the use to which this land is to be put has reached stagnation point because of a veto by the Minister for Mines. When an impasse is reached in deciding on the wisest and best use of land, we should insert in the legislation a provision by which the deadlock can quickly be resolved.

The Opposition believes that if there is a dispute that cannot be resolved by reference to the Land Administration Commission and and the Conservator of Forests, the Governor in Council, after considering how the interests of the public will be best served, should be in a position to take the necessary action to ensure the best use of the land and, in the case of the Cooloola coloured sands, declare it a national park.

I hazard a guess that the Conservator of Forests and his officers have indicated that in their opinion the best use that can be made of the area concerned is as a State forest and national park. This was demonstrated last week, when I asked the Minister to table a plan prepared by officers of the Department of Forestry of the national park proposal for this area. A good deal of credit is due to the Conservator of Forests and the many able and dedicated officers in his department for having decided that this was the wisest possible use of this area. In what some people refer to as a national park with a hole in the middle of it we have a national park plus a State forest, and, because the forest would be used only for controlled logging, the whole area, in effect, would be preserved.

Having reached the stage where the Conservator of Forests and, I believe, his Minister—although he may not be prepared to admit this—are whole-heartedly behind this proposal, the matter can proceed no further because the Minister for Mines has granted certain prospecting leases in and adjacent to the area, and it is quite natural that he would object to its being set aside as a national park. So we have reached a stalemate in this important aspect of land usage, which is to be regretted because of its proximity to the capital city and the need, as I said earlier, to preserve these areas so that people can enjoy the added leisure time

that we hope will flow from increased mechanisation, etc. It is for those reasons that I have moved the amendment.

I refer also to a proposal in which I have become interested and on which I have made many submissions to the Minister for Lands and the Minister for Conservation. It relates to the last compact block of brigalow in South-east Queensland, located in the area of Southwood. This presents a different situation that could be resolved at some time or other. The land was originally set aside for subdivision. Out of a total of some 35,000 acres, it contained about 17,500 acres of representative brigalow types. It contains an abundance of fauna, botanic specimens and, I think, four out of seven representative types of brigalow colonies. The point has been reached when the Minister for Lands must decide whether he will surrender this land to the Minister for Conservation for dedication or declaration as a national park, or whether it will be subdivided. We are still waiting for a decision. If the situation was reached in which the Minister for Lands considered the best possible use of the land was subdivision for pastures or grazing and the Minister for Conservation was equally convinced that it should be set aside as a national park, again there would be a situation which would not be resolved because one Minister objected to the land being declared a national park. I hope that that will not happen, because I believe the public interest would be best served by proclaiming a national park in the Southwood parish.

I have moved the amendment because I believe that the public interest must be served in the first instance, and that we must find some way out of the impasse that exists from time to time when it is proposed to set aside certain areas as national parks.

**Hon. H. RICHTER** (Somerset—Minister for Local Government and Conservation) (2.51 p.m.): I have listened carefully to the hon. member for Salisbury. I can see what he is trying to achieve, but the amendment will not help him. The hon. member gave me an outline of the amendment a few days ago, and I have considered it very carefully. He has altered it slightly, but as it stands now it would not achieve what he says is its purpose. It seems that the hon. member desires to see authority given to proclaim national parks without the recommendation of the Conservator of Forests.

**Mr. Sherrington:** No.

**Mr. RICHTER:** That is what the hon. member is saying. That is not what he intends, but that is what the amendment would do. The Conservator of Forests is the permanent head of the department which is responsible for the administration of national parks. Surely he could not be excluded. That is where the amendment falls down. If the amendment was adopted, anyone could submit a proposal for the reservation of a national park, without reference to the Conservator of Forests.

**Mr. Bromley:** That is not right.

**Mr. RICHTER:** That is not what is intended but that is what the amendment would do, which is where it falls down. Surely the hon. member would not seriously suggest that land be set aside in perpetuity as a national park without the advice of the authority most capable of assessing the worth of the area? The approval of the Conservator of Forests must surely be obtained. If the amendment was accepted, it would be possible for substandard national parks to be proclaimed, and the reputation that Queensland has throughout the world for maintaining national parks of a high standard would be jeopardised. The standard today is high because recommendations on national parks are made by a responsible officer who knows what he is doing, namely, the Conservator of Forests.

The hon. member read parts of section 24 of the Act. The principal Act came into existence when the comprehensive Forestry Act of 1959 was proclaimed. I am sure that hon. members will agree that, in framing legislation dealing with the permanent disposition of the lands of the State, the Government has a responsibility to see that all Government instrumentalities concerned with land usage are consulted. Surely that is only right. One could not go ahead without consulting the Department of Lands, for instance.

