

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 25 MARCH 1971

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

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

INJURY TO BOILERMAKER, TOWNSVILLE RAILWAY WORKSHOPS

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

(1) Did a young boilermaker lose four fingers and part of his left hand while carrying out welding operations on certain installations in the Townsville Railway Workshops on February 18? If so, what were the circumstances which brought about the accident and were safe working procedures being carried out or was there a breach?

(2) What officer or officers is or are responsible for safety in the Northern Division of the Railway Department?

(3) Is any effort made to enlist the assistance of unions and unionists by way of regular inspections with qualified inspectors and engineers of all installations where safety is involved? If not, what is the reason for the reluctance to do so when life or limb could be involved?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) "I have been informed by railway officers that boilermaker Passmore was required to weld brackets to the bottom flange of the beam carrying the overhead crane runners in the boiler shop. These brackets were being provided to carry a gas line along the length of the shop. He was preparing to weld the top of the bracket when he placed his hand

on the running track of the overhead crane as the crane was passing over him. Instructions had been issued to the crane driver and the crane slingsman that the crane was not to pass over where Passmore was welding. At the time of the accident an acting crane driver was operating the crane and he denied any knowledge of the instructions. Passmore was working from a ladder, which was being held steady by two boilermakers' assistants. A safety belt was supplied for Passmore's use but he declined to wear it stating he felt secure without it. The mechanical engineer in charge of the workshops has overall responsibility for safety in the workshops and individual foremen and sub-foremen are responsible for safe working procedures in the shops under their control. A Safety Committee consisting of the locomotive Engineer, Townsville, the Mechanical Engineer in Charge of the Workshops, two representatives from the Combined Railway Unions and the Safety Officer, who is a qualified Safety Job Trainer, meet regularly to discuss safety matters. A meeting was held on March 17, 1971, and the next meeting is scheduled for April, 1971."

PACKAGING OF FOODSTUFFS

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

(1) Is he aware that pensioners and single people who live alone are finding it increasingly difficult to purchase small quantities of groceries, fruit and vegetables and that many retail shops refuse to break large packs, thus causing embarrassment?

(2) As submissions along these lines were made by representatives of women's organisations when Mr. Pluckrose recently visited Townsville, will he arrange for the Consumer Affairs Bureau to carry out an investigation of these matters?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "Mr. Pluckrose, in accordance with an undertaking given by him at a public meeting when in Townsville last week, has already made a submission on this matter. Many foodstuffs, of course, are manufactured interstate as well as in Queensland. I am informed that when this matter was raised, Mr. Pluckrose pointed out that in his opinion there is no provision in the Consumer Affairs Act under which retail grocers, manufacturers or distributors could be required to break up large packs or to require manufacturers and distributors to pack in smaller quantities. Furthermore to adopt such a suggestion would conceivably affect the retail price in view of additional labour and material costs involved. Professor Gates, the chairman of the Consumer Affairs Council who was also present with Mr. Pluckrose at the meeting, stated that while

he agreed that smaller packaging could result in price increases, he felt one solution might be for a local voluntary organisation to purchase commodities in larger quantities and repack them in smaller packs for the benefit of pensioners and so forth. One of the women's representatives who was present at the meeting, later mentioned to Mr. Pluckrose in conversation, that she felt that perhaps this was a matter concerning which the National Council of Women and the Townsville Chamber of Commerce might get together in the interests of consumers generally."

CHAIRMAN, LOCAL GOVERNMENT
SUPERANNUATION BOARD

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

(1) Is Mr. C. G. A. Done the Chairman of the Local Government Superannuation Board and, if so, what salary and other perquisites of office does he receive?

(2) Is this the same man who was the chairman of a board of inquiry into Parliamentary salaries and allowances and, if so, what provision has been made to prevent his giving vent to his undisguised aversion to and contempt for people who live in the country areas of the State and who may be covered by his deliberations as Chairman of the Superannuation Board?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes. Under *"The Local Government Superannuation Acts, 1964 to 1967,"* the Governor in Council determined on February 11, 1965, that the following remuneration and allowances be payable to Mr. Done as Chairman of The Local Government Superannuation Board:—An annual allowance of \$1,000 in lieu of daily fees for attendance at Board meetings; An annual allowance of \$500 in lieu of travelling allowance for attendance at Board meetings and at the Board's office on authorised Board business and in lieu of transport allowance for attendance at the Board's office on authorised Board business. A travelling allowance of \$8.40 for each day or part thereof on which the chairman is necessarily absent from home on authorised Board business, but excluding attendance at Board meetings and at the Board's office: Provided that—(a) travelling allowance at half daily rates only shall be payable when attendance on authorised Board business other than attendance at meetings of the Board and at the Board's office, including travelling to and from the place thereof, is completed in one day and does not involve any overnight absence from home; (b) in cases where overnight absence is involved, travelling allowance at half daily rates only shall be payable in respect of any day during such absence on which travelling ends before or begins after the hour of noon; (c) when the chairman is unable to

obtain reasonable accommodation within the limit of \$8.40 per day, he may be paid the amount actually expended by him on hotel accommodation, meals and other reasonable out of pocket expenses, upon production of receipts to cover his actual expenditure, subject to approval by the Board. Reimbursement of first-class rail and sleeper fares, commercial road and sea transport fares and air fares actually incurred when engaged on authorised Board business, including attendance at Board meetings but excluding attendance at the Board's office: Provided that—an allowance of 10c per mile shall be paid to the chairman when he uses his private motor vehicle on authorised Board business, including attendance at Board meetings but excluding attendance at the Board's office."

(2) "Yes. To my knowledge there is no foundation in the allegations made by the Honourable Member. I would point out that the Local Government Superannuation scheme and the benefits applicable to permanent employees of local authorities thereunder are set forth in *"The Local Government Superannuation Acts, 1964 to 1967,"* and Regulations made under the Acts. In terms of the Acts, The Local Government Superannuation Board, subject to the Minister, is charged with the administration of the scheme. The Board, which is appointed by the Governor in Council, consists of the chairman, a representative of the Local Government Association of Queensland and a representative of the Queensland State Branch of the Municipal Officers' Association of Australia. Annual reports furnished to me by the Board indicate that the scheme is being efficiently administered by the Board to the benefit of permanent employees of local authorities throughout the State."

REPORT ON T.R.E.B. ACCOUNTANCY
SYSTEM

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

(1) Was a report received from Arthur Andersen & Co., public accountants, on the accountancy system at the Townsville Regional Electricity Board's various departments and, if so, when will this report be made available to the public information media or to this House?

(2) Is the report locked in a safe at the T.R.E.B. head office and are the board members permitted to see it only in the presence of an officer, whereupon it must be immediately returned to the locked safe?

Answers:—

(1) "The firm of chartered accountants Arthur Andersen & Co. was engaged by the Townsville Regional Electricity Board to advise on the purchase of a computer and matters arising therefrom. The engagement by the Board, of consultants to

provide expert advice to management and the distribution of their reports is a matter for decision by the Board itself."

(2) "See Answer to (1)."

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT LAND, AITKENVALE

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

Does his Department still own the land in the Thompson Street area, Aitkenvale, Townsville, which this House was told some time ago was purchased for the erection of a school and, if so, when and in what design will the school be built?

Answer:—

"The land referred to in the Honourable Member's Question is the site selected for a school at Mundingsburra South. Our surveys indicate that the new school to be erected on this site may be required in the 1972-73 financial year. The school will conform to one of the modern designs being developed at the present time."

TOWNSVILLE VISIT BY QUEENSLAND BALLET COMPANY

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to an article in *The Courier-Mail* of March 24 wherein it was reported that the Queensland Ballet Company, under the auspices of the Queensland Division of the Arts Council, will not perform in Townsville on its present country and northern tour?

(2) Did Townsville's exclusion from the tour result from the refusal by the North Queensland Ballet and Dance Society to succumb to pressure put upon it by Mr. Creedy to forgo one of its bookings of the Theatre Royal?

(3) Has Mr. Creedy the authority to take a biased stand in favour of a Brisbane company against a northern company?

(4) Will he assure the House that any future applications for assistance made by the North Queensland Ballet and Dance Society will not be prejudiced because of its commendable refusal to be blackmailed by Mr. Creedy on this occasion?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "The Queensland Division of the Arts Council of Australia informed Mr. Creedy that the North Queensland Ballet and Dance Society was already booked for rehearsal at the Theatre Royal, Townsville, on the only night which would have been suitable for a performance by the Queensland Ballet Company during its Queensland itinerary. The Arts Council of Australia (Queensland Division) asked Mr. Creedy if he could ascertain if the North

Queensland Ballet and Dance Society would be prepared on this one occasion, provided an alternative venue could be found for the society's rehearsal, to allow the Queensland Ballet Company the use of the Theatre Royal in view of there being no other suitable available venue in Townsville. Mr. Creedy contacted Mr. J. Evans, Secretary of the North Queensland Ballet and Dance Society, and asked if the society would be greatly inconvenienced by an alteration of their arrangements. Mr. Evans explained that the society would already be in the midst of rehearsals and any such change would involve a great deal of inconvenience in dismounting and re-erecting sets and transporting the production to another venue for that night's rehearsal. The society's committee re-considered their decision and regretfully advised that they were unable to oblige the Queensland Ballet Company and the Arts Council."

(3) "No bias exists in favour of the Queensland Ballet Company against the North Queensland Ballet and Dance Society. I would point out that the Queensland Ballet Company, though based in Brisbane, serves the whole of the State of Queensland."

(4) "Yes. All applications for assistance are considered purely on the basis of merit and in the light of finance available."

HOUSING COMMISSION HOUSES FOR HOME OWNERSHIP

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

(1) How many applications are at present lodged with the Queensland Housing Commission for home ownership by applicants from (a) the metropolitan area and (b) the remainder of the State?

(2) How many houses were made available for home ownership from the Commonwealth-State Housing Fund and the Queensland Housing Commission Fund from July 1, 1970 to February 28, 1971, and how many of them were built by (a) private contractors and (b) day labour?

(3) How many houses were repossessed from home owners during the same period and were the houses resold or relet?

Answers:—

(1) "Current homeownership applications at March 24, 1971, inclusive of cases where building contracts had been let but house construction not completed, were (a) 116, (b) 455."

(2) "Of the homeownership houses constructed from July 1, 1970 to February 28, 1971, 272 were financed from the Commonwealth-State Housing Fund and 193 from the Queensland Housing Commission Fund. Of these houses, 427 were

constructed by contract and 38 by day labour. In addition, 227 houses erected in previous years were sold in this period."

(3) "29. Four vacant houses are in process of sale, two have been relet to other than the purchasers, and in the remaining cases the former purchasers are still in occupation as tenants at a rental which, if paid regularly, would enable them to be reinstated as purchasers at the end of approximately three years."

ALLEGED OFFENCES BY PINE RIVERS SHIRE COUNCIL EMPLOYEE

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

(1) Has the Police Department recently been investigating a complaint by persons, including two Councillors of the Pine Rivers Shire Council, regarding allegations of criminal conduct by a former officer in the employ of that Council?

(2) Have the police evidence of admissions by the former officer, implicating him in the commission of criminal offences?

(3) Why have no charges been preferred against this person and/or any other persons who were parties to the alleged offence?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "Admissions have been made by a former officer of the Pine Rivers Shire Council in relation to certain matters done by him whilst in the employ of the Shire Council. These matters were under the control of the Shire Council. The admissions do not implicate him in the commission of criminal offences."

(3) "The enquiries carried out showed that there was insufficient evidence to substantiate any criminal charge against the ex-employee or any other person. No official complaint was made by the Pine Rivers Shire Council in respect of the matters in question."

PEANUT AND SOFT-DRINK DISPENSERS ON RAILWAY STATION PLATFORMS

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

(1) Is he aware that a peanut dispenser and a soft-drink dispenser, which were housed for some time on number 4 platform at Roma Street Railway Station for the convenience of the travelling public, have been removed and, if so, what was the reason?

(2) Have similar dispensers been removed from other station platforms? If so, which ones?

Answers:—

(1) "The peanut and drink dispensing machine referred to became defective on February 24, 1971, and was removed by the owner for repairs. Difficulty is being experienced in repairing the unit and the owner found it necessary to obtain a relief machine, which he anticipates will be in operation on No. 4 Platform within one week."

(2) "Because of defects which occur from time to time, similar dispensing machines have been removed by the owner for repairs but apart from the machine from No. 4 Platform, all other dispensing machines are in operation."

RAILWAY LEVEL CROSSING, NYANDA

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

Further to his Answer to my Question on March 24 that plans for an overpass are being prepared for the railway crossing at Nyanda, on Beaudesert Road, and that this work will be included in the present five-year plan, will he, in view of the present extreme traffic delays, consider an immediate temporary construction before the permanent overpass is constructed?

Answer:—

"Construction of a temporary overpass is not feasible but an interim scheme is being designed to improve the capacity of the present open-level crossing by providing a separate right turn movement for inbound traffic into Fairlie Terrace. It is planned to implement this interim scheme next financial year."

LAND FOR SWIMMING POOL PROJECT, SANDGATE

Mr. Lickiss, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Lands,—

(1) Has his attention been drawn to an article in *The Echo*, a newspaper circulated in the Sandgate area, dated March 17 and entitled "Race to the Pool—Ridge in Running" and to a statement alleged to have been made by Alderman Arthur Davis in relation to legal complications which affect the land status of the Sandgate project?

(2) Did the Brisbane City Council apply to the State Government for a deed of grant or trust over the subject land and, if so, what was the date of the application?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "No formal application has yet been received. On June 2, 1969, the Brisbane City Council applied for permission to lease an area of about 3½ acres of Reserve for Local Government purpose R. 1686 to Clearlite Pools Pty. Ltd. and

was informed that there was no objection to the lease proposal. A lease has not yet been produced for endorsement of my consent as required under the Land Act. The Reserve is administered by the Brisbane City Council as Trustee; so far as my administration is concerned there are no complications associated with the Reserve."

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION FOR
SHELTERED WORKSHOP,
ROCKHAMPTON

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

Will he consider the loan to the Rockhampton Sheltered Workshop Committee, after registration is granted under the Religious Educational and Charitable Institutions Act, of temporary school classrooms until a permanent building is completed later this year?

Answer:—

"The question of this committee being eligible for the assistance sought will be submitted for the consideration of Cabinet when registration under the Religious Educational and Charitable Institutions Act is granted."

BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL BUS SERVICES

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

(1) What are the powers of the Commissioner for Transport in respect to Brisbane City Council bus services and under what authority does he act?

(2) Does the Commissioner take public interest into account in relation to the Council bus services?

(3) What action would be taken by the Commissioner on receiving a complaint, or on receipt of a petition of interested persons, in relation to any of the Council's bus services, particularly in view of the savage cuts in the schedules and number of services, together with an appalling increase in fares?

Answers:—

(1) "The Commissioner for Transport holds office under *"The State Transport Acts, 1960 to 1965."* Under the provisions of these Acts he grants Passenger Service Licences. The Brisbane City Council is the holder of a Passenger Service Licence. The powers of the Commissioner for Transport in respect of Road Passenger Services are detailed in Part IV of *"The State Transport Acts, 1960 to 1965."* These cover such matters as the issue, renewal, transfer, cancellation and suspension of Licences; the determination of Terms and Conditions including Routes, Timetables and Fares and their amendment; the extension of services and the approval of vehicles."

(2) "Yes."

(3) "When the Commissioner receives complaints or petitions, if the nature of the matter raised concerns Council administration, the complaint is referred to the Transport Department of the Brisbane City Council. If the matters concerned are such as to be the concern of the Commissioner for Transport, directions are given for any investigations needed to determine what action is necessary."

LECTURERS, INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY

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

(1) How many (a) full-time and (b) part-time lecturers are employed in the Queensland Institutes of Technology?

(2) How many lecturers in the two categories have come direct from the areas of recruitment of (a) primary, (b) secondary, (c) interstate, (d) private industry and (e) overseas and private education establishments?

(3) How many of these lecturers hold degrees and/or diplomas in the subjects in which they lecture?

(4) How many lecturers (a) part-time and (b) full-time have not at least one year's teacher training?

(5) What are the hourly rates paid to part-time lecturers (a) with at least one year's teacher training and (b) without teacher training?

Answers:—

(1) "The numbers of full-time and part-time lecturers employed in the Queensland Institutes of Technology on the last education census date are shown on pages 20 and 21 of my Annual Report to Parliament."

(2 and 4) "To obtain this information it would be necessary to make a detailed analysis of applications for employment and other records of more than 800 lecturers. I do not consider that the diversion of busy staff from their normal duties to do this is justified."

(3) "Virtually all of these lecturers hold degrees, diplomas or equivalent qualifications in the subjects in which they lecture."

(5) "All part-time lecturers are paid at the rate of \$6.25 per hour."

PRAWNING, WEIPA AND GULF OF
CARPENTARIA

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

(1) Has he been advised of the number of prawn trawlers which are awaiting the opening of the prawn season at Weipa?

(2) What area of the Gulf will be affected?

(3) What is the reason for an officer of his Department flying to Weipa for the opening of the season?

(4) Will the entire Gulf of Carpentaria be open for prawning after April 1?

Answers:—

(1) "I understand that there are some 50 vessels in the vicinity of Weipa at present."

(2) "The Honourable Member's Question is not clear. I would be grateful if he would make it more specific."

(3) "Normal boat patrol duties—the officer is attached to the Department of Harbours and Marine."

(4) "I am not aware if an opening date has yet been set for the Commonwealth proclaimed waters off Karumba."

RICE-GROWING, MAREEBA-DIMBULAH
IRRIGATION AREA

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

(1) What area of rice was grown in the Mareeba-Dimbulah irrigation area during the last growing season and what amount of rice was produced?

(2) Is it intended to continue with rice trials and, if so, will any recommendation be made for the growing of rice in this area?

Answers:—

(1) "Trial plots of limited acreages have been grown by Department of Primary Industries research staff in the Mareeba-Dimbulah area in recent years. These have been the only plantings in this area and have been directed towards the investigation of various aspects of rice production including the effects of rice growing for varying periods on other subsequent crops."

(2) "The trials are not yet complete and will be continued. Any considerations of commercial rice growing in this area will depend on the agronomic and economic data from these trials. Availability of water also is important as rice has a very high water requirement."

STAFF, INNISFAIL AND CAIRNS POLICE
DISTRICTS

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

(1) What is the establishment of the Innisfail and Cairns Police Districts, indicating (a) number of police personnel, including all ranks, and (b) clerical assistants?

(2) What is the existing number in each district in each of the above categories?

(3) What steps are being taken to bring the force in both districts up to full strength?

Answers:—

(1) "The establishments of the Innisfail and Cairns Police Districts at this date are as follows:—

	Police Personnel	Clerk Assistants
Innisfail	61	7
Cairns	135	14."

(2) "Actual strength at this date is:—

	Police Personnel	Clerk Assistants
Innisfail	60	7
Cairns	131	13."

(3) "The one vacancy in the Innisfail District has been advertised and should be filled at an early date. The vacancy for an inspector in the Cairns District is to be filled, but the filling of three constable vacancies will depend upon an examination now being made of man power throughout the State and the availability of personnel. A clerk-typist has been appointed to fill the vacancy at Cairns, and she should commence duty at an early date."

TREVOR HENDERSON OPTOMETRICAL
SERVICE, COUNTRY HOSPITALS

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

(1) At how many country hospitals and/or towns does Trevor Henderson, optometrist, hold the Government contract for the supply of spectacles and what are the towns?

(2) At how many of these does the company carry out both the prescribing and the dispensing of spectacles?

(3) What are the terms of the contract?

(4) Are the completed spectacles personally fitted or are they sent to the patient c.o.d.?

(5) What are maximum and minimum charges for spectacles?

(6) Is there any minimum standard of frames to be supplied?

Answers:—

(1 to 4) "There is no contract with the Department of Health for optometrical services for hospitals. Each country Hospitals Board invites its own tenders and enters into its own contract. Details of contracts held by individual Hospitals Boards are not routinely recorded within my Department."

(5) "Spectacles provided under contracts which Trevor Henderson holds with Hospitals Boards are supplied without charge to the patient."

(6) "See Answer (1 to 4)."

PRIMARY SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES
REFERENCE BOOKS

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

(1) Have all State primary schools in Queensland been supplied with all of the recommended books for Grades 3 to 7 Social Studies Reference Libraries following the changes in the methods of teaching those subjects laid down by his Department and, if not, what is the reason for the delay?

(2) As the independent schools in Queensland are also required to follow these new methods, does his Department supply the recommended books to them or does it subsidise their purchase? If not, as the change was implemented by his Department, will he consider some form of assistance in the purchase of the reference books?

Answers:—

(1) "Thirty-two of the 41 titles were available in January of this year and all State schools that have made the necessary application have been issued with this number. The remaining nine titles are now available and the issue of these has commenced. It should be pointed out that all principals were supplied with order forms for these reference books. If a school has not received its supply, it could be because the order form was not returned. The implementation of the Social Studies syllabus is not obligatory in 1971."

(2) "My Department does not supply, or subsidise the purchase of, the recommended books to independent schools. These schools, however, may take full advantage of the contracts for the purchase of the books arranged by the State Stores Board."

TESTING OF SEWAGE EFFLUENT

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

(1) Does his Department carry out regular tests of the effluent water from the various local authorities' sewage-treatment plants in Queensland?

(2) If so, do they show some plants to be inefficient and, if so, which are they?

(3) Does his Department take any action to ensure that such plants are made efficient?

(4) Do these tests show that the present sewage-treatment works are unable to adequately separate surplus detergents from their effluent waters?

(5) Are the detergents creating pollution problems in the areas concerned?