**Mr. Sherrington:** You would like to, at times.

**Mr. RICHTER:** One might like to, but one is under an obligation to consult all the other departments that deal with the usage of land. If there is a conflict of interests, that conflict can then be resolved. In my opinion, it is an inescapable responsibility. Hon. members opposite would not advocate, I am sure, that one person should have complete authority over the usage of land.

Under section 24, if the Conservator of Forests considers that any land should be set apart for the purposes of the Forestry Act, he must refer the matter to the Land Administration Commission for advice as to whether it agrees. Where the interests of any other department of the Government are affected by the proposal, the views of that department shall also be ascertained and considered. Surely that is fair.

In relation to land situated on a goldfield or a mineral field, the approval of the Minister for Mines must be secured.

**Mr. Newton:** The Minister for Mines can beat you all the time under this Act.

**Mr. RICHTER:** The hon. member is looking at one particular case. In the over-all position, the interests of the other Government departments must be considered.

The Conservator of Forests, when preparing his recommendation to the Governor in Council, is required to state the views of

the Land Administration Commission and any other Government department concerned. That is sound common sense and sound government. I think it is essential that such conflicts of interest should first be resolved. I might add that the procedure laid down in section 24 applies to all reservations under the Forestry Act—State forests, timber reserves, and national parks.

I appreciate what the hon. member for Salisbury is trying to do, but it cannot be done in this way. The issue will only be confused. The hon. member will have to try some other method; he cannot achieve his object in this way.

**Mr. Bromley:** They get you down and beat you into submission.

**Mr. RICHTER:** It is no good the hon. member's trying to talk me down. He does not know anything about it.

I have considered the proposed amendment very carefully, and I assure the hon. member for Salisbury that it will not achieve what he wishes to achieve. Consequently, the Opposition's amendment is not acceptable.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON** (Salisbury) (2.59 p.m.): First of all, I think I made it clear in my speech after I moved the amendment that the Opposition's object was to resolve the deadlock arising from the fact that one Minister of the Crown can veto national park proposals. If, as the Minister says, the amendment proposed will not achieve that, the fault lies in its drafting, because it was conveyed to the Parliamentary Draftsman that the Opposition wanted a position created in which, where public interest is best served by so doing, the Governor in Council could resolve the dispute or declare national parks from time to time. I believe that the Minister may be flying a kite in that regard.

We seek to amend the new clause proposed and, in supporting my amendment, I argued that section 24 of the Act lays down a certain procedure which, in effect, gives every Minister of the Crown the right to lodge an objection, or the right to be acquainted of the proposal to declare an area a national park. In my remarks, particularly the tributes I paid to the Conservator of Forests, I do not think I indicated for one moment that the Opposition would wish to dispense with the views of the Conservator of Forests.

**Mr. Richter:** You may not have intended that but that is what you are doing.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** The amendment moved by the Opposition was moved on the advice of the Parliamentary Draftsman who assured us that we could achieve our object by an amendment phrased in this way. Our original thought was merely to delete the first portion which read, "Subject to section 24 of this Act" and then, at the end of the clause, add the words, "and where the public interest is best served". We thought our idea could best be put into effect by such an amendment, giving the Governor in Council the power to resolve the situation created by the right of Ministers to veto a proposal. However, we were assured by the Parliamentary Draftsman that that would not be so and, on his advice, the phrasing of the amendment I moved this afternoon was adopted.

However, I make it quite clear on behalf of the Opposition that what we hope to achieve is an end to the power of veto for an indefinite period. An answer to a query by the hon. member for Belmont some 12 months ago quite clearly shows that almost every inch of the Queensland coastline is covered by prospecting leases that have been granted by the Minister for Mines, Main Roads and Electricity. In those circumstances how could a national park proposal be put into effect if it was embodied in the coastal areas of Queensland? The Minister for Mines can completely frustrate the Minister in charge of forestry in this regard, as the Minister well knows.

The Opposition set out to eliminate the situation whereby all Ministers of the Crown can veto a proposal for a national park and hold it up for an indefinite period merely by exercising authority conferred on them under section 24 of the Forestry Act.

**Mr. PORTER** (Toowong) (3.4 p.m.): I find myself somewhat reluctantly speaking and voting against the proposed amendment. I say "somewhat reluctantly" because I think the argument advanced by the hon. member for Salisbury is a very valid one. I am sure that no-one on this side of the Committee has any doubt about the honesty and sincerity which he and his colleagues display on this particular topic. It is good to see something being discussed beyond party politics. But, so far as I see it, the amendment as written, whatever may have been the reason for its being in this form, does not achieve the objective expressed by the mover. The parent Act, undoubtedly, does give the Minister for Mines, Main Roads and Electricity, an overriding right to approve or disapprove of any area which will be part of a mineral field and prevent it from becoming one of those designated areas of national park.

I think this is perhaps an area that the Minister might well have a further look at to see whether it is feasible in this day and age that the Minister for Mines should have this type of absolute embargo, instead of putting him in the same category as other Ministers and other ranking officers of the Government who will be consulted and have their views taken into account when the Governor in Council has to consider this matter and come to a decision.

I appreciate the arguments that have been advanced by the hon. member for Salisbury, but I regret that the amendment, being one that does not achieve what he hoped it would achieve, cannot be supported at this stage.

It is a little difficult for hon. members to consider an amendment of this type in its relationship to both the Act and the Bill when it is suddenly dropped on their desks and they are not given the opportunity to consider it in advance.

**Mr. NEWTON** (Belmont) (3.10 p.m.): It is quite evident from the remarks of the hon. member for Toowong that in principle some amendment of section 24 is necessary.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** Probably the principal section rather than this section.

**Mr. NEWTON:** That is true, and that is what I have said.

Of course, it is quite evident that somewhere along the line the Opposition has not achieved what it wanted to achieve by the amendment now before the Committee.

On many occasions the Opposition has been confronted with a similar situation. On this occasion, if the Opposition had been able to proceed with what it asks for it would have asked for the amendment of this clause by deleting the words "Subject to section 24 of this Act". That is what Opposition members agreed to put forward by way of amendment. Unfortunately, members of Parliament, irrespective of the side of the Chamber that they occupy, have to rely on the person who is responsible for formulating these amendments to do so in a form that can be presented to the Committee. On some occasions Opposition members have thought that it might be better to proceed in their own way in endeavouring to amend certain measures in a way that would be acceptable to the Committee. We do not want to delay the Committee, but this is another occasion on which members of the Opposition have been faced with this situation.

**Mr. Bromley:** When you tell the Minister that you are trying to help him——

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The hon. member for Norman is not in his usual seat in the Chamber.

**Mr. NEWTON:** It does not surprise members of the Opposition that the Minister will not accept the amendment. It was circulated at an early stage among all hon. members to enable the Minister to put it before Cabinet. In view of the retention of section 24 in the Act, the amendment affects all members of the Cabinet. We can understand the Government's position; it is faced with a crisis in the Isis electorate and it is faced with one here in Parliament House.

Section 24 provides quite clearly that the Land Administration Commission is responsible for all the Government reserves in this State, whether they are national parks or State forests. We are fully aware of the fact that the Commission is charged with the responsibility of looking after all these reserves.

The members of the Opposition are concerned at the provision in subsection (4) that—

> "Every recommendation by the Conservator of Forests to the Governor in Council to which this section relates shall specify whether or not the Land Administration Commission concurs"—

That is the first problem, and it is one with which we have no argument. The Commission should be given the right to look at requests made by the Minister or the Conservator of Forests when he intends to set land aside as a national park or a forestry reserve, or any other type of reserve covered by the Forestry Act.

Subsection (4) continues—

> ". . . With the making of that recommendation and also whether or not the views of any other Department of the Government of this State with respect to that recommendation have been ascertained and, if ascertained, what those views are."

What has happened? Members of the Opposition do not know, and they want to find out.

When recommendations are made by the Conservator of Forests to the Minister on the setting aside of certain areas as national parks, another Minister must be consulted. There is no doubt of that, because of the way section 24 is framed. The Chief Commissioner of Lands would ensure that every Government department was consulted and every Cabinet Minister would have an opportunity to veto the recommendation of the Conservator of Forests. If that happens, the recommendation remains in abeyance. The Act should contain a provision that when this position arises the difficulty can be overcome by the Conservator of Forests or the Minister. We know what happened at Shute Harbour, where an area was declared for specific purposes, and then blocks of land were set aside to be sold so that revenue could be obtained to pay for the cost of the access road. It has turned out to be a white elephant.

**Mr. Newbery:** Oh, no!

**Mr. NEWTON:** It is. I was there 18 months ago and, apart from what was on the waterfront, there was nothing there.

**Mr. Newbery:** It is a beautiful place.

**Mr. NEWTON:** Of course it is a beautiful place, but that's all it is. It has not achieved the purpose for which it was set aside.