(6) What action is his Department taking to (a) improve Queensland's method of treating effluent water from sewage-treatment plants relative to detergents, (b)

educate housewives in the better use of detergents and (c) ensure that manufacturers produce a detergent that causes less pollution to our rivers and streams?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "Local authority sewage treatment plant designs are checked by the Department of Local Government prior to construction and their operation, in the Department's experience, is not less than adequate. In the case of plants fully loaded or somewhat overloaded due to increased usage, augmentation of the plants is in the design stage or is under construction."

(3) "See Answer to (2)."

(4) "Yes, due to the non-bio-degradable character of most detergents currently in use."

(5) "Present detergent levels in streams are better than acceptable levels except infrequently in one or two isolated cases."

(6) (a) The National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia, on which Queensland is represented by the Director-General of Health and Medical Services, has had the matter of pollution arising from the wide usage of non-bio-degradable detergents under investigation for some time. It is understood that manufacturers of detergents have agreed that, after December 1971, detergents for the domestic market will be at least 80 per cent. bio-degradable and this should abate pollution problems presently resulting from the heavy use of household detergents which are discharged to sewers. (b) Efforts have been made and will continue to be made by the Department in this regard. As an example, the Department's Chief Sewerage Engineer has been interviewed on radio current affairs programmes and has emphasised to listeners the problems which can arise in sewage treatment through wide usage of non-bio-degradable detergents. (c) See Answer to (6) (a)."

LAND USED FOR NEW GRAZING BLOCKS

Mr. Aiken, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Lands,—

(1) How many blocks of grazing land have been thrown open in the past 12 months and what are the numbers of blocks that were thrown open in each year from 1963 to 1969?

(2) How much land is on hand for subdivision and will expired leases, now on occupational licence, be granted extensions of leases or remain on special licence?

(3) Because there is a need to build up substandard blocks, will any land be made available within the next two years as additional areas?

(4) If blocks are to be thrown open in the period mentioned, how many will be classed as (a) sheep blocks and (b) cattle blocks?

Answers:—

I presume the Honourable Member's Question concerns lands exclusive of the Fitzroy Basin Land Development Scheme within which there is no sheep land and the question of adequacy of living area standards and grant of additional areas does not arise and I will proceed accordingly.

(1) "Six in the last 12 months—1963-64, 53 blocks; 1964-65, 41 blocks; 1965-66, 46 blocks; 1966-67, 41 blocks; 1967-68, 73 blocks; 1968-69, 11 blocks; and 1969-70, 7 blocks."

(2) "An aggregate area of approximately 1,600,000 acres is available in the hands of the Crown for further dealing. Expired leases are dealt with pursuant to the provisions of Part VI of the Land Act under which certain statutory rights of renewal of lease apply. 'Balance' areas are dealt with as the circumstances of the reasons exist, the late lessee is permitted particular case require. Where good to remain in occupation for a considerable time past expiry date."

(3) "Yes."

(4) "Because of the recession in the wool industry, present policy is that Crown land be not made available for new settlement as sheep blocks. Available land suitable for cattle raising will be dealt with in the normal way but the land available is not extensive and no firm decision has yet been made as to the number of blocks to be opened within the next two years; in respect of the land currently available, present indications are that this will not provide more than 12 blocks."

COAL RESERVES FOR AUSTRALIAN USE

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

(1) Because of the world's increasing demand for Queensland coal, what reserves of coal are under protection for Australian use and are these reserves localised or scattered in different areas?

(2) What are Queensland's proven reserves in coking and steaming coal and what is the present estimated quantity of coal considered as non-profitable to mine?

(3) Is any of the non-profitable coal included in the reserves for Australian use?

Answers:—

(1) "The progress total of Queensland coal reserved for Australian use is 1,500 million tons, which is in different areas in the Bowen Basin."

(2) "Queensland's proven reserves in—(a) coking coal, is 4,350 million tons approximately, and (b) steaming coal, is 2,500 million tons approximately. These are mainly calculated as measured and indicated *in situ* reserves. No estimate of coal 'non-profitable to mine' is made. Exploration is directed to locating minable reserves."

(3) "See Answer to (2)."

SAND-MINING LEASES, FRASER ISLAND

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

At the present time, what leases are held on Fraser Island by mining companies which entitle them to proceed with the recovery of mineral sands concentrate and what is the area of each?

Answer:—

"In this area titles are held above, partly above and below high water mark. For the purposes of my reply I am regarding them all as being on Fraser Island. Included in a total of 26 actual mining titles there are—(a) one special mineral lease; (b) eleven dredging leases; the instruments of lease of which have issued; (c) eight applications for special mineral leases, four of which have been heard in the Warden's Court and recommended for approval. As any objections to these were withdrawn, it is considered they have the right to mine subject to conditions to be imposed. The remaining four are the subject of hearings in the Warden's Court; (d) six applications for dredging leases which have been heard in the Warden's Court and recommended for approval. The holders of these have the right to mine subject to certain conditions. The total area covered by leases and lease applications is 38,317 acres approximately. I lay upon the Table of the House a list of these titles showing the individual areas. I would mention that the dates of applications for these titles range from 1949 to the present date."

Paper.—Whereupon Mr. Camm laid upon the Table of the House the list referred to.

MILK PRICES, HERVEY BAY

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

In view of milk vendors' complaints that they have been unable to obtain an official list of milk prices to be charged by them at Hervey Bay, are the prices there subject to control by his Department? If so, from what sources can official price information for this area be obtained?

Answer:—

"No. There is no prices order with respect to the sale of milk at Hervey Bay."

BUREAU OF TRANSPORT ECONOMICS

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

(1) Was the Bureau of Transport Economics set up to help in reducing the costs and in the co-ordination, rationalisation and efficiency of transport throughout Australia?

(2) Has any study yet been carried out in Queensland and, if so, with what result?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "The Bureau of Transport Economics is not a body set up within the State Department of Transport."

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

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

Further to his Answers to my Questions on March 19, August 5 and December 1, 1970, concerning tourist development assistance, what progress has been made, in consultation with the Commonwealth, in the matter of the granting of concessions and taxation incentives, such as exist in Fiji, New Zealand and other tourist countries, to those who wish to build tourist hotels and motels in competition with comparable overseas and international tourist accommodation?

Answer:—

"The latest advice is that this matter is still receiving the consideration of the Commonwealth Government."

PSYCHOLOGIST, TOOWOOMBA CHILD GUIDANCE CLINIC

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

When will an appointment be made to the position of psychologist at the Child Guidance Clinic, Toowoomba Base Hospital?

Answer:—

"Due to the lack of any applications the position has been vacant since the beginning of 1970. A recent application is currently being examined."

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

MINING OF LIMESTONE CAVES, MT. ETNA

Mr. WRIGHT: I ask the Premier: With regard to the mining of the limestone caves at Mt. Etna, near Rockhampton, has the concern of conservationists and speleologists been brought to his attention? As the company mining these deposits will not allow individuals or conservation or speleological organisations to enter the region being mined, will he initiate an immediate investigation of the area in question in order to ascertain what damage is being done to other natural wonders in the immediate vicinity?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I understand that the Department of Mines and the company concerned are investigating alternative sources of limestone at the moment. I do not know whether or not the hon. member is suggesting that the mine should be closed—

Mr. Wright: No, an investigation.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: An investigation is taking place at the moment.

BREAD BOYCOTT

Mr. DAVIS: I ask the Premier: Will he pledge Government support for the proposed 48-hour boycott of bread by the Queensland Housewives' Association as a protest against the pending price rise?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I did not quite catch what the hon. member was saying, or even what he was driving at. I understand it was something to do with supporting a boycott.

Mr. Davis: Will he support Gabby Horan's boycott for 48 hours?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: No. We, as members of this Parliament, have a responsibility to uphold the laws of the land. We accept them as we see them, and I cannot give the hon. member the assurance he seeks.

SUSPENSION OF STOCK EXCHANGE SHARE TRADING

Mr. JENSEN: I had a question without notice for the Minister for Justice. As he is not present, I will submit it to the Premier.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! If the hon. member has a question for a certain Minister he cannot immediately switch it to another Minister. The question would be out of order.

Mr. JENSEN: I will put it on notice for tomorrow. I thought the Premier could answer it. He is more amenable on these things.

ELECTORAL REDISTRIBUTION

Mr. JENSEN: I have a further question without notice. I know the Premier would have answered the previous one.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Will the hon. member either ask the question or resume his seat.

Mr. JENSEN: I direct a question to the Treasurer: In view of his reply to a question yesterday in which he claimed that he was not bound by decisions of State Liberal conventions, how does he—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. JENSEN: He said this yesterday.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I have already said that questions of a politically sniping type are out of order. I therefore do not propose to listen to the hon. member.

CHAIRMAN, ELECTORAL DISTRICTS
COMMISSION

Mr. R. JONES: I ask the Premier: In view of public concern, will he assure hon. members that a Supreme Court judge will be appointed as chairman of the commission to undertake the redistribution of Queensland's electoral boundaries—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. R. JONES: —or extend an invitation to Mr. Justice Bright, Supreme Court judge—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. R. JONES: —who was chairman of the recent South Australian redistribution commission, to serve as chairman on Queensland's Electoral Districts Commission?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. R. JONES: What's wrong with that?

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the hon. member please obey my call to order.

Mr. R. JONES: I did not know you were calling me to order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The question relates to Government policy, I should imagine, so it may have to be ruled out of order.

Mr. R. JONES: All I am asking is that the chairman of the South Australian—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Will the hon. member please take notice. I shall have a look at the question, and if I think it is in order it will be permitted; on the other hand, if it is not in order it will not be permitted.

Mr. R. JONES: It is a question without notice.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the Premier wishes to answer it, he may do so.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: The question relates to a policy matter, which the hon. member will have revealed to him at the appropriate time.

FORM OF QUESTIONS

Mr. AIKEN (Warrego) having given notice of three questions—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member's final question seeks an expression of Government policy.

Mr. HANSON (Port Curtis) having given notice of a question—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I have a recollection that a similar question was answered not very long ago—possibly just before Christmas.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

ALLEGED SERIOUS OFFENCE, GOLD COAST

Hon. A. M. HODGES (Gympie—Minister for Works and Housing) (11.52 a.m.): I have been asked by the hon. member for Clayfield, Mr. J. Murray, M.L.A., to table files concerning police inquiries into an incident on the Gold Coast last January.

Despite the hon. member's accusations that my replies were classically evasive, and his statement that he is not using the House to slander and defame, the facts are that a number of private people are involved and their statements constitute privileged information.

In tabling these documents, I should like to ask that respect be shown by all hon. members and the Press to those sections of the files involving what I feel is privileged information in the form of statements from private individuals. The police files were kept at the South Coast District and were transferred to my office at my request on 23 February, 1971, and have been held there ever since.

Mr. Mullins, solicitor, acting for Carmel Flannery and Robyn Anne Powell, during an interview with me this morning, asked and authorised me to say that no threats were made by Alderman Jones or anyone else that "if they gave further evidence they would be branded as 'sluts and prostitutes'".

The hon. member also asked, "Is someone receiving special V.I.P. treatment? Would a charge have been laid if the person were not politically important? Is there in fact one law for the influential and one for the ordinary person; one law for the rich and one for the poor?" He has said this again, despite the fact that I have previously given this House an assurance that nothing has been done in this matter which would suggest there is one law for the influential and one for the ordinary citizen.

The files show quite clearly that the inquiry has been properly conducted, that recommendations made by investigating officers were not changed, and that there has not been any interference with the proper course of justice. Despite my assurances, the hon. member has made unjust accusations and brought into open publicity privileged information that was submitted by private individuals.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I point out to hon. members a possibility that is not generally known. There is some doubt about the publication in part of any document tabled in Parliament. The publication of such a document in part could well negate privilege applying to the part published. It is generally accepted that the rule applying to privilege, even to "Hansard" proofs, is that the whole of the document must be published.

Will the Clerk please read the first Order of the Day.

Honourable Members interjecting—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Hon. members will please pay respect to the Clerk of the Parliament when he is reading the Order of the Day. I address that remark to members on both sides of the House.

LAND ACT AMENDMENT AND PRIMARY PRODUCERS' ASSISTANCE BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

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

Debate resumed from 23 March (see p. 3190) on Mr. Sullivan's motion—

"That a Bill be introduced to amend the Land Act 1962-1970 in certain particulars and to provide for assistance to primary producers in certain cases."

Hon. V. B. SULLIVAN (Condamine—Minister for Lands) (11.55 a.m.), in reply: Numerous members on both sides of the Chamber spoke on the introduction of this Bill. I thank Government members for their support. I do not wish to deal with all that Government members said, or, for that matter, all that Opposition members said. Government members indicated that they had a very good knowledge of the principles contained in the Bill. As they are aware that a Bill is to be introduced covering rural reconstruction, they left that subject until then.

Certain accusations were made by members of the Opposition. The hon. member for Barcoo is referred to by himself and others as the "shadow Minister for Lands." After some of the things he said, landholders in many parts of Queensland hope that his shadow grows longer and longer as time goes on.

The hon. member advanced the argument that leasehold is a more attractive policy than freehold because, in times of trouble, the freeholder will not receive the assistance that is available to tenants of the Crown. That argument of course is not sound, and this Bill itself demonstrates the point. It provides for a longer term of purchase for the person who wishes to operate under the freehold system. Needless to say, our land policy is flexible, and while I am Minister for Lands it will continue to be that way to meet the situation. The primary producer has the choice of remaining on leasehold or converting to freehold if he feels that this form of tenure is a better basis for his operations.

Mr. Hanson interjected.

Mr. SULLIVAN: The hon. member for Port Curtis indicated on Tuesday night that he had no respect for the man on the land or anyone in primary industry, so he should keep fairly quiet.

Mr. HANSON: I rise to a point of order. The Minister's implication of what was said by me is incorrect. I ask for a withdrawal.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Port Curtis has indicated to the Chair that the Minister's remarks are offensive to him and asks for a withdrawal. I ask the Minister to withdraw them.

Mr. SULLIVAN: I will withdraw. But I have spoken to people outside Parliament and that is what was indicated to them. Let me put it that way.

The freeholder now has 40 years instead of 30 years to make payment of the unimproved value of his land. In addition, he may apply for a rest from the repayment of this year's instalment if payment constitutes a hardship. Furthermore, any arrears of rental will be removed from his account automatically upon grant of the 40-year term. The arrears will become payable by spreading them over the balance of the term of payment in the particular case. They can be spread over an additional 10 years—and the hon. member says that freehold is not a good tenure!

Mr. Aikens: Leasehold rental is a tax deduction, whereas part payment on purchase of freehold is not.

Mr. SULLIVAN: Fair enough—but I am a State Minister, not a Federal one.

This is a very important concession and will assist a significant number of landholders. The effect of this is to do what the hon. member for Isis suggested should be done, that is, give the primary producer time. I think I have said over and over again that, in certain rural industries, time is the most important thing today. Further in answer to the hon. member for Townsville South, we are giving people the right to freehold their properties if they want to. If they do not want to freehold, they can remain on leasehold.

Mr. Aikens: I am right behind you.

Mr. SULLIVAN: Good on you! Sometimes I think the hon. member is in front of me!

No interest is charged on the postponed arrears. This concession is particularly important, because the landholder will now not have to find this sum out of the meagre funds available to him for carry-on and operating expenses. Most graziers rely on advances from woolbrokers or stock firms for this carry-on accommodation. Instead of this money being paid to the Crown, it will now be available at a time of financial stress and also at a time when all producers have a season to look forward to.

The Bill, of course, contains concessions for the leaseholder in the form of the write-off of arrears in appropriate cases, and, of course, we recently reduced the level of values by 30 per cent. in the wool areas and granted 30 per cent. remission of land rental. However, the point I wish to stress is that the Bill provides concessions for both the leaseholder and the freeholder, and it is not a valid argument that leasehold is the only form of land tenure that will be recognised when the giving of assistance becomes necessary. I hope the hon. member for Barcoo realises that. Hon. members will recall that the scheme for the remission of local authority rates, which was one of several drought-relief measures, applied equally to leasehold and freehold tenures.

The hon. member for Barcoo also referred to my recent announcement that, in the case of the forced sale of properties which were purely wool-producing, the maximum-area restrictions of the Land Act will not be applied. The hon. member said that, whilst he had no objection to this action, his criticism was that a new standard of maximum area had not been set. Superficially this argument would appear to have merit, and I think it necessary to devote some time to his point.

Firstly, the relaxation applies only in the case of a forced sale. By "forced sale", I mean a sale that is forced through economic factors. The relaxation also applies only to those areas that are regarded as essentially wool-producing areas. These areas are not suitable for the production of beef on an economic and sustained basis. Where the grazier can run cattle in conjunction with sheep, things are not nearly as bad as they are where the property is purely a wool-growing property.

These areas occur largely on the fringes of the pastoral region, and hon. members should appreciate that restrictions on land-holdings are much easier in the pastoral regions; for instance, companies may hold land, whereas they may not hold a selection in the inner districts. There never has been any maximum area prescribed for the pastoral holding.

I again stress that the area to which I refer in terms of relaxed policies refers, in the main, to lands abutting the pastoral zone. Because of the recession in wool, it is only logical that, for the time being at least, there will be a movement inwards of the boundaries of the pastoral zone, and my recent policy announcement was consistent with this movement.

I have said that transfers of properties will be allowed in excess of the present maximum areas, and this is based on the reasoning that these areas, because of economic factors, are no longer suitable for purely individual ownership, and larger areas will be required to give flexibility in production in so far as a degree of beef production may be possible.

Mr. O'Donnell: May I ask you a question at this stage?

Mr. SULLIVAN: No. The hon. member had plenty of time earlier in the debate to ask questions.

The hon. member for Townsville North also made much of this policy relaxation, adopting the superficial argument that this was the Government's only answer to the economic problems facing the wool industry and that, therefore, the Bill was of no account. The measure, of course, is to be considered in the light of other policies. For instance, applications are coming in from the people who are situated on the edge of the pastoral zone for conversion of tenure to pastoral holding.

Because of the recession in the wool industry, it is now inappropriate to prescribe that such a holding be held by an individual. In appropriate cases—and I stress that the case must be appropriate—I am prepared to consider an application for conversion of the lease to pastoral holding tenure on the ground that this will improve the prospects of a satisfactory sale in the case where an unfortunate producer, through no fault of his own, is to be dispossessed of property that in many cases has been a family heritage for some generations. In addition, as leases expire and become due for renewal, we are having regard to the complete change in the economic outlook for wool. Whereas new leases granted in the past were in a form of tenure that required personal and resident ownership, we are now prepared to grant pastoral holding tenure, which, as a security for borrowing, is much more attractive to the institutional lenders on the ground that the market for such a property is much wider than the selection, with its restrictions upon forms of ownership.

It is not so important that the industry be aware of policy in respect of the granting of new leases; but in the case of the forced sales of properties it was quite necessary that landholders, solicitors, banks and brokers be made aware of the change because of its importance in the marketing of properties. It was for that reason that I made sure that the relaxation of policy was widely publicised.

It is necessary to be practical on this issue. There are plenty of wool properties on the market and freely available to any person wishing to buy, and obviously there is no rush or demand for these blocks because of the recession in the wool industry. It is an unfortunate expectation that many more wool properties will be forced on to the market, and, of course, the number of buyers will be limited. If we can do anything to improve the market, it will assist the unfortunate person who is forced to leave the industry. It is important that he get a fair price, particularly as his equity will be very minimal. By the time he has paid off his debts, he will have little

reward for his life's endeavours. If anything can be done to assist these families, it will be done, consistent with public interest, to the limit of my opportunity.

Of secondary consideration is the lack of demand for these properties and the real prospect that they will be abandoned and out of production. Rather than see this, and knowing that larger areas are required for this type of country in the remote areas, the maximum areas have been increased by use of the provisions of section 287 of the Land Act. For the time being these holdings will be considered in the same light as the ordinary pastoral holding, in respect of which there is no maximum area that may be held. The hon. member for Barcoo cannot have any complaint with that, because former Labour Governments, with all their opportunities, at no time prescribed the maximum area that should apply to a pastoral holding.

Under the Act, I have absolute discretion in respect of transfers. In the exercise of my discretion, and consistent with the normal exercise of my responsibilities, I am watching the position quite closely. If it becomes necessary in the light of further developments to review this relaxation or to make further provisions to cope with the disastrous situation that presently confronts us, I assure the hon. member that appropriate measures will be brought before Parliament.

I have said before that the proposed Bill is not designed as a cure-all; it is a cog in the wheel of a series of measures designed to give what assistance is available. I have seen evidence that some landholders will avail themselves of the opportunity to enlarge their operations.

Let me give hon. members an example. I was approached recently by a landholder who for many years has produced wool in what I term a purely wool-producing district. He holds the maximum area prescribed in that regard. A nearby property was advertised for sale by the mortgagee in exercising his rights under a mortgage which is in default. Indications are that there will be no buyer for the property, not only because wool has become an unattractive enterprise but also because the land is not what I regard as good-quality land. The landholder approached the department with a proposal that he purchase the land at the auction, which would mean at the reserve price, on behalf of his 14-year-old son. This is quite feasible from the point of view of this landholder, because he is already established in the district and has already demonstrated his ability to survive. At the present time the maximum-area provision prevented his proposal, which I regarded as reasonable.

That is a typical case of a successful man providing for his family, as every parent is required to do. In terms of the relaxed policy, this grazier will now be able to acquire the property upon trust for his 14-year-old son, and whilst the State regrets

the loss of the producer, who has lost viability, it is a good thing that we have this youth coming on and who no doubt will possess the ability to carry on in the ways of his father. I share the hon. member's view that nobody desires to see undue aggregation, but in these troubled times it must be accepted that wool production will drop by virtue of diversification to other forms of production. It is obvious that there will be fewer wool producers in the future than there have been in the past, and the reaggregation of more marginal sheep lands is inescapable.

I take issue with the hon. member for Barcoo, who suggested that because of my relaxation of policy I will stand condemned in the eyes of the people of Queensland for all time. I think he needs to have a look at himself. When the western graziers who have been troubled by drought and the current economic situation read that statement, will it be the hon. member for Barcoo or I who will stand condemned? I think it will be the hon. member for Barcoo.

Mr. Aikens: Do you live in your western electorate?

Mr. SULLIVAN: Yes. I suppose that is why I have a better understanding of the problem than the hon. member for Barcoo. I say that with all due respect.

The hon. member's reference to the purchase of land by Orientals and his references to the wealthy trafficking in the hardship and misfortunes of others do him no credit and warrant no reply from me. If indeed he is serious in his submissions, I would prefer to save him the embarrassment of a reply. However, I am prepared to discuss any worries he may have in this regard at an appropriate time and place. I would prefer not to waste the time of the Committee at this stage because my respect for the hon. member tells me that possibly he is not serious.

Having dealt with the submissions of the hon. member for Barcoo, I now turn to the hon. member for Warrego, who treated me to an outburst of loud propaganda. That is fairly common for him; he has been doing it for years. Around Charleville and the Warrego he is known as "Propaganda Jack". His argument was that the Government has done nothing for the man on the land other than to sell Queensland to Tokyo. He brought to my mind the memory of that famous war-time personality and expert in the field of propaganda, Tokyo Rose. Just 48 hours after making his speech in this Chamber, the Charleville people are referring to him as "Tokyo Jack". Whilst the hon. member might lack that charming lady's sweet seductiveness, he no doubt subscribes to the view that if he screams loud and long enough, he might at a time of extreme difficulty and hardship manage to satisfy somebody that not enough is being done. He will have to scream much longer and louder before people in the West will take any notice of him.

Whilst my natural inclination is to ignore the hon. member's unreasoned outburst, his regrettable indulgence in the hardship of his people for cheap political motives calls for a brief reminder of the steps that have been taken to bring some measure of assistance and consolation to those who are going through such a terrible period of hardship. I cannot bring down Bills to change the seasons, nor can I legislate to manipulate the markets and finances of the universe. However, very many measures of a practical nature have been introduced and I will bring them to the hon. member's memory.

It would not do any of us any harm to listen to what has been done in this regard. Every time the hon. member for Warrego rises in this Chamber, he indulges in propaganda at the expense of people in financial difficulties. Let me quickly remind him of what has been done for the landholder during recent years. Just short of \$50,000,000 has been paid out in various forms of drought relief including—

Rail freight concessions on stock and fodder; road permit concessions on stock and fodder; subsidies on road transport of stock and fodder; loans through the Agricultural Bank to dairy farmers, graziers, canegrowers and miscellaneous primary producers; wheat purchase on terms; registration fees on drought mortgages waived; stamp duty on drought loans waived; interest rates on established loans were unchanged; grants for Local Authority rates; the seed wheat scheme; remission of interest on succession duties; the 1967 rental remission scheme; the 1970 rental reduction scheme; waiving of penalties on outstanding Crown rental dues; the funding of arrears up to 7 years on leasehold tenures; the removal of arrears from freehold purchases by spreading arrears over the remainder of the term of the purchase; extension of 10 years for payment of freeholding instalments; extension of 10 years on leasehold tenures; a rest from payment of this year's freeholding instalments; the writing-off of rentals to assist a producer to become viable; special schemes in conjunction with the Commonwealth, including—the marginal dairy farms reconstruction scheme, the rural reconstruction scheme; special Commonwealth schemes including—the Commonwealth drought bond scheme, and the Commonwealth wool relief grants scheme.

In addition to those specific measures, indirect assistance and benefits have accrued to rural people through measures such as—

The three Schools of the Air operating at Mount Isa, Charters Towers and Charleville.

I do not know whether the hon. member is aware that there is one at Charleville; I would be surprised if he does.

Other concessions have been—

Special student allowances to offset costs associated with living away from home; the introduction of remote area allowances

and scholarships for students; provision of rural training schools for the wool and beef industries; provision of tertiary education centres available to rural people.

I apologise for reiterating earlier advice, but I do so only because of the matters raised by the hon. member. I might send a copy of my speech to "The Western Times" at Charleville, too. Further benefits and assistance accruing to rural people are—

The improvement in opportunities for irrigation by virtue of the farm water supplies scheme and increased activity in the provision of major storages; a tremendous sum has been expended in the provision of bitumen roads in the beef areas; the investment in research and extension work within the Department of Primary Industries; special drought assistance finance has been made available to Local Authorities to increase opportunities for employment.

These and other measures which I specifically mentioned during my introductory speech represent but some of the special measures taken to assist those engaged in primary industry, and in the light of this I cannot accept the hon. member's argument that nothing has been done for the man on the land.

The hon. member also mentioned two special developmental schemes. The first was the King Ranch project. It has already been thoroughly canvassed in this Parliament and I am sure hon. members want nothing further from me on that one. The second was the Lakeland Downs project and I think I should make some reference to this particular scheme.

The Lakeland Downs project is the brainchild of Clive Foyster, who made his millions out of mining our beaches. This gentleman feels that he should put back into Queensland that which he has taken out rather than establish himself in the "sport of Kings", as I believe other members of his family may have done. I admired Mr. Foyster for this, and when I heard what he proposed to do in this remote area about 50 miles west of Cooktown I was quick to encourage him at every turn. Queensland needs men of capital and enterprise—and this certainly is Foyster.

For so long we have heard talk of northern potential, but how slow is the process of conversion to reality.

Mr. Aikens: The A.L.P. is sour because he went to North Queensland.

Mr. SULLIVAN: The hon. member could well be right.

Honourable Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Cross-firing will not be permitted.

Mr. SULLIVAN: Mr. Foyster proposed to do what normally is a function of Governments in opening up new areas—the investment of millions in a developmental scheme based on unproven criteria.

The hon. member for Roma likened this experiment to the operations of the British Food Corporation on the Central Highlands, and, as he pointed out, even though that scheme in itself did not achieve its objective, the side benefits from the investment were of tremendous importance to the economy of the State. It proved that grain could be grown in the Central Highlands. Other people went to that district and grew it successfully. History may show that Foyster is doing something similar. We do not know, but at least I gave him the opportunity—and I feel contented that I did so.

Mr. Tomkins: A very wise decision.

Mr. SULLIVAN: Thank you.

It requires no great ability to foresee the tremendous barriers to be overcome in a large-scale investment in intensive farming and grazing in that remote area. This man is obliged to build dams, a town, extensive roads and even a port and an airstrip. He has set up a stud and, I believe, will provide an abattoir at the port site. To round off the exercise, I point out that there is the intention to develop tourism as a secondary consideration.

In undertaking this tremendous development, Mr. Foyster subscribes to the view that farming on a large scale can be economic if the farmer follows the prescriptions of modern technology. He has employed highly qualified men in cattle, in pasture, in cropping, and in all other facets of the enterprise. As an employer of labour he sets a high standard in housing and accommodation and amenities, and in all those things so necessary in establishing a happy community in an outpost such as Lakeland. He is doing all this on an area of land which, according to approved standards, is not more than an economic unit for an ordinary-type cattle enterprise in that region.

The hon. member for Warrego should keep these things in mind when he talks about developing the potential of the Gulf Country. If Mr. Foyster had not gone there and done what he is doing and employed the number of people he is employing, the area would have remained a grazing selection running about 1,500 to 1,600 head of cattle. The tremendous production envisaged by his scheme is derived from the more intensive use of resources. Relatively speaking, the value of his land is quite significantly less than, say, an average property situated in the Taroom district.

Mr. Aikens: Sir Kenneth Morris is doing a great job, too.

Mr. SULLIVAN: This is very true. We must have every admiration for these men.

Mr. Houston: They tossed him out of the Senate. What's up with you?

Mr. SULLIVAN: The Leader of the Opposition should keep out of this. He might have wisdom in certain matters, but he does

not know much about the land. He has indicated that fact on his trips round the country.

The ordinary producer in the Taroom district can obtain freehold without any regard to special development, and there is no reason why Mr. Foyster should not be given the same treatment in relation to his enterprise.

Mr. Foyster will prove something at Lakeland. I am very proud to be associated with this scheme, just as I am with the further experiment that the Government has encouraged in the heath country further up the Peninsula. I suppose that later on I will be "knocked" for that, too. Hon. members will recall that at McDonnell, towards the northern extremity of the Peninsula, the Comalco interests are undertaking a spectacular programme in the development of heath-type country, which is presently unproductive.

It is one thing for Mr. Foyster to produce his sorghum and his beef, but it is another to market this produce on favourable terms. Mr. Foyster is looking to Japan for these markets, and I understand that his trial shipment last year was well received. Arising out of this, it appears that he is succeeding in tying up marketing contracts involving participation to some degree in his company. I understand that as part of the marketing deal, a relatively minor shareholding is to be conveyed to Japanese interests. At the same time, those Japanese interests are to make finance available on loan to assist in investment required to make this marketing possible.

Mr. Jensen: He will sell it out, as he did with his stud.

Mr. SULLIVAN: Is that any different from the position in the coal-mining industry? Japanese and American interests are involved in mining on a wide scale, thus giving employment to Queensland people who, as miners, Labour members hope will support them politically. However, recent elections in that area, through the ballot box, have shown that they appreciate this development, as they continue to return the hon. member for Mackenzie as their representative. They have shown that they want a private-enterprise Government.

There is, of course, the question of shipping and the provision of a port and access to it.

There is no question of Queensland being sold to Tokyo, as "Tokyo Jack" tells us.

Mr. TUCKER: I rise to a point of order. Is the Minister in order in referring to another member as "Tokyo Jack"?

The CHAIRMAN: If the Minister was referring to somebody in this Chamber and identifying him, the Chair would step in. I do not know whom he was referring to.

Mr. SULLIVAN: The hon. member for Warrego also questioned the adequacy of the Bill in the light of the serious situation faced by wool, and I think at this point of time that he considered the Bill as if it were a solution to all existing problems. The actual position is that the provisions of this Bill are complementary to the rural reconstruction scheme and must be considered in that light. I thought I made that clear at the introductory stage.

The State is negotiating an agreement with the Commonwealth in order to finance its rural reconstruction operations. Rural reconstruction by way of the adjustment of debts, the building up of the size of properties and the provision of carry-on and restocking loans is a separate exercise which will be brought before Parliament next week.

The provisions of this Bill, whilst constituting significant assistance to primary producers, are in fact complementary to the scheme of rural reconstruction, which has yet to come before Parliament.

The hon. member for Townsville North made a commendable attempt at responsibility and laid stress upon the fundamental problem that the costs of producing wool exceed the prices paid to the grower. This is, in fact, the real problem of the moment, and the answer to it is most elusive. For the property that is a purely wool-producing property, there is grave trouble. We all know of the activities of the Australian Wool Commission and its attempts to force up the price of wool. We all know that wool is returning an average of less than 30c a lb. and that a price of about 40c a lb. is necessary before wool can re-establish itself as a healthy, strong and viable enterprise—and it will not be too healthy even at a price of 40c a lb. We all know that textile people can well afford to pay more than 40c. Why they will not, I do not know. If we can get an answer to that question, we may be able to cope.

Mr. O'Donnell: We can guess. If we buy a woollen tie, it costs a couple of dollars.

Mr. SULLIVAN: That is so, but the growers still do not get a good price for their wool.

Whilst the hon. member for Townsville North has isolated the problem, I note that he made no constructive suggestion as to how anyone can cut costs or increase the price. The Bill tends to cut costs, and the rural reconstruction scheme can at least buy time. Here, I agree quite strongly with the hon. member for Isis in his assertion that at the moment time for the wool-grower is a very valuable commodity. I have stressed that point repeatedly—and I have stressed it in Canberra when arguing for more money for Queensland. Nothing is static in this world today, particularly in the marketing field. If we can buy time, we may buy the solution.

The hon. member for Townsville North criticised the Government for requiring a first mortgage before advancing funds for drought relief. This is not so. The Agricultural Bank handles advances for drought relief and does not in fact insist on a first mortgage. Where the bank secures its advance by way of a property mortgage, it is prepared to follow behind the first mortgagee and stand in line.

Although the hon. member was mistaken in his argument, it might assist him to know that there is a problem where the Agricultural Bank is unable to ensure a repayment of the advance. In these cases, the bank requires a priority assignment on produce and not a first mortgage. Certain lending authorities are not prepared to assign a share of the property income, and in these circumstances a landholder is deprived of the drought relief loan.

Mr. Tucker: It is almost a distinction without a difference.

Mr. SULLIVAN: Well, it is a distinction without a difference, but there is a problem there.

The hon. member will appreciate that these are Commonwealth funds which are repayable to the Commonwealth, and if the enterprise is not viable to the extent that the producer is unable to repay the loan, the State is unable to make the advance. I am quite sure the hon. member is not suggesting that loans be made that cannot be repaid. If grants are to be made out of Commonwealth funds, these should be made directly. I repeat that the State is not insisting on a first mortgage, as claimed by the hon. member.

I join issue with the hon. member for Townsville North on one matter. He claimed that Country Party members had proved that they are out of touch with reality as far as rural industries are concerned. Let me say, in defence of every Country Party member in this Parliament, that nobody in the Country Party, or the Liberal Party, is out of touch with the problems of rural industry. We are aware that we are going through very troublesome times. This applies not only to Queensland, but throughout the Commonwealth and in other parts of the world. We are grappling with the situation, and people are realistic enough to know that this is a problem that is not easy of solution and they are appreciative of what we are doing.

Mr. Tucker: You are completely wrong when you say it exists throughout the world. The rest of the world is making a fair living.

Mr. SULLIVAN: I said it existed throughout the Commonwealth and in other parts of the world.

Mr. Tucker: You use this generalisation, which is not correct.

Mr. SULLIVAN: I said that, in relation to rural industries, it existed throughout the Commonwealth and in other parts of the

world. I agree that one section of the community in Australia is living in a very affluent state because of our industrial and commercial development and the policies of free-enterprise Governments, at both Commonwealth and State levels. And thank God that we have our industrial and commercial development! Without it, our economy would be in very bad shape because of the bad seasons that the rural industry has been through.

Mr. Tucker: The primary industries today are not making a decent living.

Mr. SULLIVAN: This may be so, but friends of the hon. member, such as Hawke, are always clamouring for higher wages. We all have a responsibility in this. The primary producers' costs are going up, and at least this Government, of which I am proud to be a member, is grappling with the situation and endeavouring to help. And what is contained in this Bill is an indication of our efforts to help. However, I do not want to become bogged down, as I have further to go.

I do not know that I should answer the hon. member for Logan. He followed in the footsteps of the hon. member for Warrego in that he was looking for rural reconstruction in this Land Act Amendment Bill. The rural reconstruction scheme will come as a separate exercise and we can go into those matters at a later stage, so we can look forward to hearing from him again.

The hon. member has no knowledge whatsoever of the subject matter of the Bill, and for this reason I do not intend to comment in detail upon his contribution to the debate. I think it is a reflection upon him that one who knows so little about these issues has the gall to make findings related to overseas monopolies, aggregations of land and the rest of the socialistic rubbish that I have come to expect from this hon. member. I say this without any personal disrespect for the hon. member. If he does not know anything about a subject, he should leave it to somebody who does.

Mr. Baldwin: I said I knew enough. I said nothing socialistic at all.

Mr. SULLIVAN: As usual when one meets this socialistic type of thinking, there is a conflict in logic. The times have substantially broken the primary producer and, as a result, rural business has suffered. As a corollary, the worker is adversely affected—and the hon. member talks about a shot in the arm for the larger landholder at the expense of the worker and the taxpayer! From where I sit, this is a classical example of the way in which the welfare of the worker is wedded to the health of the enterprise. The two cannot be divorced. When the primary producer saw better times, so did the worker. Now that the pendulum has swung the other way, the effects of adversity flow on to many.

The hon. member for Isis made this point very soundly. He purports to espouse the cause of the primary producer, but he flies his true colours when he argues that the consumer and the taxpayer are being hit by the Bill. How ridiculous can anyone be! I should not have to point out to the hon. member that the main concession granted by the Bill is time to pay.

Mr. Baldwin: I agree.

Mr. SULLIVAN: The hon. member for Isis indicated that he has at least a knowledge of the problem. What we are doing is buying time. Arrears are postponed, and this will cost the taxpayer nothing. I also wish to stress that rural reconstruction is based on repayable loans, and any suggestion of hand-outs, or impositions upon taxpayers, is divorced from the facts.

Mr. Baldwin: Where is the money coming from?

Mr. SULLIVAN: I mentioned at the start of my speech that I would not answer in detail the contributions of some hon. members. I thank Government members for their support.

Mr. O'Donnell: There weren't many Government speakers.

Mr. SULLIVAN: Their number very nearly matched the number of speakers on the other side of the Chamber.

Mr. Aiken: Another extravagant statement! Another stupid statement!

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. SULLIVAN: I have already referred to the hon. member for Isis. I listened to his speech with keen interest.

Mr. Tucker: Who was that?

Mr. SULLIVAN: The hon. member for Isis. There were other members who spoke. Two, in particular, namely, the hon. members for Port Curtis and South Brisbane, entered the debate late at night merely to bat out time. With due respect to them, they made no real contribution at all. I am sorry to have to say that. Perhaps the hon. member for Port Curtis showed that he knew a little more about the subject than the hon. member for South Brisbane, but both those speeches were a complete waste of time.

Mr. Hanson: You'll keep!

Mr. SULLIVAN: I am merely speaking the truth.

Mr. Hanson: You come to Port Curtis and put up some of the drivel you have put up this morning. You will get some response, all right.

Mr. SULLIVAN: The point is that I am not like Murphy's dog; I can give it, and I can take it, too. If the hon. member wants to dish it out, I can take it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Motion (Mr. Sullivan) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

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

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier) (12.41 p.m.): I ask permission to move the motion in an amended form.

(Leave granted.)

Mr. BELKE-PETERSEN: I move:

"That a Bill be introduced to make provision for the better distribution of electoral districts."

The intention of the Bill is very adequately and clearly described in its title. I should have no need to tell hon. members that it has been drafted with the object of giving the people of Queensland a parliamentary representation more in keeping with the situation existing as a result of population growth and other demographic movements over the last 13 years.

By force of circumstance there have been only two electoral redistributions in this State since the one effected in 1935. By reason of the 1939-1945 war and other causes, no redistribution was undertaken until 1949. In that period—an era not so much of social upheaval as of social change—factors emerged that were given recognition to some extent by the Labour Government of the day in 1949.

In 1958 a further redistribution was undertaken and, as the Premier of the day clearly stated when introducing his Bill, its principles were entirely in line with the principles of the Bill introduced in 1949.

May I say at the outset that the Bill I am now presenting to the Committee is, to a very large degree, based on the 1958 and 1949 legislation and embodies the same basic principles. It provides for 78 electoral districts, distributed in the same three electoral zones as in 1958, namely, the metropolitan, provincial cities and country zones.

Another aspect of major importance is that it will permit the electoral tribunal to be appointed to give recognition to the needs of the outlying and sparsely populated portions of a State that embraces a geographical area of about 667,000 square miles.

In essence, the zoning provisions allow for a metropolitan zone of 30 electoral districts, and a provincial zone, consisting of 20 provincial city electoral districts made up of three electoral districts based on Townsville, three based on Toowoomba,

three in Central Queensland based on Rockhampton and Gladstone, three in the Gold Coast area, one in Cairns, one in Maryborough, one in Bundaberg, two in Ipswich, one in Mackay, one based on Mt. Isa and one based on Redcliffe. The country zone will comprise 28 electoral districts.

Now, while this zoning proposal is in conformity with obvious requirements, it will affect, to a greater or lesser degree, certain electoral districts presently in and adjacent to the provincial city areas determined by the 1958 legislation.

As I have said, in framing this Bill the Government has maintained the principles embodied in the 1958 redistribution legislation, which, in turn, followed substantially the Labour Government's measure of 1949.

To be a little more explicit—the principle of dividing the State's geographical area into three electoral zones is retained. The vital factors of community and/or diversity of interests, means of communication, physical features, the necessity to consider remoteness and distance from population centres, the density of population, and the probable future movements of population, are matters which the tribunal will take into account.

While it is true that there is, unfortunately in my view, a great concentration of people in the metropolitan area, there is a misconception abroad in some quarters concerning population growth here.

The increase in metropolitan population has not occurred in inner-city areas. Indeed, there has been a marked reduction of population numbers in these places. The great population increase in the metropolis has occurred on the fringe of the metropolitan zone, and this is equally true of the growth of the provincial cities, where the greatest population increase has been in their out-skirt areas. Let me make it perfectly clear that this Bill recognises the resultant electoral disparities which have occurred in recent years, and it is intended to fully rectify these disparities and to cater for further inevitable growth for a period of some years.

At this stage I could quote, as my predecessor in office did in 1958 when introducing the previous legislation, actual statistics of population in the metropolitan electoral districts, but I know that almost every hon. member of this Committee is familiar with the basics involved. Similarly, there are not many who would be unaware of the similar situation prevailing in the provincial cities.

The major machinery provision is for the appointment of a commission to undertake the redistribution of electoral districts. The duties of the commissioners are clearly laid down in the Bill, together with the basis of distribution for the various zones. It should be noted that in 1958, when the State's population totalled 1,449,000, provision was made for the creation of 78 electoral districts.

Queensland's population is now of the order of 1,810,000, but the number of electoral districts has not been increased. Indeed, this situation means that parliamentary representation per head of population is well below the comparable level in the other Australian States, even taking into account the compact States of Victoria and Tasmania.

It must be remembered, therefore, that on this basis country electoral districts are of far greater area than those in the metropolitan and provincial city zones, and it follows that the constituents in these latter zones have easier access to their elected representative than their rural and outback counterparts.