**Mr. Newbery:** It will.

**Mr. NEWTON:** It is to be hoped that it will, but when?

We are concerned about what can happen. Time and time again the hon. member for Salisbury has raised the need for conservation. He has done an excellent job in protecting our national parks and other places

that are of interest to the people of Queensland. He has never hesitated—he has always been to the fore—but evidently some Cabinet Ministers are trying to beat the gun because they know they have power under section 24 of the Act to override any recommendation made by the Conservator of Forests, or the Minister.

Sub-section (5) provides—

> "Every recommendation by the Conservator of Forests to which this section relates shall be forwarded to the Minister, who may, in his absolute discretion, present the recommendation to the Governor in Council or remit the same to the Conservator of Forests for reconsideration."

If hon. members read sub-section (4) and then sub-section (5), they will see that the position can become very complicated.

We believe that the Bill improves the position until it deals with this section, where we come up against a very serious problem. No doubt is left in our minds about what can be done by any other Cabinet Minister. That is a pity, because the Bill is a step in the right direction for the Conservator of Forests, who no doubt has the support of his Minister and some Government members in that we have the Bill before us. It is obvious that hon. members opposite realise, as we do, that something must be done because of the protests made, the petition presented and the many other things that have happened.

The amendment may have been misconstrued, so let us make our position clear. We are endeavouring to tidy up the position created by section 24. In the amendment we are saying that it is about time that the public interest was considered. There is no doubt in my mind that if something is not done in this regard, people will continually endeavour to get into our national parks and other reserves to exploit them because of the mineral wealth or something else contained in them which can be got out quickly at a good return to them without their giving any consideration to the preservation of national park areas.

I recently studied a map of Australia showing national reserves, and I was amazed at the small percentage of each State set aside as national parks. While Queensland has a fair coverage compared with the other States, it is to be hoped that steps will be taken to give to the Conservator of Forests, if not in this Bill, in a further amendment of the Act, power to overcome some of the problems that are confronting him now. There is no doubt that he is confronted with problems in setting aside more areas as national parks and forest reserves. That is why this Bill has been brought down.

I have outlined the reason for the amendment. It was circulated to give the Minister ample time to study it and allow him, if he deemed it necessary, to consult his Cabinet colleagues, who are all covered in section 24—not one of them is missed out—so that he could not accuse us of rushing in with an amendment at the last minute.

**Mr. BROMLEY** (Norman) (3.18 p.m.): We are sincere in moving the amendment because this matter is of great importance not only to the public of Queensland but also to the many tourists who come here. In my opinion too many Ministers are involved in the control of forests, national parks, tourism, and many other matters related to conservation; One Minister should control all of these matters. I realise it would be difficult, but the Minister for Conservation should control all of these matters. He should not be burdened, as he is, with the portfolio of Local Government as well as that of Conservation. We moved the amendment because we genuinely believe the step we suggest is necessary.

On the wall of my office at home I have a map showing the places that are conserved and those that are not conserved in all parts of Australia. Of course, I am particularly interested in Queensland. I have shown this map to many visitors and they have expressed amazement at the fact that the Government is so greedy that it allows not only all of the coastline but most sections of the State to be exploited. There are not enough forests, timber reserves and national parks throughout the State.

Only recently some Navy personnel from Britain visited my home, and these people commented on the wonderful tourist attractions of the whole of Queensland, particularly the coastline. They were most surprised that parts of it were not set aside mainly for this purpose.

The Opposition is quite genuine and sincere in moving this amendment. I believe that the Minister for Local Government and Conservation is in sympathy with it, but he is susceptible to being overridden by other Ministers, such as the Minister for Lands, the Minister for Mines, Main Roads and Electricity, and the Minister for Labour and Tourism, each of whom comes into matters connected with national parks. That is why I believe that one Minister should be responsible for conserving, for Queensland and for posterity, some of the beautiful and interesting places used in this State for tourist purposes.

**Mr. Dewar:** It really needs a co-ordinator of all these things that impinge one on the other.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** That is the point I am trying to make. At present many Ministers —even the Premier—are involved in it. I agree with the hon. member for Wavell that some tie-up is needed. The Minister should have the portfolio of Conservation only, and he should be given complete powers to decide these matters without the possibility of being overridden by another Minister or Ministers.

Although the Minister for Local Government and Conservation said that I did not know much about this, I have letters to prove

that people are happy with what I have said in this Chamber. Although I believe the Minister to be genuine in what he has said about national parks, numbers count and he can be overridden.

If perhaps the amendment is not exactly what he wants, his advisers should be able to examine it and say, "We will accept it with one or two additions or deletions". I say that the amendment will achieve what we want and what the people want, and, I believe, what most Government members want.

**Mr. TUCKER** (Townsville North) (3.24 p.m.): From the attitude of the Committee, there appears to be no doubt that the argument advanced by the hon. member for Salisbury this afternoon was a very valid one. The hon. member for Toowong said that he felt that in matters concerning the preservation of national parks no Minister should be able, at any stage, to veto a decision of the Minister for Conservation. As the hon. member for Salisbury pointed out, he holds a very responsible position in the State.

There is no doubt that Nature has bestowed some wonderful favours upon Queensland in its national parks, and the Opposition believes that if these national parks may be placed in jeopardy in any way—hon. members on this side of the Chamber think that they can, by means of mining leases—it is obligatory upon us to take action to prevent that happening. The Minister shakes his head, but the Opposition believes that that is so. I do not wish to embarrass the Minister in any way——

**Mr. Richter:** You are not embarrassing me.

**Mr. TUCKER:** ——but I think that he secretly believes that the Minister for Mines sometimes has a chance to veto his decisions relative to national parks. If that is so, or even if there is a doubt about the position, I believe that Parliament should take the necessary steps to do something about it.

I commend the hon. member for Salisbury and the hon. member for Belmont for bringing the amendment forward, firstly to the Opposition Caucus, where it was immediately seen that there was tremendous merit in what they were advancing, and secondly to this Assembly. As I said earlier, the hon. member for Toowong also realises that the Act under which the Minister operates is vulnerable in this respect.

The hon. member for Salisbury mentioned the coloured sands; other hon. members have mentioned areas such as Shute Harbour; and farther north there are the wonderful scenic attractions of the Atherton Tableland and the coastal areas of North Queensland. I reiterate, therefore, that if there is any chance that a decision by the Minister may be vetoed by the Minister for Mines, I believe it is the duty of this Parliament to take action to prevent that from happening.

If the argument advanced by the hon. member for Salisbury is correct, the great majority of hon. members, including Government members, are arguing only about the way in which this should be done, not that the idea is wrong. Surely to goodness, in view of that, it would be a good idea for us to get together and suggest an amendment to the Act to ensure that such a thing would not happen.

I commend the Minister for what he has done already. I believe that he has attempted to ensure that national parks and other areas of interest will be preserved not only for this generation but also for future generations. If he can submit an amendment that will ensure that the fears of the Opposition are not realised, he will have the support of hon. members on this side of the Chamber.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON** (Salisbury) (3.29 p.m.): I have been in touch with the Parliamentary Draftsman while my colleagues have been speaking, and he has assured me that the amendment proposed by the Opposition will in fact negate the powers of the Conservator of Forests in this instance. Never at any time did the Opposition desire to do that. If the Minister followed the argument that I put forward in support of the Opposition's case, he will know that the amendment sought to achieve only one purpose—to prevent the impasses that arise from time to time when Ministers veto proposals relating to national parks.

In my opinion, the crux of the position that the Opposition seeks to correct is set out in section 24 of the Act. Unfortunately, section 24 does not come under discussion during the progress of the amending Bill. I suspect that there is a very strong feeling of approval on the Government benches of the argument that I have put forward on behalf of the Opposition. However, it is obvious that on this occasion we will be denied the opportunity of putting our thoughts into effect, because section 24 of the Act cannot be amended by this legislation.

I am sure that one thing the Opposition has achieved this afternoon is general agreement on the desirability of putting into effect the thoughts that we have expressed. Whilst we concede that the amendment cannot achieve this objective, I believe that the Minister should introduce a further early amendment to the Forestry Act that will give effect to the wishes of the Opposition. I reiterate that if the amendment has the effect of completely ignoring the opinion of the Conservator of Forests and his officers, this is a step that the Opposition would not wish to take. Therefore, I indicate at this stage that we do not intend to proceed to a vote on the amendment.

**Mr. Porter:** That is very wise.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** I would not consider this a defeat for the Opposition. I feel that we have provoked the thought this afternoon that the Government must have a

second look at the Forestry Act if it wants to get anywhere in the declaration of national parks. The Opposition put the amendment forward in what we thought was the best interests of the public. The Minister told us it would not achieve our purpose and that we would have to try another avenue. I challenge the Minister now to introduce, before the end of this session, another amendment of the Forestry Act, to put into effect the ideas that have been expressed this afternoon by myself and my colleagues on this side of the Chamber.