In considering this point—and it is a subject on which greater elaboration would be well justified—I need only quote the words of the Labour Premier of the day when introducing his Bill in 1949. The late Mr. Hanlon said—

"It must be remembered that every acre of land in Queensland is held in occupation—and in all parts of the State, even the isolated parts, people are living.

"Those people are entitled to at least the same services as those in the metropolitan area get. As a matter of fact, if there is to be any balance in favour of any section in this respect it should be in favour of the people developing the outback parts of the State."

This sentiment is whole-heartedly endorsed by my Government, and the necessary legislative provisions have been incorporated in the Bill to cater for it.

Nobody should lose sight of the fact that the people of Queensland are fully aware that an electoral redistribution is not only warranted but is absolutely necessary at this point of time if they are to be given the best opportunity of expressing their democratic preference in government at the next general election.

This Bill is designed to create the necessary environment for that functioning of their inherent right. It has been designed to establish an independent tribunal whose members will carry out their function in accordance with the broad intentions and purposes set out by Parliament in this Bill.

The measure is a necessary, a just and an efficient instrument, and it fulfils the Government's undertaking to the people of Queensland that it would introduce legislation during the current session of Parliament to effect a fair and honest adjustment of electoral district boundaries.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition) (12.52 p.m.): For well over 10 months now we have seen the Country and Liberal Parties at each other's throat, fighting among themselves in an effort to come up with some kind of compromise to present to this Parliament. After that 10 months or more, we now find that it takes the

Premier but 10 minutes to introduce his Bill. The important things that we want to know about were those that were not mentioned. He did suggest that there would be a certain number of seats and a certain number of zones and that a commission will be appointed. However, he did not suggest in any detail what the relationship between one zone and another is likely to be. He did not give us any details about the commission—as to the number of members or who they are likely to be.

Before we go into the details of the Bill, I think I should put on record some of the history of the unfortunate episodes that the people of Queensland have had to witness. I think it would be true to say that, over recent months, the citizens of Brisbane and of Queensland have been subjected to power politics at its worst. It was a power struggle, not in the public interest, but in the interest of individuals controlling the Country and Liberal Parties.

I do not want to single out any individuals, but I think the public know full well quite a number of names that were constantly before them as having opinions and ideas, and as being prominently tied up in this redistribution proposal. I do not think it would be unfair to say that the six most prominent people in this power struggle were the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Deputy Country Party Leader, the Deputy Liberal Party Leader, and Mr. Robinson and Mr. Sparkes as respective presidents of the Liberal Party and the Country Party.

Mr. Bromley: They were called the "zone rangers".

Mr. HOUSTON: They could be given many names, depending on how one looks at the matter. But it is obvious that, during this time, no great love was lost between these gentlemen, on either a party basis or an inter-party basis.

If we trace the history of this matter, we find that the Premier was the first to make a worth-while statement. He said that any redistribution would result in 82 seats. There is plenty of evidence to show that many news reporters accepted that statement as his opinion and thought that he would continue to hold it. However, we found that Mr. Sparkes came out more strongly and said that in any redistribution he would not have the "city slickers" telling the country people how many seats there would be or where they would be. It is interesting to note that at that stage the Deputy Leader of the Country Party, the Minister for Mines and Main Roads, did not have much to say at all.

Mr. Camm: I was a silent worker.

Mr. HOUSTON: The Minister was very silent. I do not want to misjudge him or give hon. members wrong information. At that time he did not have very much at all to say publicly. On the other hand, the Deputy Premier, Mr. Chalk, speaking on behalf of the Liberal Party, said there would be 78

seats. I will say this much for him: he has been consistent all along. Then Mr. Robinson said he would not have the "cow cockies" telling the city people how many electorates there would be.

Mr. R. E. Moore: He made no such statement.

Mr. HOUSTON: He said something to that effect. The Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party, Dr. Delamothe, did not have much to say. If I am wrong and he feels that he had a lot to say, naturally we will be pleased to hear about it.

In November, 1970, Mr. Sparkes changed his mind. He "dropped" the Premier and said that 78 seats would be acceptable, provided the present zones were retained. Perhaps he knew all along that this matter would be the one for negotiation and that the others were only window-dressing, pressure politics and, as I have said, part of a power struggle. Evidence of this is found in the fact that in his introduction the Premier said that there would be 78 seats and three zones, which is exactly what Mr. Sparkes said in November of last year would be the Country Party's attitude. Of course, Mr. Robinson said, "We will have 78 seats, but we will have an eastern zone of 65 seats, a western zone of seven seats and a south-western zone of six seats." That was the situation in November of last year.

The next link in the chain of events was the breakdown of negotiations and the demand by Mr. Sparkes, on behalf of the Country Party, that the number of seats be 82. The argument continued, and I am sure the public grew sick and tired of reports that appeared in the Press. One man was attacking the other and one party was attacking the other. Usually the public do not care very much about squabbles between individuals and political parties, but when the whole principle of democracy is at stake in political squabbling they become interested. The public took note of statements made by certain prominent people.

Mr. Sparkes was the first to give way. He dropped his demand for 82 seats and accepted 79. The Liberal Party stuck to its original demand. At the same time Mr. Sparkes accused Mr. Robinson of having made untrue and unfounded allegations about electoral redistribution. That is a serious charge for one prominent person to lay against another on such an important issue. It became obvious to everybody that the Government parties could not agree and that, in view of the bad feeling that had been generated between them, they would have to leave the matter to their parliamentary representatives.

The stage was reached when the parliamentarians were called upon to do the job given to them by their respective organisations. But again arguments developed, with the Liberal Party insisting on 78 seats and the Country Party demanding that 79 seats

be established. I ask: why the change? If a person has a principle that is worth fighting for, why does he change it?

Mr. Miller: Have you changed?

Mr. HOUSTON: No. I have always said there should be 78 seats, and I shall prove that 78 is the correct number.

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

Mr. HOUSTON: To continue with my outline of events prior to the presentation of this Bill today, I point out that a lot of haggling took place after the Premier and the Deputy Premier got together again, and the first casualties in the power struggle became apparent. It was obvious that if the Liberals were to have their way and get an increased number of seats in Brisbane, some country seats would have to be eliminated. The first seat that comes to mind is that of the Deputy Leader of the Government, that is, Lockyer. Of course, it would not be considered proper to tackle that seat first, so naturally the one to receive consideration was Bowen.

Mr. Sullivan: You are still scratching.

Mr. HOUSTON: I am not scratching at all.

The Minister for Justice became the first casualty in the big power struggle. However, a man of his eminence could not be thrown on the scrap-heap simply because there was no seat for him. It was common knowledge that one of the extra seats in Brisbane was to be offered to him, but he declined it. That is why we have seen an intimation in the Press—neither denied nor confirmed—that he is to be sent to London on behalf of the State.

Mr. Hinze: He would do a good job, too.

Mr. HOUSTON: No-one is denying that he would do a good job. The point is that he would not have been offered the position had it not been that there was no seat for him. Of course, that made the hon. member for Burdekin very happy.

Only a few weeks ago the Premier finally agreed with the Liberal Party on the basis of 78 seats, and at that stage everyone thought a Bill was under way. I point out, however, that that stage was not reached until after we had made an effort to get the whole matter debated. It was strange today to hear the Premier admit that the Bill of which he previously gave notice was not then in existence and that, in fact, what was to be presented to Parliament was not a Bill amending the 1958 legislation but a completely new Bill. The Premier adopted that method—

Mr. Sullivan: He did not want to interfere with your seat. He wanted to keep you as Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. HOUSTON: That would be all right. There is no way the Government could interfere with my seat. The people in the electorate of Bulimba are quite happy to have me as their representative.

The Premier agreed with the Liberals that, basically, there should be a four-zone system, with 30 seats in Brisbane, 20 provincial-urban seats, 23 country seats, and five western seats. The only departure from that arrangement is that the five western and the far northern seats have been combined with the Liberal's proposed 23 country seats to give them the 28 anticipated seats. When the Country Party organisation analysed the position, it became very obvious that with the present set-up of 28 metropolitan seats, 12 provincial seats, plus the Gold Coast and Redcliffe seats, the Liberal Party was able to contest 44 seats against the Labour Party to the exclusion of the Country Party. However, the new set-up gives the Liberal Party direct access to 50 seats, or six seats more than previously. The Liberal Party knows as well as I do that really genuine country people do not accept the Liberal Party in any way. It will have to stick to electorates in the metropolitan area to win seats.

Mr. Hinze: I don't think that is quite right. You won only nine seats out of the 37 you contested in the country.

Mr. HOUSTON: We gave the hon. member an awful jolt. The Liberals do not hold any provincial seats at present, and they have "given away" the one they hold in the country. The position now is that there are 50 possible seats that the Liberal Party can contest instead of the former 44.

Naturally, there was more wrangling, and the old fight between those who follow the Minister for Mines and those who prefer the Premier again came to the fore. This is why the Premier, right at the last minute—a last-ditch stand if you like—insisted on 79 seats. Of course, he did not get very far. Even his threat to eliminate preferential voting, which would have hurt the Liberal Party, had no great effect. (Government laughter.)

It is no use laughing. My pipeline into the Liberal Party has proved very successful in the past, and my information has been right on the ball. It is quite significant that final arrangements were made in the aeroplane purchased by the Government. History will now record that the Deputy Premier got his way on redistribution and the Premier got his aeroplane. That is the position as it now stands.

Let me now deal with the proposal that has been put forward as a compromise in the fighting and wrangling that has gone on between the Government parties over the past 10 months. And there will be a good deal more of it, because the three-corner-contest idea is not finished with yet. It has never been denied. The Premier claims, "It was in the Press. It must be right." The Minister

for Labour and Tourism is the champion of this Parliament in saying, "I gave it to the Press. You read it in the Press, that's it", and makes no statement to Parliament. Naturally, we have to accept these undenied Press statements by Ministers. Everyone knows that the important issue is how many seats the Liberal Party and the Country Party will fight out in three-cornered contests.

Mr. Camm: The main issue is how many we can keep you from winning.

Mr. HOUSTON: Don't worry about that. The good sense of the electors of Queensland will ensure that there is a Labour Government next year. There is no doubt at all about that. However, I want to deal with this proposal, and I will not go past what we have been told so far. The Opposition supports the introduction of redistribution, full stop. But we will have a good deal more to say about the Government's attempts at gerrymandering, and we will want to know a good deal more about who will be on the proposed commission and their backgrounds. We do not want the same thing happening as happened after the last redistribution.

There are to be 30 metropolitan seats. The Premier has not told us whether they will extend past the present Brisbane city boundary. The Premier, in his reply (or the Deputy Premier if he speaks), should tell us that. We should be told what effect that will have on the Brisbane City Council wards. This is important because, just as parliamentary electorates in Brisbane are completely out of proportion, so are the Brisbane City Council wards. Whatever happens to the State electorates must have some effect on the City of Brisbane, and the people of Brisbane are entitled to know.

It is suggested that there will be 20 provincial city seats. The Premier said at the outset that the commission will take into account communications and similar interests. I think those were his words. I do not want to deliberately misquote him. How can he say that the people of Mt. Isa, for instance, and those of Redcliffe are exactly the same? They are being given the same quota.

Mr. Camm: You give it a different quota.

Mr. HOUSTON: Is it now proposed to have quotas within quotas? Are we to have different quotas within zones? Why didn't the Premier say that? Why is he again hiding behind half-truths and only partly saying something? The Premier has not told the Committee that his deputy leader knows full well that, although the Premier says there are to be three zones, there will be different quotas within those zones. How many different quotas does the Premier envisage? Surely the basic principle of democracy is one vote, one value. The Labour Party has agreed, although many people do not agree with us, that there is a case for the far-western and far-flung areas, where communications are bad. We have agreed that there is a case for lower quotas in those areas.

It now appears that when a zone of 20 provincial cities is set up, there will be quotas within that zone. What is to be done in the case of the metropolitan area? Are there to be different quotas in that zone, and quotas that differ yet again in country areas? There will be more zones and quotas under this redistribution than there were under the previous one. The Committee is entitled to know what the Government has in mind on these matters.

I return to my original submission. Surely no-one can argue that the same communication problems face the residents of Mt. Isa and those of Redcliffe. What happened only a few weeks ago? Mt. Isa was completely isolated from the rest of Queensland as a result of flooding. Apparently the railway line to Mt. Isa was reconstructed with such poor engineering skill that every time there is heavy rain some part of it is washed away. The people of Mt. Isa will be asking a lot of questions on why they are placed in the same category as those at Redcliffe or on the Gold Coast. There is no comparison at all between those centres.

The hon. member for Burke sees himself as a representative of western people. According to Liberal and Country Party thinking, he does not represent the West at all; he represents a provincial city with only the same problems as the Brisbane metropolitan area. I cannot see that there is any great difference in the problems of people living on the Gold Coast, at Redcliffe, and in Brisbane. All are virtually in the same area. If the Government would proceed with recommendations made to it on transportation and electrify railways in Brisbane and the surrounding areas, it would take no longer to travel from the Gold Coast to Brisbane than it does to reach the city from Wynnum or some of the northern suburbs.

I now wish to make a few remarks on the size of electorates. There has been a lot of talk about the fact that country electorates must have fewer people. Let us examine the position in New South Wales. In the metropolitan area in that State, where the smallest electorates are, there are seats of 28,000, 29,000 and 30,000 electors. In the largest electorate, which covers 64,000 sq. miles, there are 19,000 electors. Broken Hill, with an area of 59,000 sq. miles, has 19,000-odd electors. Barwon is 17,000 sq. miles in area, and it has 19,000 electors.

(Time expired.)

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (2.28 p.m.): I hope to bring a cooling breeze of common sense to this debate, because I have been here for some time and I know the problems of the State as a whole. I am amazed at the attitude of the A.L.P., because, when all is said and done, the A.L.P. was conceived in the back country of this State. It was born in the back country of this State, and, till the 1957 split, it lived

in the back country of this State. Now the present-day breed of A.L.P. is sacrificing the back country in the interests of the "golden circle", which is the circle within a radius of 100 miles of their beloved Brisbane.

I can remember the 1949 redistribution of electoral boundaries by the last genuine Labour Government to have control of the Treasury benches. Today the Premier quoted some of the remarks made on that memorable occasion by the late Hon. E. M. Hanlon. He said, "Those who live in the back country, and those who really produce the wealth of this State, are entitled to the same amenities and facilities as anyone else". I remember that redistribution quite well. I admit that there were several blatant anomalies in it. For instance, in order to make its position safe on the Treasury benches, the Government of the day brought in some measures that were quite remarkable.

Opposition Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: I would not expect anything better from the ignorant, uncouth members of the A.L.P., and I sympathise with you, Mr. Hooper, in the job you have in trying to keep order.

I remember that on that particular occasion the Mundingburra electorate, with about 8,000 voters, was cut up and, believe it or not, Charters Towers, which is 63 miles from the coast, as the crow flies, was classified as a western electorate with fewer than 4,000 voters.

Let us be honest about redistribution of electoral boundaries. Every political party wants a redistribution to suit its own political ends. It is not concerned with the welfare of the people; it is not concerned with the development or the progress of the State. In this Parliament we have the Country Party, which, quite naturally, wants a redistribution to suit the political interests of the Country Party; we have the Liberal Party, which wants a redistribution to suit the political interests of the Liberal Party; and we have the A.L.P., which wants a redistribution of electoral boundaries to suit the "new look"—and I emphasise those words—Labour Party that has been imposed on the people of Queensland by the Trades Hall gang since the 1957 split.

Let us have a look, Mr. Hooper, at the various proposals being put forward relative to the redistribution of electoral boundaries. I listened from a seat in the Speaker's gallery to the Premier's introduction of the Bill, and I, too, am going to be very eager to find out what the zones are, what particular areas they embrace, how many seats will be included, and so on. If I do not agree with them, at least I have not to ring up Tommy Burns at the Trades Hall, or Jack Egerton, or Stanaway, and say, "Please, Mr. Burns", or, "Please, Mr. Egerton", or, "Please, Mr. Stanaway, may I say what

I want to say on this particular measure?" I am sure that when I put the question to my party it will agree, although there may be a majority of only one, with my viewpoint.

Opposition Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: Let us have a look at this great State of ours and the wealth that it pours into the national economy.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Although I called "Order" previously, I did not ask the hon. member for Toowoomba East to refrain from talking in front of the hon. member who is on his feet addressing the Committee. This time I ask the hon. member for Toowoomba East and the hon. member for Logan, if they want to converse, not to do it in front of the member who is addressing the Committee.

Mr. AIKENS: I am used to it, Mr. Hooper. I have learnt that one can never expect anything but filth from a sewer. Consequently, I am prepared to meet all the organised interruption that is directed at me by the "Johnny-come-latelies" in the Labour Party.

I believe, and my party believes, that the electoral districts in the State should be assessed not on the basis of people—not on the number of electors—but on the basis of the wealth produced in each area and the calibre of the people in each area. That is where we take issue with the A.L.P.

I was privileged to read recently the so-called redistribution plans of the A.L.P. At first it came out, quite openly and blatantly, and said that its redistribution would be made on the basis of one vote, one value. All the "floozyies", all the female impersonators, all the "queers", all the "queens", all the "bum boys" on the South Coast and elsewhere were to be given the same electoral representation in this State as the men out in the back country who pour wealth into the coffers of the State. Because of the tremendous pressure put on the A.L.P. by "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" and other newspapers, the A.L.P. began to weaken and, to our surprise, we read in the columns of "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" not so long ago a long diatribe by Mr. Tom Burns, who, of course, tells members of the A.L.P. what to do, that the Australian Labour Party had decided that there was to be a special area for the West over the other side of the Great Dividing Range.

Members of the A.L.P. did not tell us which Great Dividing Range they meant; they did not tell us whether some of the electorates were to go over the range, or whether some would be on the western side of the range and some on the eastern side of the range. The point that intrigued me and all the other genuine North Queenslanders was that right from Coolangatta to

Cape York, right up the great eastern coast of Queensland, they were going to have only one zone. In that one zone from Coolangatta to Cape York, two or three hundred miles wide running up the coast, there was going to be the A.L.P. principle of one vote, one value.

If the A.L.P. had the power it would give people on the Gold Coast, people within the golden circle, and other people around this favoured south-eastern corner of the State the same electoral representation as the people in the great sugar industry from Bundaberg in the South to Mossman in the North, who pour millions and millions of dollars every year into the national economy. Without the pouring of that money into the national economy there would be no Brisbane; it would be a shanty town with a collection of bag-and-bark humpies along the Brisbane River.

The A.L.P. would give exactly the same electoral representation to those in the golden circle as it would give to those in the great cattle areas of Central Queensland and Western Queensland; it would give the same representation to those in the golden circle as it would give to people in the North in the great mining complexes—the big coal-mining complex in Central Queensland, in Mt. Isa, at Weipa and elsewhere. It would give the same electoral representation to those in the golden circle as it would give to the farmers on the Atherton Tableland and all up along the northern coast, to the farmers who recently established the rice industry in the Burdekin, to the farmers who have established and maintained the maize industry on the Tableland. All those people are of worth to the State. Without them there would be no Queensland; without them there would be no Brisbane.

That is the expressed and expounded policy of the Leader of the Opposition. I hope he has been talking with the full approval and concurrence of Mr. Burns and Mr. Egerton. I hope that he does not fall out with them. That is how he would consider those people who add to the wealth of the State and who have made it what it is today—the men on the great sheep lands of the West, where they go out among the flies and the heat, floods and droughts, who pour millions of dollars into the economy of this State and add to the national wealth. All those men are to be treated in exactly the same way as the pitiable, motley collection in Brisbane and down along the South Coast. As far as the A.L.P. is concerned, the man in the West, the jackeroo, the miner and the cane-cutter, are no better than the "pork and beans" down on the South Coast.

Mr. Baldwin interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: Well, there could be a few decent people in Logan, although I really cannot understand how they could be very intelligent when they send the hon. member to Parliament.

I am not going to spend a lot of time on this issue. I have dealt with the redistribution of electoral boundaries on more than one occasion. I rose today to tell the Committee what the genuine people in North Queensland want, what they might get—it is a big “might”—from this Bill, and for a surety that they will not get from the A.L.P. They will not get from the A.L.P. the representation to which they are entitled. This is the party whose leader went out into the back country, and with tears in his eyes, wiping the sheep dirt from his face, said, “I think you are wonderful people. You come out here among the flies and the heat and the dags, and what have you. You grow the wool, you cut the wool, and you send it down to add wealth to Brisbane. I think you are entitled to all the amenities and facilities of civilisation enjoyed by people on the coast. We believe in decentralisation.” Like hell they do! The old Labour Party believed that. The Labour Party led by Hanlon, Cooper, Gair and Forgan Smith believed it, because that was where the Labour Party was founded; that was the origin of the Labour Party in this State.

Mr. Baldwin: That is why they wouldn't have you.

Mr. AIKENS: They would crawl over broken glass bottles on hands and knees to have me, and the hon. member knows that. My attitude is simply that the Labour Party, or any political party, that could have in it some of the political riff-raff on the A.L.P. benches of this Parliament is no place for me.

As I say, the A.L.P. preaches decentralisation and practices centralisation. What would be the effect of a redistribution of electoral boundaries on the basis of the proposals put forward by the A.L.P.? More people than ever would be driven from the back country into the provincial cities and from the provincial cities into Brisbane. That is where the A.L.P. wants them because the trade union gang in control of the A.L.P. today wants all industry established in Brisbane; it wants all the workers centred in Brisbane so that its members would not have to go through the motions every two or three years of visiting workers in other parts of the State. Unfortunately, the policy of the A.L.P. today is no longer a policy for the back country and country areas of this State, whereas my policy and the policy of my party is based on the needs—

Mr. Bousen: You don't come into it.

Mr. AIKENS: Well, I come into it more than the hon. member does. I came into this Parliament and I will not go out of it until I am ready. The hon. member will go out a long time before he is ready to do so; make sure of that.

Mr. Bousen: We'll see about that.

Mr. AIKENS: The longer one lives, the more one sees.

While preaching decentralisation the A.L.P. practices centralisation. One of the suggestions that causes me concern and which I do not find very humorous is that the representation for what are known as the provincial cities should be increased from 12, as it is at present, to 20. What justification exists for that? Let me take as an example, my own town, Townsville. I am told there are going to be three seats in Townsville, whereas today there are only two. Anyone who goes to Townsville and tells the people that there are going to be three State seats in Townsville instead of two, will be told, “What do we want three for? We don't even want two; Tom does the lot as it is. We don't even want two members; one is enough.”

Mr. Baldwin interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: I am in a different position from the hon. member for Logan. I do not care two hoots in hell what the Liberal Party and the Country Party think about me. I can stand on my own feet and I do it.

Mr. B. Wood: You do all the work! Tell us what your telephone bill is.

Mr. AIKENS: I have no telephone. Unlike the hon. member, I am not a snob. I have been in Parliament longer than any other member and I have not got one of the social status symbols that most members of Parliament think they should have. I have not got a motor-car, a telephone, a cheque book or a brief case. I was in this Parliament for seven years before I could afford to buy my own home. The hon. member who has just interjected has been in Parliament for only two years, yet when I was up at Freshwater the other day I saw the house that he was having built, the house alone costing \$35,000. (Laughter.) There is my answer to the hon. member. I may not have a telephone but I have a reputation for sincerity and honesty that will never be approached by the hon. member for Cook. It is a mansion beside which the mansion being built for Professor Zelman Cowen would look like a rag-picker's tent.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to get back to the Bill before the Committee.

Mr. AIKENS: I was provoked into replying to what was said. I did not want to.

As I have said, I am not quite sure what is in this Bill, and I am very eager to see it. When we see members of the A.L.P. standing up here and in a Simon-pure attitude preaching decentralisation and then really have a look at what they advocate in this matter, I wonder what members from far-flung western electorates, those representing electorates up the eastern coast and

in the mid-west—the hon. members for Barcoo, Warrego, Burke, Tablelands and Cook—would tell their electors if what their own party wanted to do was ever put on the line. They want to sacrifice the West and the North in the interests of Brisbane, and they cannot deny it.

I have shown where I stand, and I have told hon. members of the attitude adopted by the last genuine Labour Government in Queensland, the Labour Government led by the late E. M. Hanlon. He really believed that the people who earned the wealth that made this State the great State that it is—the people who went out into the burning West or into the rain-soaked jungles of the North to toil and sweat and then send the wealth to Brisbane to make it a fine city—should receive favourable consideration. That was my policy, too, and it still is. If there is any vital difference between me and the Labour Party, at least the people always know where I stand, whereas they do not know where the members of the parliamentary Labour Party stand, simply because those members do not know where they themselves stand until they receive a phone call from the Trades Hall to tell them where to stand.

Mr. Davis: You are regarded as a joke in your electorate.

Mr. AIKENS: In reply to the boy soprano from Brisbane, I remind him that I must be the best joke in this Chamber. Let him look at my voting figures for the past 10 years. I have won 10 elections straight, against A.L.P. members, Liberal members, D.L.P. members—all sorts of members—and the further I go the further I am in the lead. If, in the coming years, the boy soprano from Brisbane can prove that he is as big a joke in his electorate as I am in mine, he will be a very happy man. What has the wealthy landowner and home-owner from Cook got to say now?

Mr. B. Wood: Your vote dropped 10 per cent.

Mr. AIKENS: My vote did not drop 10 per cent. at all. All that happened was that a D.L.P. candidate entered the field, and he took a small number of votes from me. Incidentally, he saved his deposit by a mere 147 votes. But what happened to the hon. member for Townsville North? His seat is a safer Labour seat than mine, yet he had to live in a state of trepidation and apprehension for three weeks after the election until every single preferential vote was counted. He was a bundle of nerves. When the votes were counted and he just got his nose in front to win in a photo finish, the ambulance had to be called to take him home so that he could be given sedatives and put to bed. And the hon. member for Cook has the nerve to talk about the drop in my vote. Let him have a look at the drop in the vote of the hon. member for Townsville North.

(Time expired.)

Mr. HINZE (South Coast) (2.48 p.m.): I join in this debate with great pride. Obviously the Government, in introducing the Bill, has taken great care to ensure that the electors of this vast State will receive the representation that we believe they are entitled to receive.

Mr. Baldwin: Without three-cornered contests.

Mr. HINZE: I will deal with that matter later on. Don't worry about that.

As the Leader of the Opposition has received so much Press publicity of his criticism and propaganda—engineered, I suppose, by the Labour Party's public relations team—I thought we would have heard him speak on some important matters. However, obviously because the Bill is such a good one and will implement the wishes of the majority of Queenslanders, he could not find any flaws in it, so he got back to the hackneyed phrase "one vote, one value". In the argument advanced by the Leader of the Opposition I could not find anything but a repetition of "one vote, one value".

I have tried to analyse what all the other Commonwealth countries do about implementing this principle of one vote, one value, but I cannot find one that puts it into practice. In urban areas of the United Kingdom, three times the number of electors send a member to Parliament compared with rural areas. Under Labour's regime in Western Australia—that is the brand of politics that the Leader of the Opposition so capably espouses in this Chamber—three electorates were provided in the far north-west of the State, irrespective of the number of people living there. The nearest approach I can find to the implementation of the principle of one vote, one value is in South Australia.

The Premier suggested that the Bill is designed to increase the number of provincial-city electorates from 12 to 20. Because of the great expansion in the State under the Government's decentralisation programme and its acceptance of the principle of giving the State and its people good representation, it is intended to give additional representation to the provincial cities. The Premier said that we are to have three electoral districts in Townsville, three in Toowoomba, three in Central Queensland, three in the Gold Coast area, one in Cairns, one in Maryborough, one in Bundaberg, two in Ipswich, one in Mackay, one based on Mt. Isa, and one on Redcliffe. Anyone who is genuine must accept this as a step in the right direction.

Mr. Houston: Are you taking the Gold Coast seat or the inland seat?

Mr. HINZE: A seat in the new Gold Coast area, which is to have three members. It is obviously entitled to another member. It has the greatest population increase in

Queensland. With those who live in other provincial cities, we believe that we need additional representation.

Mr. Houston: By doing that, you are taking representation from the sugar areas. You are dropping Bowen.

Mr. HINZE: I do not know anything about dropping Bowen. I believe this is a good, forward step in recognising the development of our great provincial cities.

If there are to be three seats in the Gold Coast area, I suggest that one should be referred to as "Gold Coast" rather than "South Coast". I cannot accept the name "South Coast". It could be the south coast of New South Wales, Victoria or Western Australia. It does not describe anything. If a member is representing an area, the name of the electorate should designate the area that a member represents. If I am returned—and there is not much doubt about that—I should like the name of the electorate changed to "Gold Coast".

Mr. Houston: What areas on the Gold Coast do you think should be embraced—from Southport through to Coolangatta?

Mr. HINZE: I think the area embraced should be from the Logan River to the New South Wales border, with the boundary running east-west. I do not want to cut the electorates up; I do not want to tell the commission what to do. I subscribe to the principle in the Bill by which we are to appoint an independent commission to decide where the boundaries shall be.

Mr. Houston: I am interested in your views.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for South Coast need address himself only to the Chair.

Mr. HINZE: The population explosion in the Gold Coast area has been recognised, and under this Bill, we are to be presented with another seat. I will welcome further assistance; it is much better to have three people advancing an argument than two. We must at all times make strong representations for what we think we are entitled to in our electorates.

Like every other member of this Committee, I am disappointed at the long, drawn-out wrangle that has taken place and the time it has taken to have this Bill introduced.

Mr. Bousen interjected.

Mr. HINZE: Oh, shut up for a minute. You're a pain in the neck.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Before rebuking the hon. member for Toowoomba West for his persistent interjections, I ask the hon. member for South Coast to withdraw his remark.

Mr. HINZE: What did I say?

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member to withdraw the remark.

Mr. HINZE: Did I say "Shut up, you mug", or something like that? What did I say?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair does not have to repeat what the hon. member said. It has been requested that he withdraw it, and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. HINZE: All right, I am pleased to withdraw it. I cannot waste time.

The CHAIRMAN: I now warn the hon. member for Toowoomba West under Standing Order 123A that his persistent interjections will not be tolerated.

Mr. HINZE: I was talking about the representation in my area. Obviously, the area is entitled to three representatives. I am sure that, within a very short period, it will have developed to the extent that it will require five or six representatives.

When I was rudely interrupted, I was saying that I was concerned about the time it took to have this legislation introduced. Of course, it was well discussed in our party room. I see a similarity between this Bill and the Liquor Act Amendment Bill, which also took us a long time to have introduced. However, everybody in Queensland can now see the benefit of thrashing out these matters before they are placed before Parliament. I do not think anybody in Queensland could point a finger at this Government over its liquor legislation. I realise, of course, that it was the right of the Opposition to continually criticise this delay.

I do not like the idea of too much outside interference. There has been too much of it. It is the function and duty of the elected representatives of the people to draw a Bill and introduce it into this Parliament. I say quite forcibly that I do not like to have to refer back, after a parliamentary party meeting, to some outside body. I do not blame the Q.C.E., Jack Egerton, Tommy Burns or any of the others. I know that this happens in the Australian Labour Party. I am quite sure that Opposition members would find themselves in the same position. I am saying that from my point of view I do not like it, and I hope that the organisational side of politics in this State recognises that we have a sovereign right and a duty to perform and that we do not want too much outside domination or interference in the duties we are supposed to perform in this Parliament.

The hon. member for Logan referred a few minutes ago to three-cornered contests. Everybody knows my attitude to this matter. If a seat becomes vacant following the death of a member or for some other reason, or if we are opposing the A.L.P.,

it could be a good thing to have a three-cornered contest. But I cannot understand, and I am sure that members of the public do not understand, why a member who has represented an area loyally and faithfully must compete with a candidate from the other coalition party. I have said publicly that this is not much good for the State of Queensland. It creates unrest within the Government. This is something that one organisation in Queensland had better have a very good look at.

Mr. Houston: No members represent any seats after a redistribution. They are all vacant seats, every one of them.

Mr. HINZE: The Leader of the Opposition made great play on the "one vote, one value" principle. "Hansard" records what a great A.L.P. leader, the father of the hon. member for Baroona, said as Premier of this State. I should like to read it, so that it will again be recorded in "Hansard". Mr. Hanlon said on that occasion—

"The population of Brisbane is growing rapidly, but we do not wish to reach the stage in this State when the representation of Brisbane in this Parliament will overshadow country representation. It has not in the past and it would be very foolish for Parliament to allow that result to take place. It would be a bad thing not only for the country people but in the last analysis a bad thing for the metropolitan area, because on the successful development and expansion of our country areas depend the very life and security of our capital cities."

I think all in this State recognise that the late Ned Hanlon was an extremely capable Premier, and those were his words as A.L.P. leader.

What has happened in 21 years to cause the A.L.P. to somersault to the extent that they are not now prepared to accept Ned Hanlon's line of thought?

Mr. Houston: You can't read.

Mr. HINZE: I think I can.

I should now like to give the Committee some interesting figures to show the position in other States. In Tasmania, there is one member of Parliament to 3,911 persons.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Hon. members on my left: I think the Committee will agree that I have been most tolerant of conversations being held from one end of the Chamber to the other. I do not intend to tolerate such conduct any longer.

Mr. HINZE: I was about to give figures that show the extent of parliamentary representation in the various States of Australia. In Western Australia, there is one member to 5,976 persons. In South Australia there is one member to 10,586, and in Queensland there is one to 12,225. That should be of interest to those who say that

Queensland is over-governed. Quite frankly, I think that, after a period of 13 years between the 1958 redistribution and 1971, there is a sound argument for additional parliamentary representation in this State. We have accepted that there will be 78 seats, which is fair enough. However, in the light of the figures that I have presented, no-one could possibly claim that Queensland, compared with other States, is over-governed. In New South Wales there is one member to 15,835 persons, and in Victoria the figure is one to 16,755. The voting population of 791,719 in 1958 increased to 953,564 in 1971. That is an increase of 161,845, or approximately 21 per cent.

The argument of the Leader of the Opposition was so hollow that the only thing to which he could return was the principle of one vote, one value. In the 1949 redistribution the number of seats was increased by 13, from 62 to 75. Frankly, I think that was a good thing.

Mr. Houston: Your crowd opposed it.

Mr. HINZE: In 1958, under the Nicklin Government—

Mr. Houston: We did not oppose your 78 seats.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HINZE: In 1958 the Nicklin Government increased the number of seats from 75 to 78. I think the figures I have quoted are most interesting. After much discussion, the joint Government parties have now decided that the number of seats will not be increased. As I have already said, I personally believe that there is a very good argument for more members in this Chamber.

I think I have argued the case on the "one vote, one value" issue. Quite obviously A.L.P. members do not believe in it. It does not exist in any part of the United Kingdom, as far as I can ascertain, and it is not much use flogging a dead horse. Anyone who does not have a good argument should admit it and say, "Although I keep on saying this, I do not believe it myself."

I remind the Committee that at the 1969 election the A.L.P. contested 37 seats in the country and won only nine of them. I do not know whether it had no appeal. I do not know why, after obviously having spent so much in trying to capture some seats in the country, A.L.P. members were not accepted. The Labour Party has no programme; it has no appeal; it has nothing to place before people in the country areas. Although the A.L.P. holds nine country seats at present, it possibly will lose some of them.

Opposition Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HINZE: On the other hand, the Country Party contested 35 seats and won 26. That indicates the popularity of the party with which I am pleased and proud to be associated.

The Federal by-election held recently in Victoria indicated the attitude of people in other parts of Australia to the Country Party. Hon. members opposite can take it that the Country Party is a force to be reckoned with, and we will put the skids under a few A.L.P. members at the next election.

Opposition Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I know that hon. members on my left were provoked, but there is far too much cross-firing.

Mr. HINZE: I was only developing my argument to indicate the far-sighted policies of the present Government. There is no doubt that, after the redistribution takes place, the Government parties will return to this Chamber with their numbers greatly increased. It is obvious that the people of Queensland have no faith in the cock-and-bull stories told by the Leader of the Opposition about what the A.L.P. intends to do for the rural population. Hon. members have seen evidence in this Chamber over the last few months of the attitude of the A.L.P. When hon. members opposite had an opportunity to do something for the rural population, they very quickly backed out the door so that they would not have to indicate which way they would jump.

(Time expired.)

Mr. O'DONNELL (Barcoo) (3.9 p.m.): I have just listened to what can only be classified as "tripe" from the hon. member for South Coast. He referred to what was done during the great Ned Hanlon's regime and the attitude of the A.L.P. Government at that time to redistribution, knowing all the time that in the last redistribution in this State, which was carried out by a Country-Liberal Government, four seats were added to the Brisbane area to bolster the Government. Under the proposal put before the Committee today, the Brisbane area will gain another two seats. Anyone who works it out will ascertain that the metropolitan area will have increased by six electorates and the rural area will have decreased by three electorates. That is the type of argument that is put before the Committee by an allegedly responsible member of this Assembly. One would have to have the credibility of a two-year-old to believe it. Surely the hon. member does not believe what he said when the facts contradict him completely. Hon. members on this side of the Chamber know very well that they are facts, because they are in black and white.

The hon. member cannot deny that the redistribution in 1958 was carried out by a Country-Liberal Government; he cannot deny

that at that time four seats were added to the metropolitan zone and one was taken from the country area. It is recorded history. If we go back in history we also find that the words of that eminent leader, the late Ned Hanlon, were as stated by the member for South Coast. What he said was quite true and still is quite true. The hon. member for South Coast has quoted his words in an effort to justify his Government's actions. He made a ridiculous speech—for what reason I do not know, unless he was trying to back up his leader. If he was, it was a half-hearted effort, because he said that he had some doubts about the situation proposed under the Bill. He might well have doubts. Did not the Premier back down every inch of the way until he agreed to what the Treasurer wanted? Of course he did. That was published in the newspapers. No doubt the hon. member would have a somewhat qualified attitude to the Bill. I have a certain attitude, too. I have listened to the hon. member for Townsville South—

Mr. Aikens: At least he lives in his electorate.

Mr. O'DONNELL: I also live in my electorate, between sessions.

Mr. HINZE: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member for Barcoo said that during my speech I stated that I had some doubts about the presentation of this Bill. That is not correct.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member for Barcoo to accept the statement of the hon. member for South Coast.

Mr. O'DONNELL: I accept his statement.

When the hon. member for Townsville South was speaking he certainly provoked a great deal of merriment in the Government benches when he sought wherever he could to denigrate and "rubbish" the Australian Labour Party. When he went overseas on a tour last year he denigrated almost the whole parliamentary set-up in this State. It did not matter whom it was he was speaking about, wherever he went he denigrated him, right from Mr. Speaker to the humblest back-bencher.

Mr. AIKENS: I rise to a point of order. On the Pacific tour that I took last year—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! What is the hon. member's point of order?

Mr. AIKENS: My point of order is that I made one speech and that was at a civic reception in Dunedin. Never at any time in that one single speech I made during the whole of the trip did I denigrate anybody. I ask for a withdrawal and an apology.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member for Barcoo to withdraw the remark.

Mr. O'DONNELL: I withdraw the remark.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member also requested an apology.

Mr. O'DONNELL: If it satisfies his ego he can have an apology.

I denigrate members on the Government side for their raucous enjoyment of the criticism of a great party like the Australian Labour Party. For anyone on that side to say that there was no validity in our argument for redistribution, and that we had no honesty in this matter, it is a downright untruth. I am very sincere about this. We put forward a simple plan for electoral redistribution in this State. We asked that there be minimum interference from Parliament. Parliament should set down only the main needs for the control of a redistribution of the electorates. Hon. members know that that has been put in print. Certain decisions were made at the A.L.P. convention. Those decisions are binding ones but hon. members opposite come in here and "rubbish" the A.L.P. and try to take credit away from people who are endeavouring to assist. That is going on all the time. I do not know why people cannot be honest and stand up in the Chamber and say, "Well, at least they have proposed something."

What is wrong with the present system of zones that we, the A.L.P., are offering to the people? The eastern zone would contain 69 electorates, with nine in the inland zone. On no occasion have we proposed the elimination of any electorate at all.

Mr. Miller: Where is your "one vote, one value"?

Mr. O'DONNELL: The "one vote, one value" exists in 69 electorates. The nine inland ones take into consideration factors that the hon. member for South Coast has been propagating over the years.

Mr. Miller: You are destroying your own argument.

Mr. O'DONNELL: I am not destroying any argument. This is what we presented and this is what we stand by. It is above criticism. The hon. member for Ithaca, who is so persistently and rudely interjecting, is gratified that his party has succeeded in pushing the Premier back to the wall and obtaining virtually all its own way. But, as he talks about "one vote, one value", I ask him what rural areas in this State are represented by Liberal Party members, and, if they did represent any, would they be putting forward the "one vote, one value" proposal? Of course they would not—not as it relates to inland areas.

The hon. member for South Coast brought up the question of an independent commission. I should like to know how this independent commission is going to work, because there is a division of the State already. A Minister of the Crown—the Minister for Local Government—has said in public, whether it be in hotel bars or in the street, that Blackall is gone from Barcoo. He has said it on a number of occasions over the last two years. And he is also going to get rid of Quilpie. We know very well that these statements have been

made; he has asserted these things as facts. Just where does the independent commission come in when a Minister of the Crown can freely say that these things will happen?

No doubt, other electorates will be affected in the same way and I am very worried about this because I represent in this Parliament an electorate known as "Barcoo".

Mr. Aikens: You do not know where it is.

Mr. O'DONNELL: I notice that, because it suits him, the Premier chooses to smile at this person from Townsville South who casts aspersions at the Labour Party.

I want to preserve the name "Barcoo". I want this electorate's name indelibly written into the history of this State because it was in Barcoo that the Australian Labour Party was born in Queensland. I am putting that forward today as a "must" for the commission and I hope its members read these debates. I hope also that they will eliminate from consideration some of the remarks that come from irresponsible members of this Committee.

The second thing I want is the retention of Blackall in my electorate because it is on the banks of the Barcoo River. If Blackall is taken from Barcoo, then my electorate ceases to be the electorate of Barcoo. It is the aim of this Government to destroy any historical reference to the credit of the Australian Labour Party and so please those people who feel that we must forget about the greatness of the past—the greatness of the pioneers of this State.

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr. O'DONNELL: I am very concerned about this. I know that what I am saying is stirring up quite a number of interjections but that simply means that I am telling the truth and that the truth is hurting. I want you to understand quite clearly, Mr. Ramsden, that we of the Australian Labour Party want the retention of the Western electorates; we are endeavouring to do something for an area of the State that is beset not only by the vicissitudes of climate but also by its remoteness from the metropolitan area. A great number of areas adjacent to Brisbane are receiving numerous benefits. They have been referred to as pocket boroughs, and they are the places the commission should look at when making its alterations to the boundaries. I say that in all sincerity.

The Gregory electorate embraces approximately 159,000 square miles and contains only half a dozen centres, whereas my electorate, which embraces 43,000 square miles, contains 18 centres that I must visit, sometimes two, three or four times annually. I succeed in doing that. That factor is important in any consideration of redistribution. I understand that the Government's plan is to unload onto me the mining town of Blackwater. It has been asserted that I will lose Blackall and get Blackwater.

Mr. Camm: Don't you want Blackwater?