**Hon. H. RICHTER** (Somerset—Minister for Local Government and Conservation) (3.33 p.m.): I have listened to this debate very carefully. I think the hon. member has made his point and, as I said before, he cannot achieve it by this amendment. Some hon. members opposite have attacked the Minister for Mines.

**Mr. Sherrington:** Not the Minister.

**Mr. RICHTER:** Then the Department of Mines.

**Mr. Sherrington:** No. We have attacked the principle laid down in section 24.

**Mr. RICHTER:** Let me tell the hon. member that the record does not bear this out.

**Mr. Sherrington:** What is holding up the Cooloola Sands matter?

**Mr. RICHTER:** When this Government came to office there were 800,000 acres of national parks. Today there are 2,300,000 acres, an increase of 1,500,000, so the overall position is not too bad. We have trebled the area.

**Mr. Sherrington:** How many new vegetated colonies have you introduced?

**Mr. RICHTER:** Quite a few. The fact is that the area has increased threefold, so the position cannot be too bad. However, the hon. member has made his point.

Amendment (Mr. Sherrington) negatived.

Clause 11, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 12 to 47, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### SECOND READING

**Hon. H. RICHTER** (Somerset—Minister for Local Government and Conservation) (3.36 p.m.): I move—

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

Hon. members were made aware of the provisions of the Bill at the introductory stage, and, in those circumstances, I do not wish to say any more.

**Mr. NEWTON** (Belmont) (3.37 p.m.): On behalf of the Opposition, let me say that we have had a good look at the Bill and we indicate that we want to ensure that in the approval of local authority by-laws we are not letting the Minister out. Previously in this Chamber Opposition members agreed to the abolition of local option polls mainly to relieve local authorities of the cost of conducting polls that were considered to be unnecessary because local authority members are elected in the same way as members of Parliament; that is, every three years they face their constituents and are either returned or defeated.

Nine amendments sought in the Bill deal with water rates, charges, dues and fees, the obtaining of financial statements, payment of fees, licences, fees for stock impounded by local authorities or the release of impounded stock. When this legislation becomes law all these things will be fixed by resolution each year. It seems that what is indicated already applies in a number of Brisbane City Council ordinances. Each year when the council's budget is introduced a scale of fees relating to the ordinances is fixed. We see no danger in the provisions covering this matter.

The Opposition looked closely at the provision that a person shall have only one vote in local authority elections although his name may appear on two local authority rolls. We believe that the amendment does not really clarify the position, and we hope that the Minister will elaborate on this matter in his reply.

We are concerned about how this provision will be policed. People have been known to vote twice. We do not know how this matter is overcome by the legislation, unless the Minister can give us further information about how it will tie in with the Election Acts.

We are very pleased with the provisions which ensure that money paid by subdividers to local authorities for park and recreation purposes is used for that purpose. This is a very good move. For some time subdividers in the metropolitan area had to set aside a certain area of land for park and recreation purposes, but frequently the land set aside was extremely costly to develop for park or recreation purposes.

The Government is not let out by this provision. In Housing Commission areas in the metropolitan zone the Government has set aside areas in which ships like the "Queen Mary" could be buried, and probably the "Queen Elizabeth" as well, and the land was not fit for park and recreation purposes.

This is a very good provision, and it should provide a lead to local authorities throughout the State. We are led to believe that the position in the metropolitan area has changed. Instead of the Brisbane City Council asking for land to be set aside, it is asking the subdivider to pay a certain amount so that park and recreation areas

can be provided. The crux of this provision is that whenever money is paid in by a subdivider and is not used for this specific purpose, the Minister has power to act. This is a step in the right direction. When money is paid in by subdividers, it should be spent in the locality of the subdivision. We could be faced with the position that money is paid in and somebody else makes a decision on where it is to be spent.

A great deal of development is taking place today, even in the metropolitan area. I see the hon. member for Aspley shaking his head. He is probably thinking the same as I am. We are concerned about the outer electorates in the metropolitan area—they are wards of the Brisbane City Council—in which huge development is taking place. We know that this money is being paid in, but so far we have not seen any development of parks and recreation areas. The Minister is to be commended for writing this provision into the Local Government Act so that he can take action to ensure that this work is carried out.

The rewriting of the classifications is also a wise move. This Act is amended two or three times every session—particularly in the August-December period—and this proposal will be of assistance in this regard.

The Opposition allowed the introduction of the Bill and will not oppose its second reading. We have studied all the proposals, particularly the interim town-planning proposals, and there will be no opposition to the Bill, either at this stage or in Committee.

**Mr. BENNETT** (South Brisbane) (3.48 p.m.): I do not propose to speak at length as the hon. member for Belmont has indicated the Opposition's approval of the Bill. I always like to be helpful to Cabinet Ministers. One point has occurred to me concerning the acquisition of land. Up to date, subject to certain conditions and some restrictions, local authorities, for the purpose of local government, had the right to acquire land for public purposes or for the functions of local government within their own areas. Provided it is done for the bona fide purposes of local government, there is nothing any person or authority can do to prevent acquisition. I entirely agree with this principle because the functions of local government are important and it is necessary that local governments be not impeded in their purpose, provided adequate compensation is paid.

The Minister, no doubt for good reason, intends to extend that principle.

**Mr. Richter:** Not at all. It is only a new method of doing it.

**Mr. BENNETT:** Oh no it is not. I have read the Bill. The Minister is extending the principle. He stated in his introductory remarks that the power of a local authority is being extended to allow it to acquire land outside its area.

**Mr. Richter:** You have not read the Bill.

**Mr. BENNETT:** The Minister said I have not read the Bill. Clause 8 adds the following:—

> "The power of the Local Authority to take land includes power to take land outside its Area that is required by it for the purpose of any function of local government."

**Mr. Richter:** It always had that power, but it had it through the Water Act and under the new Acquisition of Land Act and something like this had to be written into the principal Act.

**Mr. BENNETT:** Exactly. The Minister is agreeing with me after I have drawn his attention to a clause that he did not know was in the Bill. I am talking about the amendment to the Local Government Act. This power has never been contained in the Local Government Act. That is why it is being put into the Local Government Act. Otherwise it would be redundant and unnecessary as an extension of the principle contained in the Local Government Act. The officer who wrote out the Minister's introductory speech said so. He has only to refer to "Hansard".

**Mr. E. G. W. Wood** interjected.

**Mr. BENNETT:** The hon. member is referring me to the standard water supply and sewerage by-laws. I know all about them; they apply all over Queensland. As a matter of fact, only recently, within the last few months, I appeared in a prosecution involving the Caboolture Shire Council and the Water Act and the standard water supply and sewerage by-laws. The case ended with the entering of a nolle prosequi because the Crown and the local authority apparently knew the full extent or purpose of their Acts. I therefore ask the hon. member not to try to tell me that I do not know what is in them. I can refer him to the case heard in the District Court in the last few months in which a nolle prosequi was entered. I ask him not to try to teach me anything about those Acts. I do not know why hon. members opposite have to try to annoy and irritate me when all I am trying to do is help. The principle is to write that additional power into the Local Government Act.

The suggestion that I was about to make was that, for the purpose of achieving harmony and co-operation between local authorities, the principle should be qualified or be subject to the approval of the local authority concerned. The amendment is to give a local authority the right to acquire land in a neighbouring authority or some other area, irrespective of whether or not the other local authority approves of the acquisition. I do not agree with that principle. Anyone who goes on to the property of another person should have his authority to do so. I do not think that there is anything improper or unusual in that suggestion. I therefore feel that the principle should

be subject to the approval of the other local authority. Amongst the many functions of local government is the provision of water and sewerage schemes.

**Mr. Hinze:** And drainage.

**Mr. BENNETT:** Drainage, and many other functions. Those of us who have been in local government know that if it is not possible to discharge sewerage effluent into the sea there must be sewerage farms, which a lot of people do not like to have in their neighbourhood. A local authority that decided to undertake a sewerage scheme could, under this amendment, decide to acquire land in a neighbouring locality for the purpose of constructing a sewerage farm and there dispose of the effluent. This may not meet with the approval of the neighbouring authority. All that I am suggesting is that, for the purpose of harmony and co-operation between local authorities, such acquisitions should be subject to the approval of the neighbouring local authority. I suggest this because there is a fair degree of camaraderie and good feeling between councillors and aldermen, most of whom are sincere men, and there is no reason why any authority should be given the opportunity to rock the boat.

**Mr. Richter:** They usually do it by agreement.

**Mr. BENNETT:** Yes, which is correct in principle and ethics. However, there might be an arrogant council which was not prepared to observe the unwritten or ethical laws followed by most local authorities over the years. It would therefore not do any harm to add those few extra words.

**Mr. E. G. W. Wood:** Wouldn't the local authority from which the land was being resumed have the right to appeal under the Acquisition of Land Act?