Mr. O'DONNELL: I want to retain my electorate as it is; I do not want anything extra. I have 18 centres now, and that is enough. However, if I am to believe the Minister for Local Government, the matter is already cut and dried and I will not have any say before the electoral commission. The Minister for Mines has a supercilious smile on his face. He knows that what I am saying is true. Who more than the Minister for Mines would be conversant with the Country Party plan for redistribution? What has he been doing all last week? He has been prodding the Premier, saying, "You give into the Libs., or else you are out."

Mr. Camm: You don't know what you're talking about.

Mr. O'DONNELL: I do know what I am talking about. But, if I do not know what I am talking about, neither does the Minister for Local Government. Does the Minister for Mines agree that his colleague the Minister for Local Government does not know what he is talking about?

The classifications that have been put before the Chamber today will need to be seriously considered by the A.L.P. The Bill is a very important one, and it provides for radical changes. I do not feel disposed to support this proposal to bump up the number of electorates in the metropolitan area. We are happy with 28. But what about the 30 that the Government has referred to? In the previous redistribution the number was increased by four, and in this Bill it is proposed to further increase it by two, yet the Country Party-led Government says it is there to represent the rural people of this State. That is the greatest lot of bunkum we have ever heard, and it will not fool the people in the rural areas. I cannot understand how the Ministers of the Crown, who pose as responsible people, can claim they know what the commission will do when it has not even been selected. This matter is of great concern to the Opposition.

The peculiar thing about the Minister for Local Government is that he does not mind "dumping" Quilpie, yet he wants Blackall, simply because he buys his beef and groceries there. What a feeble excuse that is. He does not care about the people of Quilpie, who have voted for him for the last 10 years. He says that he cannot do anything for them and is glad to get away from them. I have had a lot done in Blackall, and I will not be forgotten in that town. I will fight the best way I can to retain Blackall, and to retain the name "Barcoo" for my electorate. It embraces part of the Barcoo River, so surely I have a right for historical reasons to have the name retained. I do not know whether the Country Party holds any electorate that is closely associated with that party's beginnings, and certainly no Queensland electorate can be associated with the history of the Liberal Party. After all, over the years, it has probably changed its name more times than the Premier has changed his suit. Why can we not have sanity and honesty?

Mr. R. E. Moore: That is what I want to hear.

Mr. O'DONNELL: That is what I want.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! Will the hon. member please tell the Chair?

Mr. O'DONNELL: Through you, Mr. Ramsden, I tell the hon. member that he should watch very carefully Country Party plans for the next election. He might get a shock; after all, he would not know what has been agreed to behind his back.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Yes, I do.

Mr. O'DONNELL: I do not know about that, but the hon. member does not seem very well informed as a member of this Chamber.

I have advanced a case for my own area, and for the West as a whole. We must retain the electorates of Warrego, Gregory, Roma, Barcoo, Burke, Flinders and Balonne.

Mr. Hinz: How many electors have you got on the roll?

Mr. O'DONNELL: I have 8,800, and the number is growing. It will increase quickly because mines are being established. If I remain the representative of the area for another six or seven years, I will probably have an electorate as big as the redistributed electorate of South Coast.

Mr. Miller: Do you want one vote, one value out there?

Mr. O'DONNELL: We have not proposed one vote, one value in that zone.

I, like the A.L.P., believe that the people in the western areas of the State should have better representation in this Assembly. The total area of the nine electorates I have mentioned is about 440,000-odd square miles, which must represent almost 60 per cent. of the area of Queensland. It is not unfair to ask that this area should send at least nine representatives to this Parliament. As a matter of fact, in some circumstances, I would say that we could do with more.

Dr. Delamothe: How about 10?

Mr. O'DONNELL: That is a rather unintelligent remark for a prospective Agent-General.

I feel strongly about this matter, as does the Labour Party. I have taken part in Labour Party discussions about it as a member of the redistribution committee.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Oh, gerrymandering!

Mr. O'DONNELL: I am not gerrymandering anything. If the hon. member had been at our convention at the Gold Coast he would have heard me speaking there in a similar vein. I am honest, and so is the A.L.P.

(Time expired.)

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! Before I call the hon. member for Toowong, I point out that I was in the Chamber when I heard the Chairman say that he was going to take a strong course of action.

Mr. Aikens: Why don't you do it?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: If I knew who spoke, I would name him. While the Chairman is on his feet, I ask hon. members to extend the usual courtesy. I expect members to be somewhat emotional when discussing such a Bill as this, but I point out that while I am in the Chair I do not intend to allow the Committee to become chaotic. If an hon. member desires to answer an interjection, he may do so. If he cares to ignore an interjection, he may also do so. I will not tolerate cross-firing in the Chamber.

Mr. PORTER (Toowong) (3.29 p.m.): I wish to speak briefly on the issues raised in this Bill. It is true that this is an area in which feelings can be excessively tender and, as you have just said, Mr. Ramsden, emotions can run high.

I have no desire to pose as an expert in this field but, owing to the accident of being about a quarter of a century in politics—part of that time in a sphere other than this—I have been involved in four major redistributions, both State and Federal, and perhaps I have a little more experience in this field than most other people. Because of that, some 18 months ago I thought it might be helpful if I could look at this matter and put forward some proposals.

At that time the thoughts of people on the matter of redistribution were very vague. I thought it might be possible to polarise these thoughts if I could put up some proposals which I felt were proper in various respects, which were arrived at after very careful consideration of the population and the geographical and political factors involved, which were quite valid, which were eminently workable and which gave due recognition to the conflicting interests that will always be concerned in any attempt to rearrange electoral districts.

I published that proposal for some electoral change. I gained some editorial support for it, and over a period my own party has come around to adopting what were essentially the basic principles I then expounded, namely, no increase in seats, three zones different from those that had been obtaining since 1960, and rational recognition of the problems of the remoter areas.

I based my proposals then, and in all the subsequent discussions on redistribution in which I took part, on a very clear and simple proposition, that is, that there is a gross and accelerating imbalance in the State as between electorates, and also that the intention for redistribution had been clearly expressed by all parties prior to the

last State election and therefore people expected a redistribution—and, what is more, they expected it to have a certain degree of electoral equity.

I have always taken a stand on those essential principles. I felt that redistribution would need to be over-all and comprehensive. It could not be just a series of put-and-take adjustments as between the existing seats because, in the 10 years since the last redistribution, the State population has grown from less than 1,500,000 to very close to 2,000,000, and it certainly will be 2,000,000 by the time an election is fought on new boundaries. Over 70 per cent. of this growth has taken place in a very small part of the total State region, that is, the coastal cities and towns and the south-east region, if I can call it that, from, say, Noosa to the border, plus Brisbane, Ipswich and Toowoomba.

Quite inescapable pressures are created for substantial electoral adjustment as between the coastal strip and the remainder of the State where population is either static or declining. I emphasise that, in stating this basic proposition, there was always recognition that some consideration must be given to the needs of remote and relatively empty rural areas.

I do not wish it to be thought by anyone that I so aspire to lofty principles and noble motives that I cannot be associated with an expedient agreement. I have been associated with plenty of them in my time, so dismiss any such thought. I say here and now that much of what is proposed is very good. It is a big advance on what has existed hitherto. Infinitely more flexibility will obviously be permitted, as we are moving away from tying State electorates to quite outmoded local authority boundaries and there is some recognition of what I regard as the inexorable growth pattern in urban areas.

For me, regrettably, it appears that some of the proposals will reveal features which, in my view, quite confound the good principles that are exhibited by most of them. For example, I think that some provincial cities will again become major victims. I feel that the Ipswich position particularly is likely to be most unpalatable.

I make the point that, although I talk of this in terms of principle, I am not concerned only with a proper principle. I am also concerned with the hard, practical, political results that can flow from all of this. I believe that every election in recent times, State or Federal, and certainly the referendum for severing the nexus between the Senate and the House of Representatives to allow for a very large increase in the House of Representatives, which was astonishingly and surprisingly defeated, reveals that growing in the community there is a very deep distrust of the existing political processes and the major parties. There is

a tendency for people to be cynical about us and to believe the worst of anything we may attempt to do.

Mr. P. Wood: Are you talking about your own party?

Mr. PORTER: In reply to the interjection of the hon. member for Toowoomba East, his own party falls completely into the category of which I am speaking. This is demonstrated by the fragmentation of the vote for the major parties, and the tendency for it to move to what I call the "bits and pieces" groups and individuals. This worries me immensely, and I deplore it greatly. Possibly part of the answer is that today there is a very sophisticated political climate, much more so than was the case 10 years ago, and in this stage of political sophistication, where the media, particularly television, can make a much more exhaustive investigation of what is happening than was possible a decade or so ago, redistribution simply must provide a total arrangement of boundaries that is compatible with public demand for democratic equity, and that to the public does not appear to confer any undue, inbuilt protection anywhere along the line. In other words, not only has justice to be done, but people nowadays seem to want it to be obvious that it is being done.

I therefore believe that a problem is created if a redistribution does not rest firmly on proper principles of broad electoral arrangements, recognising not only present population patterns but also the obvious growth trends. None of us can blind ourselves to the fact that today's electorate includes a very large "younging" community; some 56 per cent. of all voters nowadays are in the 21-to-35-years age group. It is these people who represent an attitude that expects more from parties than perhaps it was possible to get away with in the past.

I do not think that these "younging" people feel as deeply committed to the major parties as perhaps their parents do. I think they demand more in terms of moral leadership, and they provide a sort of big, free-wheeling, uncommitted sector of the electorate that is quite a new factor on the political scene. I think it is this that explains the huge swings noted in recent elections, which nowadays are accepted as the norm and not as rather remarkable occurrences.

Nobody is more aware than I am of the hard work, the frustration, the discussion, the concessions, and the tolerance that have gone into producing this measure, and I appreciate what has been done. I only repeat my regret that it did not go a little further, as I believe it could have done, and produce proposals that not only are equitable but clearly could be seen by the people as equitable to them.

We all have to remember that, in the final analysis, the people are our masters. The electorate is never just so much private real estate that can be divided up as we desire. We are responsible always to the people.

We must never let them think that we are trying to short-change them in any way at all, and I believe that a redistribution proposal which, I say again, could have been, in my view, done to the satisfaction of everybody, and which does not in any sense give the impression to which I have referred, would have been better.

Therefore, reluctantly I fear that I will not be able to give full support to the proposals in their present form. But, because I accept much that is before us as a worth-while advance, I do not propose making any futile gestures and thus cause unnecessary embarrassment. I can only state my own position, and I must leave it at that. From this point on, I do not propose to participate in the passage of the Bill.

Mr. NEWTON (Belmont) (3.39 p.m.): The contribution just made by the hon. member for Toowong was rather a valid one. Knowing the hon. member as we do and the amount of time that he has spent campaigning for the Liberal Party, we have no doubt that he has done a tremendous amount of work behind the scenes on this very important matter. There is no doubt, either, that his work would have caused a lot of headaches not only for the Liberal Party but also for the Country Party, as the senior party in the coalition. His thoughts on some matters were similar to those of the Opposition. He referred to the position in Ipswich. As we are talking about increasing the metropolitan zone, it is hard to understand why the Ipswich area was not included for redistribution. The hon. member's speech clearly indicated the truth of what has been said right throughout by the Opposition. All we are asking for is what the hon. member for Toowong has suggested. In a redistribution in 1971 let us hope that the proper principles are adopted. Let us hope that fringe growth will be taken into consideration. Let us face the position that will eventually confront us whether we like it or not.

In the future young people will have to be given greater consideration than they receive at present. We of the A.L.P. have made it quite clear where we stand on the subject of votes for 18-year-olds. We have indicated that we support the principle. We have made our attitude well known to the Government so that when introducing a redistribution Bill it would know our feelings on the matter. This morning we heard the Premier of this State introduce, in a very restrained tone, a Bill providing for electoral redistribution. This is the first instance for a long time when the Premier was so unsure of himself in outlining the Government's policy. Probably that was because of the haggling on electoral redistribution that has taken place since the 1969 State elections. Right up to the last minute the Premier did not know where he stood on electoral redistribution.

We understand that even at a late hour today there were some unusual moves. Certain members of a particular party were

asked to sign a document concerning three-cornered contests. No doubt those people will be answerable to their party for their actions. Undoubtedly this is what has prompted the Premier to defer other business on the Business Paper and introduce this Bill. I remind the Committee of what the then Leader of the Country Party said when similar legislation was introduced in 1949 by the Labour Government. Mr. Nicklin said, "It is rather contrary to usual Parliamentary procedure to override the business sheet to introduce such a Bill".

Despite what might have been said on that occasion, we welcome the introduction of the Bill today. After all, we, on this side are the ones that moved prior to the 1969 elections. At that stage the imbalance of electorates was very evident.

Mr. Houston: They could have amended them then according to the existing Act.

Mr. NEWTON: They could have. The then existing legislation allowed the Government to make a partial redistribution. We gave the Government an opportunity to do that before the 1969 elections.

I am pleased to see the Deputy Premier in the Chamber. He took part in the debate on that occasion. Although he would not support the Opposition motion for a redistribution, he gave the assurance that after the 1969 elections he would see that something was done about it.

Mr. Chalk: Isn't it being done?

Mr. NEWTON: Of course it is now being done, but many shifty moves have been made behind the scenes to bring it about.

Mr. Houston: A new coalition—the Camm-Chalk coalition.

Mr. NEWTON: It is well known, too, what the future coalition would be. The Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party is now vacating the field. Because of the redistribution and what is now taking place, he is to leave this Parliament and, of course, take a position overseas.

Much has been said here about outside interference in the affairs of the Australian Labour Party, but have we ever witnessed as much outside interference as has taken place on this question of redistribution? Every day of the week, including Sundays, one could read newspaper reports of statements by either the president or executive of the Country Party or the president or executive of the Liberal Party, as well as some by their political leaders in this Parliament. When I speak about political leaders, I mean the leaders and deputy leaders of the coalition parties in this State.

Further, the Australian Labour Party has been attacked on many occasions for abiding by its convention decisions, which become the policy of the party. Let me throw such attacks back at the Liberal Party, which is now caught up in this aspect because its own

conventions have made decisions on these very matters and, irrespective of what Government members might have done prior to the introduction of this Bill today, between now and the 1972 elections some of them will be answering to their political parties. Many might have great trouble in receiving endorsement because of their actions in this regard.

Mr. Chalk: Wishful thinking!

Mr. NEWTON: It is easy for the Deputy Leader of the Government to say, "Wishful thinking", but we have seen the stand adopted by the executives of these political parties in recent years. They have made it quite clear what parliamentarians have to do, and, whether Government members like it or not, they are copping it today in the same way as the Opposition has been copping it for years, according to their accusations in this Chamber, and they cannot deny it.

Now, let me put the Australian Labour Party's position quite clearly.

Mr. Chalk: The position of Tommy Burns.

Mr. NEWTON: Not at all. In discussing this question we had a committee within our own parliamentary Labour Party of which our Leader was chairman. We had a look at the redistribution question and we were able to offer a proposal that was eventually carried by the party as our policy.

Mention has been made of 78 seats. We on this side can at least say that we are proud of being a single party that contests every election as a single party. We have contested almost every seat on every occasion because our policy is a policy for all the people of Queensland, whether they be rural, industrial or otherwise. On most occasions we have contested the 78 seats, or whatever the number at the time, and we have gone before the people as a party with a policy not only for the benefit of Queensland as a whole but also for the benefit of all the people of Queensland, and we make no apology for the statements made here today about how we contest any particular election on any redistribution.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Your record shows it.

Mr. NEWTON: The hon. member for Windsor, who has recently entered this Parliament, has quite a lot to say. Let me tell him that if the electorates were distributed on a basis of equality and the principle of one vote, one value, we would not be on this side but over there, because we have obtained the percentage of votes required to become the Government of this State. The hon. member's interjection is hogwash.

Mr. Chalk: You would have six on the Gold Coast.

Mr. NEWTON: The Leader of the Liberal Party may take part in the debate later on, but if that is the area in which he thinks he will pick up seats he

has another think coming. The Labour Party has contested every seat in Queensland, and when we were in Government we represented a vast area of the State.

The Opposition is concerned about certain matters that were not taken into consideration by the Electoral Districts Commission that was set up in 1959. It is quite evident that that commission, being bound by its terms of reference, had to consider three zones, namely, the metropolitan, provincial and country zones, and the quota that was set in each zone. Evidently the commissioners could not see what would happen in any one of the zones. What happened? Great changes were occurring in the inner-city electorates. Industries were shifting into the outer suburbs and flats and homes in the inner-city area were being demolished to make way for commercial buildings. The result is that the number of electors presently in the inner-city electorates is well below the 1959 quota. It is evident that the commissioners did not foresee the huge growth that has occurred in the outer metropolitan electorates.

The result is that the population of each of Belmont, Salisbury, Aspley, and Mt. Coot-tha electorates is approximately 22,000. In other words, the population of each of those electorates is approximately double its 1959 quota. I venture to suggest that a police check of electors in the metropolitan seats would reveal an even greater growth in the electorates that embrace new residential areas. Of course, no police check has been made since 1966. As I have said, the commission that was set up in 1959 did not look properly at the matter of quotas.

The population in the provincial city zones has grown out of all proportion to the 1959 quotas, and the same can be said of the country zones, especially those that are adjacent to the metropolitan area or to the provincial cities. A huge increase has occurred in the number of electors in those zones, particularly in Logan, Albert, Redcliffe, Toowoomba, Ipswich and Townsville. The drift in population must be taken into consideration. The figures taken out of the number of electors for the 1969 State election and the closure in 1970 of the electoral rolls show that a tremendous drift of population from the country to the provincial cities and metropolitan area has occurred. The Government is answerable for that, but it was not taken into consideration in the redistribution.

Recently, there has been much haggling about the zones that should or should not be established. As our leader said, we have considered this aspect. By the tone of the speech made by the member for Toowong I have no doubt that his views are similar to ours, namely, that there should be a coastal zone with so many seats, and a certain number of seats for the western areas. Long before it was contemplated

that such a Bill would be introduced we made it quite clear that we favoured 69 seats in the No. 1 zone, with an equal enrolment of about 12,500 electors, and nine western seats, which is exactly what the hon. member for Toowong said today.

Mr. Aiken: That is fair enough, too.

Mr. NEWTON: Of course it is.

We suggested that there should be nine seats in the West because of the area of the electorates. At the same time we indicated that there should be reduced quotas in these nine seats. It is hogwash for hon. members to say that we are not trying to help the people of the West. Our proposal would have been far better than that outlined by the Premier.

As usual, the member for Townsville South was the first speaker to reply on behalf of the Government. In doing so he demonstrated clearly that all he knows about Queensland is the area he flies over when travelling to and fro, between Townsville and Brisbane. He said that no sugar was grown south of Bundaberg. I point out that there is a sugar mill in the electorate of Logan, and another at Nambour. That proves how much he knows about our State. Even my electorate is a rural-urban electorate containing poultry farmers, vegetable farmers and citrus farmers.

Mr. Aiken: They all love you, too.

Mr. NEWTON: Of course they do, because I look after their interests.

A number of members on this side of the Chamber have had experience on farms, and have come from the land. It is just as much hogwash for Government members to tell us that we do not know anything about primary producers.

I agree with my leader that preferential voting was at stake in the final bargaining between the Liberal and Country Parties. Members of the Country Party know quite well that preferential voting was introduced for the 1963 State election at the request of the Liberal Party. Who suffered as a result of its introduction? None other than the Country Party! If members of the Country Party had an opportunity today, or even tomorrow, to overcome the position created by the Liberal Party, through preferential voting, they would think seriously about crossing to this side of the Chamber and voting with the A.L.P. to abolish preferential voting, because in the last election the Country Party lost three seats and went close to losing some others because of it.

(Time expired.)

Hon. P. R. DELAMOTHE (Bowen—Minister for Justice) (3.59 p.m.): According to the Business Paper we are gathered today to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Electoral Districts Act of 1958. What we have heard so far from the Opposition benches has not constituted an argument

either for or against the desirability of amending this Act. We have had a tirade directed mainly against the fact that notice was given of the introduction of the Bill some time ago.

Since the beginning of this session the Labour Party has been taking every opportunity, both inside and outside the Chamber, to make known its view that this Bill would never be introduced. I sympathise with it today, and I also sympathise with Opposition speakers because they are speaking with leaden hearts and disappointed minds. Here, today, one can make allowances. As a kind-hearted doctor, I feel sorry for Opposition members. However, a Bill has been introduced today.

The Leader of the Opposition complained bitterly that the Premier did not disclose the contents of the Bill. In my long experience in Parliament, I have found that the contents of a Bill are disclosed when it is printed and distributed. I have probably introduced more Bills than any other Minister in this Chamber and, neither in my time nor before it, has it been customary for a Minister to outline a Bill's contents when he is introducing it. We should be debating and giving our reasons on whether or not a Bill should be introduced and, if the Opposition so wishes, vote against its introduction. It is the Bill's introduction and not its contents that we should be discussing at this stage.

The Leader of the Opposition, from the depths of his disappointment, spoke about the alleged power struggle that has been going on in the coalition. This is a phantasmagoria of imagination. No two people would be more intimately concerned with the production of this Bill than the Minister for Mines and me. We are neighbours, friends, and co-members of the coalition, and we have been co-workers in the vineyard the harvest of which is this Bill.

I suppose one could forgive those in the ranks of the Opposition for speaking about a power struggle, because they live in an atmosphere, an odour and an arena of power struggles. After all, in recent months, weeks and days the newspapers have carried headlines to the effect that, at the Labour-in-Politics Convention at the South Coast, with plenty of "nice popsies" to ensure a full attendance, the same old Left-wing control of the Queensland Branch of the Australian Labour Party was confirmed.

Mr. Tucker: Is this to do with the Bill?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I am talking about power struggles. We saw a power struggle in Victoria which was engineered, master-minded and ring-mastered by Labour's Federal president, Mr. Tommy Burns, who is an employee of the Q.C.E. He master-minded the take-over in Victoria, and he also master-minded, and ring-mastered, the take-over of the A.L.P. in New South Wales. I am sure he is proud of those exploits, which were accompanied by the greatest power struggles since 1954 and 1955.

The third item in the speech of the Leader of the Opposition dealt with the "one vote, one value" issue. The word "gerrymander" was used by him, and also by the hon. members for Barcoo and Belmont. We might well have a look at that claim. What I have in my hand is a pamphlet headed, "Stop another gerrymander". It contains no acknowledgement of responsibility for its publication, but it was distributed last Saturday by A.L.P. members, one of whom gave me a copy. Hon. members opposite make accusations of gerrymandering, and someone on this side of the Chamber should take them up. I take hon. members back to the last redistribution in 1958. The first election held on the boundaries decided by that redistribution was in 1960.

Mr. Bromley: That was a real gerrymander.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: Let us look at the picture. At the time of the 1960 election following the 1958 redistribution, the average enrolment for city electorates was 11,698. In 1969, nine years later, the average enrolment had risen to 13,600. By December last year it had risen again to only 13,800. One can therefore say that, so far as the city is concerned, the 1958 redistribution was carried out so skilfully and with such foresight that the average number of electors in city electorates did not increase very much at all.

Mr. Bromley: The average in the metropolitan area does not make a very good argument.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: Let us look at the maximum and minimum enrolment figures in 1960. Against an average enrolment of 11,698, the electorate with the maximum enrolment was Wavell, with 13,900, which was well under the 20 per cent. tolerance. The smallest electorate was Sandgate, with 10,511 electors, which is well below the tolerance. Those proportions have not altered.

What applied in the city in 1960, 1969, and the end of 1970 also applied in the country. There, the average enrolment was 8,598. That figure increased to approximately 10,000 in 1969, and it is just in excess of 11,000 today. The electorate with the maximum number was Redcliffe, with 10,400 electors, and that with the minimum number was Mulgrave, with about 7,000. Again, those figures are well within the prescribed tolerance. The same situation is seen with provincial averages. One can therefore say that the 1958 redistribution was not a gerrymander, and that the situation as it has developed in the 13 years since that redistribution has confirmed its wisdom, fairness and justice.

That statement is also borne out by the distribution of electors at 31 December, 1970. At that date, of the 28 seats in the metropolitan area there were only five in which the number of electors exceeded the 20 per cent. tolerance. Out of the 38 seats in the country zone, there were only seven that had crept

above the 20 per cent. tolerance. I think all hon. members will agree that that redistribution was carried out with skill and fairness.

In a side-winding sort of way we have had some aspersions cast upon the possible composition of the commission. None of us knows at this stage who will be on the commission. For anyone to say in so many words, "Whoever are on it will be people who will cheat or be unfair or unjust" is to be completely deprecated.

Mr. Sherrington: Who would want to be on the commission?

Dr. DELAMOTHE: We will put the hon. member on it. He would be fair and just. We would expect him to be, and I am sure he would be. If the hon. member's party put me on it, they would expect me to act that way.

By comparison, I think we should look at the situation that existed when the last election was held on a Labour Government's redistribution. We have heard a lot about Labour's plan for nine western seats and 69 coastal seats. If we go back to the elections in 1957, held under the last Labour redistribution, we find that there were 10 western seats. Now that I have discovered this, I have some sympathy for the pushing and the arguing on the Opposition side for nine western seats.

In 1957 those 10 seats had a total of 56,000 electors; they averaged 5,600 each. One can well understand the wish, hope and desire of the A.L.P. to reproduce the little pocket boroughs that, to a great extent, kept the Labour Party in power for 30 or 40 years. One has only to look at the seat of Charters Towers at that time. If ever there was a pocket borough that was it; it had only 4,463 electors. I should like to have an electorate like that. When we hear the Opposition talking about gerrymandering, we should look at those 10 pocket boroughs that the A.L.P. desires to reproduce, if it can have a say on the commission.

Let us be quite frank. I do not think I am saying anything out of school when I say that one would expect the Bill to make provision for parties, individuals, towns and electorates to make submissions to the commission. One would expect the commission to examine closely all those submissions. I have no doubt that the Country Party, the Liberal Party, the A.L.P., the D.L.P. and the "X.Y.Z." will be putting to the commission their ideas of what should be done. In the final analysis, of course, an independent, just and fair commission has to weigh in the balance all the various pros and cons. But one would hope that the commission would not produce 10 western seats with an average of 5,000 electors each.

That was not the only anomaly that had arisen by 1957. By then there were 24 city seats with an average of 13,303 voters. The

highest was Mt. Gravatt, with 28,289. Brisbane, which was a safe Labour pocket borough, had 8,000.

There was also a south-eastern area, with an average of 10,700—a maximum of 15,700 in Murrumba and as few as 8,000-odd in Marodian. In those days Labour held the view that a division of the State into four zones was right and proper. The average in the North was 8,900, with a maximum of 10,700 in Mundingburra and again a nice little pocket borough of 7,000 in Townsville. I should think that the A.L.P., having been made aware of the position, will say no more about gerrymandering. Of course, very few who were in the Parliament in those days are still here today.

I have said that in those days the average number of voters in city seats was 13,300. I am sorry that the hon. member for Baroona is not here. He won the seat of Ithaca, which then had a total enrolment of 10,000. I am quite sure we will hear no more from the Opposition of the word "gerrymander". It hurts us all very much to have our former sins come back and haunt us.

I conclude on the note on which I began. As a kindly, courteous doctor, I can well understand the disappointment of the Opposition in having to debate a Bill which they hoped, felt, wished and desired would never come before Parliament.

Mr. B. WOOD (Cook) (4.18 p.m.): As a patient, I would certainly not consult Dr. Delamothe. He could not make me feel better in any circumstances. At the outset of his speech, he said he thought that Opposition members were rather sorry about the introduction of this legislation. Let me say that the A.L.P. is responsible for having this legislation brought before Parliament. It was only the persistent criticism of the Australian Labour Party and the strength of our arguments that resulted in its presentation. Had we remained silent, no agreement would have been reached by the Government parties. They would have dithered, argued and fought each other for years. We forced the introduction of this Bill.

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen: I hope you will support it.

Mr. B. WOOD: We do support it, although with certain worries at the back of our minds. Our leader has said that he supports the introduction of the Bill, but we want to see it. We all hope that justice will be restored to the State, but have grave doubts about it. We are very concerned that it will not be.

Mr. Lee: Fancy saying that after what Dr. Delamothe has just said.

Mr. B. WOOD: The doctor had quite a lot to say. He got up in his rather pious and pompous manner, and at the outset, criticised the Opposition by saying that we were not speaking about the introduction of the Bill; that all we were doing was criticising

the Government. We are entitled to do that; there are good grounds for criticising the Government.

Having said that, what did the hon. doctor do? For 20 minutes he attacked the Labour Party, its leaders, our principles and our morals. Having said one thing, he proceeded to do another. Let there be no doubt that the Opposition is happy to see the introduction of the Bill. We hope that we will be just as happy and pleased when it is passed.

The Minister for Justice also referred to a gerrymander and quoted some figures. I have also studied those figures. Of course, the way in which boundaries are drawn and certain areas are kept out of electorates to make them safe for the Liberal and Country Parties is also a gerrymander.

The Minister then referred to the four zones that were created by the Labour administration. I have looked at them quite carefully. At that time there was a greater degree of equality than there is at present. There were 10 western seats, each containing a small number of electors; but do not let us forget that that was in 1949, when the northern and western members were not a mere two to four hours' flying time from Brisbane. In those days a DC-3 made the flight from Cairns to Brisbane, whereas today a DC-9 covers the same distance in 2½ hours. Despite some complaints, which I shall make shortly while the Premier is in the Chamber, I can travel round my electorate in an aircraft, which members could not do years ago. Do not let us forget that at present the emphasis is placed on air communication.

Mr. Muller: You can thank this Government for that.

Mr. B. WOOD: I do not know that I can thank this Government for a DC-9.

Mr. Lee: You can thank the Premier for more flights in your electorate.

Mr. B. WOOD: I do not think it is the Premier who should be thanked; rather is it the Treasurer. He has given us 21 return flights each year. We get nothing at all from the Premier.

Attacks have been made by Government members on the sincerity of Labour members who have expressed concern about the West and the North. The proposals put forward by Labour relative to those areas of the State are better than the proposals that seem to be embodied in the Bill.

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen: How can you say that when you recommend only 78 seats over all?

Mr. B. WOOD: I do not understand the Premier. I thought he, too, was recommending 78 seats—or has he changed his mind again?

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen: You say you are giving better representation to the West.

Mr. B. WOOD: Our proposals are much better than the Government's. Until the Country and Liberal Parties attacked the West, that area of the State enjoyed excellent representation; and it will not be restored by this Bill.

One of the proposals put forward by the Labour Party is that in a consideration of boundaries the facilities available to members within their electorates should be borne in mind. The hon. member for Townsville South does not seem to worry about that; nevertheless, it concerns country members. We believe that we should have a telephone, for example. I do not know how I would be able to look after the interests of my constituents if, when they call on me, I could not make a phone call to Brisbane. I certainly do not know how the hon. member for Townsville South manages without a telephone.

Mr. Wright: Isn't it true that the hon. member for Townsville South does not have a telephone so that his constituents cannot contact him?

Mr. B. WOOD: I do believe he avoids his responsibilities quite deliberately.

Mr. R. E. Moore: He'll "do" you.

Mr. B. WOOD: He won't "do" me. He is not in the Chamber at present and, as it is past 4 o'clock, he will not be here again today.

Government Members interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! I have already warned hon. members.

Mr. B. WOOD: I can handle him.

I wish to refer to certain other facilities that should be made available to country members. I have approached the Premier on this matter—with no result of course—and I dare say that other hon. members have done the same. I have found that at night I am weighed down with correspondence. Our proposals are that, as well as making a redistribution, the Government should provide country members with better facilities. I see no reason for not implementing very moderate proposals. In the centre of Cairns we should have one short-hand-typist available to do the work of the four members from that area. That would not be a very expensive undertaking, because the staff in Brisbane could be reduced correspondingly.

Greater provision should be made for air travel allowances within a member's electorate. I have had arguments with the Premier on this matter, but my proposals have been rejected. He is very adept at ignoring suggestions that he does not wish to implement. His attitude in Cabinet meetings is the same; he walks out like a spoilt child. I raised with him a matter relating specifically to the Cook electorate that I will bring to the

notice of the commissioners, or whatever they may be called, when they are appointed. I think it is worth mentioning that, in a letter of 25 February, 1970, the Under Secretary, on behalf of the Premier, advised me, "The Premier cannot concede that the areas of water to which you refer . . ."—that was Torres Strait—" . . . can be included in the Electorate area." In one sense, it seems that Torres Strait is not part of Queensland because it is not included in my electorate when determining its size. Although I fly across Torres Strait, as I do when visiting Thursday Island or Bamaga, that area of water is not considered as part of my electorate.

Mr. P. Wood: Does the Premier want to hand it over to New Guinea?

Mr. B. WOOD: I hope not. He has said he does not want to, and the A.L.P. certainly does not want that to happen.

As this area of sea is not included, my allowance is smaller than it should be. Next year, if the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs honours his promise, airstrips will be constructed on Yorke Island and Badu Island. I will then be able to fly to those islands, but the area of sea I cross is not regarded as part of my electorate.

Mr. Camm: This has nothing to do with your electoral allowance.

Mr. B. WOOD: Yes, it has.

Mr. Camm: It has not. The hon. member for Mackay gets the same electoral allowance as I do.

Mr. B. WOOD: The hon. gentleman was not listening to my earlier submissions. I get \$400 a year for flights within my electorate.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! Will the hon. member please address the Chair.

Mr. B. WOOD: The allowance is determined by the size of the electorate. That is what I am referring to. Because the sea area is not included, my allowance is smaller than it should be. I fly over it, and I will do so more often in the future. The Minister for Local Government, who has the largest electorate in the State, flies over a desert area but he is allowed to claim it as part of his area. The decision about Torres Strait is most unreasonable and unjust.

Mr. Chinchin: What islands in the Torres Strait do you fly to?

Mr. B. WOOD: At the moment, to Thursday Island, and in the near future I will be flying to Yorke Island and Badu Island.

Mr. Chinchin: What distance is that from the mainland?

Mr. B. WOOD: It is 20-odd miles.

I hope that the Commissioners will correct the anomaly so that I can say that the Torres Strait, in all respects, is part of Queensland.

Earlier today the hon. member for Townsville South—I understand he is called "Two-day Tom", because he comes down to Brisbane on Wednesdays and returns home on Thursdays—

Mr. Hanson: He is never here at night.

Mr. B. WOOD: That is right. His other nick-name is "Sleepy Tom", because he is never here at night. Perhaps the fact that he sleeps so much causes us to hear so much of his nonsense from the dream-time. "Two-day Tom" expressed an interest in the West and the North. I understand that before he came into this Chamber he spent some time in the West, sometimes on the track and sometimes off it. But he obviously knows nothing about the North. The other day, during the debate on the Health Act Amendment Bill, he showed that his geographical knowledge of North Queensland was very badly astray. Some time ago he made a trip to Cooktown. If he had known the North better, he would have checked his accommodation before he arrived because there was none available when he got there. Perhaps the owner knew him. Then, because no accommodation was available and the red carpet had not been rolled out for him, he put on a "turn" that would have done a prima donna proud. He said, "I am Tom Aikens. Look out!" This is the sort of man who claims to be a representative of the North. He does not even live in North Queensland.

There is one matter the hon. member raised to which I should refer. Hon. members know that nothing he says can be believed. His speeches are full of untruths. He will say anything at all, especially in response to an interjection, when he will try to score off another hon. member. This is what happened today when he referred to a house I have recently had built at Freshwater, in my electorate. He put a price of \$35,000 on it. Unlike "Two-day Tom", I have not won the Golden Casket.

Mr. Tucker: He has won it twice.

Mr. B. WOOD: I have not been quite so fortunate, so obviously I could not build a house worth that amount. For the benefit of anyone outside this Chamber who might happen to read "Hansard", I should like to put the matter straight. Once again, as always, the hon. member's remarks were quite untrue and way out.

Mr. P. Wood: I understand that, unlike the hon. member you mention, the first thing you put in your house was a telephone so that you could help your constituents.

Mr. B. WOOD: Yes, I arranged for this. A telephone is an important part of our work.

Mr. Thackeray: Do you think a car is necessary?

Mr. B. WOOD: I understand that "Two-day Tom" does not have one, but I believe that he asks the hon. member for Townsville North for lifts from functions they attend.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! Would the hon. member please return to the Bill.

Mr. B. WOOD: Perhaps, Mr. Ramsden, I will not have the privilege of speaking in this Chamber again under your chairmanship. I find you are always much more lenient than the other chairmen.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member not to presume.

Mr. B. WOOD: I am told that the reason you are leaving is that you are not going to fill the next Cabinet vacancy.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! Would the hon. member continue with his speech relative to the Bill.

Mr. B. WOOD: We welcome this Bill with mixed feelings. We welcome it as a chance to achieve what this State deserves, and we accept it with some very grave doubts about the Government's real intentions.

Mr. W. D. HEWITT (Chatsworth) (4.33 p.m.): While listening to the hon. member for Belmont this afternoon, the thought occurred to me that he and I should feel a little nostalgic, because the last redistribution created the electorate of Belmont. On that occasion he and I clashed for the first time. He was the Australian Labour Party endorsed candidate and I was the Liberal Party endorsed candidate. It is not true to say that he beat me—he thrashed me. I extracted a miserable 34 per cent. of the votes, and I had to work my innards out for every vote I won. As a result of that contest, the hon. member for Belmont and I became good friends. While we fight like Kilkeny cats on occasions, from that time on he has always commanded my personal respect, and I hope that I command his. Therefore, it was with some regret that I was not able to follow him immediately in this debate.

Mr. Hanlon: Have you signed the pledge with Joh. yet?

Mr. W. D. HEWITT: I have signed no pledge, no.

Before moving to the burden of my own comments, I shall touch on something said by the hon. member for Barcoo. He referred to the history of the name of his electorate, and argued that the name should be preserved. I should not like to think that any commission would be so petty as to abandon a name that is so rich in tradition and history.

Mr. Hanlon: They abandoned the name of mine in 1959.

Mr. W. D. HEWITT: That may be so, but I am not now talking about the electorate of the hon. member for Barcoo. I do not know, either, whether the name of the hon. member's electorate has the same traditions that attach to Barcoo. As the hon. member for Barcoo pointed out, the Australian Labour Party had its origin in that territory, and it is an argument on historical grounds, and a good one, that the hon. member puts forward for the preservation of the name of his electorate.

It is true that the Bill has been a long time in coming to Parliament. It was originally foreshadowed in the Governor's Opening Speech in July last year. Negotiations have been protracted and painful, and unfortunately they have been conducted in a blaze of publicity that probably has not reflected any great glory on either of our parties, or, indeed, on Parliament itself. I reject out of hand any suggestion that any Liberal parliamentarian is under any influence or authority emanating from his party executive. I say quite bluntly that if our respective parties had not been able to arrive at a policy determination on this matter, the Government parties would certainly have proceeded. Like justice, it is important that these things not only be done but appear to be done, and I do not want there to be any inference that there has been an overdue exercise of authority by the organisational wings of the parties on members of Parliament, because that is just not true.

In saying those few things, I would not want to take anything from the negotiators for the respective parties. They have toiled long, faithfully and well. I know that this has been a matter of some heartburning to them. It has been a tremendously difficult matter to negotiate and on which to reach agreement, and I think members of the Government parties are indebted to the negotiators for the end result that they have produced.

My friend from Toowong said in effect that the Bill is not the Bill that he would have written. It is probably not the Bill that any one member would have written. I imagine that trying to find a solution to the question of redistribution is rather like asking town planners to give their ideas; if there were 100 town planners, they would produce 100 different plans. Each member will undoubtedly have his own approach, and I also go on record as saying that it is probably not the plan that I would have produced myself. It does, however, represent an acceptable compromise to all members of the two Government parties. In case there are those who think that "compromise" is a dirty word, I shall return to that matter in a few minutes.

No-one would deny the urgency of a redistribution of State seats in Queensland. There has been an intolerable work-burden placed on those members whose electorates have swollen. In effect, many people have been disfranchised because of the imbalance that

has developed, and there has been the serious risk of a resulting distortion of election results. None of these things is desirable. In a democracy such a possibility must be avoided, and all significant reasons for redistribution must be investigated before the next election so that a proper result can be produced.

I argue on the basis that the most important thing of all is that it is not the role of a Government to perpetuate itself in office or prejudge itself, but rather to create a climate in which the will of the people can be gauged. The essence of democracy is that the will of the people should prevail, and, the closer we can get to assuring that that will be the result, the better it will be for all concerned. The nature of the seats will become apparent after the commission has been appointed and produces its results. We are already talking about zones, sizes of seats, geography of seats, and a host of other things that will become more apparent only with the effluxion of time.

One could speak of all seats falling into two categories: the "swing" and the "blue-ribbon". I think there is an argument to be developed in favour of the second category. There is less security in any blue-ribbon seat today than there has ever been before. The very significant percentage swings that we have seen in recent elections give mute testimony to this. I suppose, from the viewpoint of the Australian electorate, that this is probably a good thing, but I, for one, believe that there should be a certain number of blue-ribbon seats on the Government side and on the Opposition side—seats that would not readily swing, and seats that would give their incumbents reasonable security. I say that for this reason: one of the great arguments against entering politics is the in-built insecurity. When we approach young people who we feel have something to contribute, they may talk about earning capacity and perhaps contrast what they are earning with what they will get in Parliament, but they point to the in-built insecurity. That is a very real problem.

If we are to attract young men into politics, if we are to place in their hands the ultimate destiny of the State and look to them for political leadership, we must be able to offer them some form of security. It can never be a complete guarantee because that is beyond the power of all of us. If there were some blue-ribbon seats on each side, there would be opportunities for some men to stay here a number of years, to understand what Parliament is about and, in the fullness of time, to achieve a senior position in the Parliament.

I would remind you, Mr. Ramsden, that most political parties do their best to give their leaders blue-ribbon seats so that, to some degree, the day-to-day grind is avoided and they can be reasonably sure of remaining in Parliament for a fair length of time. I always thought it was regrettable that it was

only in the latter days of his career that Dr. Evatt was given a reasonably safe seat in Federal politics. I always thought that as a leader of a national party it was rather degrading that he had to hang on by his teeth, election after election, when there were good blue-ribbon seats that should have been made available to him. Ultimately Hunter did come his way, but it was very late in the piece.

I want to put two propositions to the Committee, the first of which will attract very little argument indeed. I suggest that there should be lower quotas for the western seats. There seems to be no argument about that; it is accepted. I want to make a very easy contrast to substantiate my argument. By way of comparison I refer to the seat held by the Minister for Local Government and Electricity—Gregory—and my own. The hon. member for Gregory represents an area of 159,000 square miles; my electorate covers only 3½ square miles. At 31 December last year in the hon. gentleman's vast area there were 6,682 people; my small area had 11,745. If the hon. member for Gregory were asked to embrace a quota of, say, 13,000, he would balk at the prospect. He would be terrified at the thought of the extra territory he would have to absorb. What is possibly an oversimplification will, I hope, establish a telling case for a lower quota for western seats.

If allegations of gerrymander are made, we should be mindful that the lower quota favours our opponents on the other side, because at the moment more western seats are held by the Opposition than by Government members. Therefore, this is an advantage being written into the Bill in favour of the Opposition. No-one argues about it, but it is a balancing factor and one that I hope will not be entirely disregarded.