**Mr. BENNETT:** The proposed amendment does not say so. The Minister can intervene at any time that he sees fit, in his discretion, but why should it be made discretionary? I am not supporting the request or demand that he interfere with the Brisbane City Council. Hon. members opposite want him to do that now, but, although he could, he will not do so. The executive adviser, not the town clerk, has only to call on him and whisper a few sweet, smooth words in the Minister's ear and he is happy and tells the "ginger group" to go and jump in the lake. Why should this matter be subject to the Minister's discretion? Surely it should be laid down as a principle in the Act. That is the only suggestion that I have to make, and I make it as a lawyer, one who has been connected with local government, and a parliamentarian.

As far as I am concerned, if the Minister does not wish to write it in, that is his business; but it would remove the possibility of a great deal of disagreement in the future and perhaps avoid unnecessary litigation. I believe that it will not do any harm to write the principle expressly into the Act, even if it does not change the present situation.

**Hon. H. RICHTER** (Somerset—Minister for Local Government and Conservation) (3.55 p.m.), in reply: I fear that the hon. member who has just resumed his seat does not know the Act very well. I do not think he read my introductory speech.

**Mr. Bennett:** I listened to it. It was hard to follow, I will admit.

**Mr. RICHTER:** The hon. member did not listen very well. For his benefit, I shall repeat what I said on that occasion.

Prior to the passing of the Acquisition of Land Act, when a local authority required to take land outside its area for a function of local government (other than for the purposes of a water supply undertaking, which is dealt with specifically under the Local Government Acts), it had to take action under section 54C of the Water Acts. In terms of that section, where the Minister administering the Water Acts was of the opinion that the land was required by the local authority, he could take the land at the expense of the local authority, and the land became permanently reserved under the Land Acts and the local authority was vested with the control and management thereof for the purposes for which it was taken.

Section 54C of the Water Acts was repealed by the Acquisition of Land Act, and therefore it was necessary to substitute something for it. That is what the Government has done. The power was always there in a different form. This is nothing new.

**Mr. Bennett:** It is.

**Mr. RICHTER:** It is a new form, new words, but the principle is the same.

The hon. member for Belmont referred to the person who may exercise more than one vote. All we are doing is bringing the Act into line with the State Elections Act. A person may perhaps be entitled to be enrolled in one area and also have his name on another roll. We are only saying to him, "You do not vote on two occasions at the one election. If you do, you become liable."

Motion (Mr. Richter) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 to 7, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 8—Local Authority charged with exercise and performance of functions of local government—

**Mr. BENNETT** (South Brisbane) (3.59 p.m.): I do not propose to delay the Committee on this clause, but, for purposes of

record, I should like the amendment to be written into "Hansard". It inserts the following paragraph:—

> "The power of the Local Authority to take land includes power to take land outside its Area that is required by it for the purpose of any function of local government."

Obviously, the section will mean what its plain, ordinary language says. One does not need to be a lawyer to know by reading it that any local authority can take any land outside its own area provided it is for the purpose of local government, which includes the disposal of sewerage effluent, and perhaps other noxious purposes.

The acquisition powers contained in the clause are subject to no qualification, restriction or condition other than that the land must be for a function of local government. The clause does not give the neighbouring local authority power to object to or refuse the acquisition. To take an absurd example, it would be a really difficult situation if, say, the Albert Shire Council decided to take the office of the Gold Coast City Council for the purpose of its local government. What does the Act say if there is a clash of interests of that nature? The Minister might say, "Well, I would intervene," but why should the legislation be so vague and uncertain as to allow for that possibility, absurd and all as it might be. I am carrying the argument to the extreme but that could happen. It would not be beyond the bounds of possibility that one local authority would want to dispose of its effluent on the land of another local authority. That could well happen and it may advance some spurious reason for so doing. The Minister might say again, "Of course, I have the power to intervene." He might intervene, as no doubt he sometimes would, according to the political calibre or complexion of the local authorities involved, but I do not like the possibility of politics in such a controversy.

In his reply at the second-reading stage the Minister quoted the Water Act. I do not wish to prolong the debate on a matter such as this but, in relation to the principles I am submitting on this particular amendment, the Minister's arguments were completely irrelevant. So far as writing the principle into the Bill is concerned, it is a new one and in my opinion it should be done effectively, properly, efficiently and in a tradesman-like fashion so that we do not leave the Local Government Act, like the Traffic Act, looking like a pakapu ticket, with amendments written in during session after session.

Clause 8, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 9 to 17, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

The House adjourned at 4.3 p.m.