My second proposition is one that may attract some argument. It concerns the aggregation of seats in the south-eastern corner of the State and the argument that it is to the disadvantage of the rest of the State. Foremost among the proponents of this argument, of course, is the hon. member for Townsville South, who I am told is no longer with us. I repudiate this argument on two bases, the first being in terms of aggregation of people. The simple fact of the matter, whether it be acceptable or not, is that the great aggregation of people in this State is now in the south-eastern corner and they are entitled to representation on a fair basis or quota that gives them a reasonable number of members to whom they can have access. I can never accept the argument that members in this south-east corner come together to vote and work against the interests of the State as a whole and particularly against the interests of the northern and western parts. That has never been the case, and I do not really think that it ever will be so.

An analysis of expenditure in this State over the course of many years will show that there has been a greatly disproportionate expenditure in country seats. I do not argue

against that; I simply state it as a fact to repudiate the argument that city members work against country interests. In fact, the record of the Government gives the lie direct to such a contention. Not one piece of legislation of a purely rural nature has been opposed by the Liberals in this Parliament. The contrary is the fact; they have been ardent supporters and at times the proud architects of this legislation.

Liberals are mindful of the disadvantages of people in remote areas. They are sympathetic to their problems, and I do not believe that they ever come together and disadvantage the interests of country people. Indeed, it is useful to point out that, when the company law was being amended recently, Liberal members recognised certain problems that would accrue to country people in remote areas and took the matter up on their behalf.

As a matter of fact, I find that a city member's remoteness from country areas gives him a degree of impartiality and objectivity. I do not say that unkindly about other members, but the fact is that I do not go home on a Friday night to an electorate filled with wheat-farmers, dairy-farmers or grain-growers. I am ready to look at their problems objectively, and if there is some short-term disadvantage in some legislation that will work to their long-term good, possibly I am in a better position to be party to such legislation. I repudiate out of hand the suggestion that a greater number of seats in the south-eastern corner works to the disadvantage of the rest of the State.

I mentioned earlier that this Bill is a result of a compromise between the two joint Government parties. Some think that "compromise" is a sullied word, that there is something dirty about compromise. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. Compromise is part and parcel of political activities, and within the machinery of party politics, as we understand it today, few decisions on either side of the Chamber could be arrived at without compromise.

If Opposition members do not accept my contention on this, I ask them seriously would they not agree that there is constant compromise between the left and the right, between the Q.C.E. and parliamentarians, between the trade unions and members, and, when they recently held their Labour-in-Politics Convention and changed the decision with regard to a casino on the Gold Coast so that it would be determined only by referendum, was this not also compromise?

Compromise is nothing more than two groups coming together; two groups, each initially adopting a stand that may put them poles apart, moving closer together and, by each giving a little, finding common ground. There is nothing wrong with compromise in these circumstances.

Kennedy, in his book "Profiles of Courage," put this much better than I could ever do.

He said—

"All legislation . . . is founded upon the principle of mutual concession . . . Let him who elevates himself above humanity, above its weaknesses, its infirmities, its wants, its necessities, say, if he pleases, 'I never will compromise'; but let no one who is not above the frailties of our common nature disdain compromise."

Finally, I hope that, in the future, redistribution problems can be removed from the pathos and agony that we have been subjected to in recent weeks. I hope it never happens again. As well, I hope that, sooner or later, as a Parliament we can embrace certain important principles, namely, that the commission should be retained on a continuing basis; that the population and boundaries of each electorate should be reviewed prior to each election; and that boundaries should be readjusted automatically when movements have exceeded the defined percentage above or below quota. When that happens we will get closer to a continuing review and, as well, closer to being able constantly to assess the wishes of the people as accurately as possible.

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) (4.51 p.m.): The Minister for Justice commenced and ended his clinical examination of the measure by referring to himself as a kindly and humane doctor. By doing so he gave us a typical example of the old saying that self-praise is no recommendation. He took the opportunity of putting before the Chamber the thought that the Opposition was bitterly disappointed because the Bill had finally come before Parliament. I remind him that the introduction of this Bill closely followed the pattern of the Cooloola issue. Owing to the constant pressure exerted by the Opposition and public opinion, the Government unwillingly decided to prevent sand-mining at Cooloola. Similarly, the Government has unwillingly decided to give Parliament an opportunity to debate redistribution. Obviously, the Government has been activated into introducing the Bill by its realisation that failure to legislate for a redistribution at this stage in the life of the present Parliament would result in nothing short of a political scandal.

I recall the time-honoured quotation, "Something is rotten in the State of Denmark." On the matter of redistribution, "something is putrid in the State of Queensland." The existing electoral boundaries not only deny the electors the opportunity of having their wishes recognised but also create such an imbalance between certain areas and towns that the Government cannot rebut the charge that it has been guilty of political legerdemain. At last the Government has realised that if it does not proceed with redistribution it will create a political scandal, and it has unwillingly brought this measure before Parliament.

In view of all the statements made during the week by the Deputy Leader of the Government, and the fact that he has sat and warmed his chair throughout this debate, I think he must have adopted the role of "No-talk Chalk".

Mr. Chalk: I will be speaking after you.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I knew that the Minister would not speak before me; he did not want me to speak after him. At least I will get him out of his chair-warming position.

The events leading up to the introduction of the Bill take my mind back to world events prior to 1939 when there was backstabbing and conniving on the carving up of European countries. Finally, Neville Chamberlain stepped from the plane and, waving a piece of paper, said, "Peace in our time." I see a strong parallel between the Premier producing the Bill today and Chamberlain saying, "This will mean peace in our time," and I am prompted to say that there is marked similarity between the effects of the Bill and the effects of the piece of paper which Government members were asked to sign guaranteeing that there would be no three-party contests. The pages of history reveal what happened after Munich. The agreement was torn up and, within six months, Poland was invaded. I hazard a guess that, within six months, all members who signed the paper today will be tearing it up and the Liberals will be slipping into three-cornered contests as quickly as possible.

Mr. Hanlon: They will tell the Premier they signed it only "at this point of time".

Mr. SHERRINGTON: That is correct. The Government has employed subterfuge in many ways by using the words, "at this point of time".

When the sordid shabbiness of electoral redistribution in Queensland is exposed, it is seen that it is not simply a question of Government or coalition juggling to keep the Opposition out of power. It would be bad enough if electorates were gerrymandered merely to keep the Opposition out of Government. The reason for the internecine wangling within the coalition is the desire not to keep the Opposition out of office, but to keep a minority-scoring Country Party as the senior party in the coalition. The Deputy Premier admitted in 1969 that there would be a need for redistribution in 1972, but Parliament has had to sit and wait for years while difficulties were resolved merely to keep a minority-scoring party as the senior party in the coalition. At present, criticism is coming not only from the Opposition benches, but from the wood-and-water joeys of the coalition, that is, members of the Liberal Party.

Neither of the coalition parties can govern in its own right and, collectively, they provide a classic example of the old axiom, namely, that if we do not hang together we will all

hang separately. On that basis, I should like to refer to the great, sudden inspiration of the Premier, and other Government speakers, to cite what the late Hon. E. M. Hanlon said about electoral distribution in Queensland. I am quite sure that, in formulating this worthy doctrine, he could not have envisaged that electoral redistribution in the metropolitan area could reach such scandalous proportions. While I believe, and always have believed, that there is a case for some differentiation between metropolitan and far-flung electorate enrolments, until the various quotas bear some form of relativity to one another, the Government can only be accused of gerrymandering.

While there may be some argument for lower quotas in country areas, the position in the metropolitan area is not only ludicrous but downright dishonest. There may be some justification for an imbalance between metropolitan and country areas, but there is absolutely no justification for the imbalance which has existed in the metropolitan area for a number of years and which could have been corrected if the Government had been honest and courageous in carrying out a partial redistribution in the metropolitan area.

Today, Aspley, Salisbury, Mt. Gravatt and Belmont average between 21,000 and 23,000 voters, and others have large enrolments. Of the 28 metropolitan electorates, the 14 with the highest enrolments have a combined total of 237,842, whereas the combined enrolment of the other 14 is 150,095, or almost 100,000 fewer. The 14 electorates with the greatest number of voters cover 343 square miles of the metropolitan area, whereas the other 14 electorates cover 46 square miles. Each of the electorates of Belmont and Mt. Coot-tha covers an area greater than the combined area of the smaller 14 electorates. Mt. Coot-tha, which covers 92 square miles, is almost double the area of those 14. My own electorate of Salisbury, which covers 43 square miles, is almost equivalent to the 46 square miles covered by those 14 electorates.

The Liberal Party holds 17 Brisbane seats, and the Australian Labour Party holds 11. The Liberal Party was able to win 17 Brisbane seats by polling a total of 159,695 votes, while the Labour Party was able to win only 11 Brisbane seats by polling a total of 163,446 votes, or 5,000 more. I am referring now to the metropolitan area only.

Mr. Armstrong: Was that at the last election?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Yes. Carried to its logical conclusion, the figures show that in the metropolitan area it took 9,394 votes to elect a Liberal member and 14,859 votes to elect a Labour member.

Mr. Ahern: It's marvellous what you can do with statistics, isn't it?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: We had the Minister quoting statistics about pocket boroughs. What I am quoting are figures. If the hon. member for Landsborough does not like to hear a logical argument based on figures, let him get up and try to dispute what I am saying. This afternoon the Premier in justification of his actions trotted out statements made by the late Mr. Hanlon. Next week he will be trotting out Tom Burns in an attempt to tip a can of rubbish over us if it suits his purpose. These figures that I am quoting have been taken from the returns at the last State election, and they are indisputable. If the hon. member for Landsborough still has any serious doubts about them, I shall quote for him figures that have been compiled by a computer. They are indisputable.

Mr. Ahern: A statistician would have made a different deduction.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Of course he would, but the hon. member does not like to be met by cold, hard facts. Hon. members opposite deal in fantasies. They have been doing that for the last two years; that is why they have been getting into so much trouble, and why the Premier and the Deputy Premier have been slipping into each other. They do not like being confronted with cold, hard facts. It is indisputable, from the figures that I have quoted, that it took 9,000-odd voters to elect a Liberal candidate in Brisbane, and 14,000-odd voters to elect a Labour candidate. Although Government members seek to justify discrepancies between metropolitan and country areas, they cannot justify the situation that they have allowed to remain in the metropolitan area when a partial redistribution of seats in that area could have been made. Of course, the Government has allowed the present position to continue because it knows that a partial redistribution of the metropolitan area would have meant the loss of Liberal seats. I am not saying that Country Party members would not have been happy about that; it is just that they did not think of the possibilities.

Of course, what has led up to the unwilling introduction of this legislation is the philosophy of the coalition parties. The Country Party has never had a desire to change the status quo. Like the Liberals in Canberra, the Country Party intends to remain the dominant party in the coalition. Conversely, I believe that the Liberals have not had the will to do anything about it. In any case, the Act provides for the setting up of a boundaries commission. In all sincerity I ask: what person in this community, knowing the events that have led up to the introduction of the Bill, would want to serve on a boundaries commission in this State?

There has been talk of disbanding the Isis electorate, and the Premier has disagreed with that suggestion. Is not that sort of talk an indication that the commissioners will be instructed not on the number of seats and quotas, but on the seats to be

abolished, particularly those held by Opposition members? That is a statement that appeared in "The Courier-Mail", and it has not been denied by the Premier. Would a boundaries commissioner have any respect for himself if the public knew that he was merely a ventriloquist's dummy voicing the words put into his mouth by the Government? From the actions, attitudes and statements of the Government parties over recent months, it is quite obvious that the commissioners will not be determining areas and boundaries, but will merely be drawing lines on a map according to the instructions of the coalition parties. It is because of this that I ask: is there any person in the community who would want to accept the job of a commissioner under these circumstances?

I believe that the actions of the Government over the past weeks and months have brought discredit to the principle of appointing a so-called independent boundaries commission in this State.

(Time expired.)

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer) (5.11 p.m.): I think there is only one other hon. member in the Chamber who has been here longer than I have. Two hon. members, the Premier of the State and the hon. member for Cooroora, came into Parliament when I entered it in 1947.

Mr. Bennett interjected.

Mr. CHALK: The hon. member for South Brisbane only entered the Chamber during the last hour. He has not been here all day.

The point of the matter is that I have had the opportunity of being in the Chamber when legislation covering two redistributions passed through it. This is the third occasion I have seen such legislation come forward. When I sat in the Opposition in 1949 I witnessed the basis on which a redistribution was brought about by the Labour Party. At that time the Opposition of the day was extremely critical of the proposals put forward, but that legislation was passed, the redistribution was carried out and a new Parliament was set up under a Labour Government.

I have just listened to the remarks of the hon. member for Salisbury, who expounded on what he described as the diversification—the difference in the number of electors in the various seats at the present time—particularly in the metropolitan area. I draw the attention of the Committee to the situation that applied in 1956, after the Labour Government had been returned on the basis of the redistribution carried out on its pattern in 1949. The hon. member has referred to the fact that there are 20,000-odd electors in one area in Brisbane at the present time. He also drew attention to some areas in which he contends there are 11,000 or 12,000 electors.

Mr. Sherrington: I didn't say that at all.

Mr. CHALK: What number, then? I am quite prepared to accept a correction of the figures. The hon. member said that at the present time there is an electorate in Brisbane containing 20,000-odd people. He also indicated that there were certain electorates held by Government members with fewer than 10,000 voters in them.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I rise to a point of order. My statement was that between the top seats and the low seats there was a difference of 100,000 electors.

Mr. CHALK: I am prepared to let the public read the hon. member's speech. He made a straight-out claim that in 1956 there were 20,000 voters in electorates in Brisbane. In 1957, although there was no mention by the Labour Party of a redistribution, the Mt. Gravatt electorate had 28,000 voters and the South Brisbane electorate 8,000. That is an indication of just what happened under the proposals put forward by the A.L.P. at that time.

Opposition Members interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! I give hon. members a final warning.

Mr. CHALK: The hon. member complains that I have quoted only one electorate. He therefore forces me to quote others. Kedron had 20,787; Chermside had 18,483 and, if he wants a few more facts, these were made on the basis of an A.L.P. redistribution.

Consequently, when we came to power as a Government in 1957, we set about having a redistribution. Anyone who reads the record of that debate will find that the arguments put forward by the A.L.P. were in support of the very type of policy that they had laid down previously. The Government of the day saw fit to prepare a new proposal, which was passed through this Chamber and in which we indicated that when we believed that the figures again became unbalanced a new distribution would be instituted. This is exactly what the Government is doing at the present time.

Now, let us have a look at the basis on which this redistribution is proposed. I have listened to arguments put up this afternoon by the A.L.P., which has said that it wants some 68 seats in what might be described as the coastal strip.

Mr. Sherrington: 69.

Mr. CHALK: All right, we will take it as 69. Opposition members are very sensitive today. They want 69 seats in an area stretching from Cape York to Coolangatta and bounded by the Great Dividing Range. They are prepared to concede that there should be nine seats in the West.

On the figures used by the hon. member for Salisbury, there would be 69 seats in the coastal area with an average of about 12,000 votes.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I rise to a point of order. I did not mention the western seats of the State. My submission was entirely on the out-of-balance state of seats in the metropolitan area.

Mr. CHALK: The hon. member likes to split straws. He cannot deny that it was said in this Chamber this afternoon that there is an average of 12,000 voters in these electorates. This is true and, based on the number of voters inside the area proposed and 12,000 electors in each electorate, we would have in the Brisbane area alone some 30-odd seats. He would have five or six seats on the Gold Coast and very few, if any at all, in North Queensland. Then, having had a look at the formula that Labour puts forward, in the West he would have nine seats, in each of which he would have approximately 6,000 electors.

Mr. O'Donnell: 8,500.

Mr. CHALK: Very well, I will accept the figure of 8,500. My calculations do not confirm that figure, but his may be more accurate. However, the fact remains that Labour's proposal is centred on an area of mass population.

Mr. Houston: Boloney!

Mr. CHALK: The Leader of the Opposition says, "Boloney!" He cannot deny it. It is a mathematical figure, and I shall deal with it now. The growth of population has occurred in the metropolitan area, in the City of Townsville, in the areas adjacent to Rockhampton, and in the other cities along the coastline, and the Government has a responsibility to ensure that those areas receive fair representation based on population. On the other hand, the Government realises that within the primary-industry, agricultural and far-flung areas of the State there is a need for representation on the basis of a smaller population than in the metropolitan area. The proposals that have been put forward—and they undoubtedly will be put to the commission—are based on similarity of interest as has been indicated, firstly, in the metropolitan area and, secondly, between what have been described as the provincial areas, in which the population is growing and business is expanding.

In an attempt to have not an imbalance but rather a balance between areas that are developing quickly yet are removed from the metropolitan area, the Government has laid down a number of provincial localities. It recognises the community of interest that exists in the metropolitan area; similarly, in the provincial cities a basis of equal representation can be found. But I sincerely believe that in the far-flung western areas of the State there is no basis for a comparison between local population and city population. Rather is there a need to consider the territory that an hon. member has to represent to ensure that he can give a service to the people, which

undoubtedly will mean considerable travelling on his part. Having provided for those areas, there is a balance of territory that must be regarded as country electorates.

That is the basis on which the Government approached the redistribution proposal. We went forward believing that this Bill will provide a reasonable balance between the people in the country areas, those in the provincial-city areas and those in the metropolitan area. If it achieves what we believe it will, we will have brought down legislation to provide protection for the people of Queensland and give a fair indication, by the return of members—whatever that return might be—of what the people desire.

A few moments ago an hon. member referred to drawing boundaries inside the various zones. That is a responsibility of the commission. The Government has formed its policy on the basis of a high degree of equalisation, but it is the responsibility of the commission to determine boundaries. It will consider suggestions from the A.L.P., the Liberal Party, the Country Party, and anyone else.

To condemn the commissioners, as the hon. member for Salisbury did this afternoon, by saying that they would be dishonest men, is to take advantage of privilege within this Parliament that is unbecoming of the hon. member who made the statement. The commission will have a responsibility, and I believe that there are men in this State prepared to listen carefully, to judge fairly, and to ultimately present to this State a redistribution of electoral boundaries within the designated zones so that the purpose for which the Bill has been designed will be achieved.

I do not believe that there is any need for me to convince the people of the need for a redistribution. We gave an undertaking on redistribution to the people when we went to the polls in 1969. On that occasion we were returned because the people believed that the Government of the day was carrying out its duties and responsibilities in the best interests of Queensland. I believe that our approach will continue to provide representation that will be fair and just to the people of this State. It will also ensure that the legislation provides a pattern that will enable the State to be governed for several years to come by whatever Government is elected. It is true that, with a quickly developing State, further redistributions will be necessary in the future. However, because the growth of the State has been fantastic under this Government, we cannot gaze any deeper into the crystal ball than we have in the past. But, as that growth has been confined to certain localities, it is necessary to ensure that they receive proper representation in this Assembly.

As one who knows something of the deep consideration and the hours that have been spent on this matter by responsible members of Parliament and the advice that has been tendered to us by those who

prepare the statistical returns of this State, let me say that the question has been considered fully by Cabinet and by hon. members generally who realise their responsibility. All I can say is that, in the presentation of this Bill, we have provided something which, in my humble opinion, will give equal and just representation to the people of Queensland and ensure that the will of the people is represented in this Parliament.

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) (5.31 p.m.): The Treasurer talks about all the work that has gone on behind the scenes in this matter. It is pity he did not tell us of all the intrigue that has gone on behind the scenes during the past year.

The Treasurer talks about the period between 1946 and 1958, the 1949 redistribution, and the fact that the enrolment of Mt. Gravatt, between 1946 and 1958, increased to something over 20,000.

Mr. Chalk: 28,000.

Mr. TUCKER: All right, 28,000. Apparently at that time it was the only one that had increased. However, the figures indicate that there are now six electorates with well over 20,000 voters—Aspley, Salisbury, Mt. Gravatt, Belmont, Murrumba (a country electorate) and Mt. Coot-tha. The Treasurer is talking about a completely different era, that is, 1946 to 1958. Communications have improved tremendously since then; the Treasurer would admit that. The Premier now has an official aeroplane. Nothing like that was available during the period from 1946 to 1958.

The quota suggested by the A.L.P. was 12,600, with a margin of 20 per cent. above or below, for seats on the eastern seaboard. Redistribution along those lines would have been equitable. It has been claimed that under our system the North would have been given away. That is not so. Had our suggestion been adopted, Townsville would have had three seats and Brisbane would have had 30, as will happen under this proposal. Therefore, it is a fallacy to claim that, had the submission of the A.L.P. been adopted, the North would have suffered.

Mr. Houston: There would have been nine far northern and western seats under our system, whereas there will be only five under this system.

Mr. TUCKER: That is right. The great exponent of one vote, one value has deserted that ideal. He and his colleagues are on record over the years as wanting one vote, one value. I believe he is seeking to hide the fact that he sold out the Liberal Party in this regard. Whenever he speaks in the Chamber, he talks in a loud voice and thumps the table and bluffs his way through in an attempt to give Liberal Party members the impression that he is leading them. In fact, if it suited him, he would sell them out tomorrow. I would say that

he sold them out yesterday. The hon. members for Toowong and Clayfield, and other members of the "ginger" group, are painfully aware that he has sold them out on this occasion in regard to one vote, one value. They are painfully aware that they have been grievously sold out and abandoned by the Treasurer.

I think it was the hon. member for Salisbury who mentioned the pledge that has to be signed by Government members. It is also referred to in the "Telegraph". Surely all members on the other side of the Chamber have been blackmailed by being forced to sign such a pledge. What sort of a leader is it who would have his men rub their noses in the dirt in that way? "Bleeding Heart Chalk", as I might call him, cuts no ice with the Opposition, nor does he fool the people of this State when he "bleeds" in here about people in the West and the North of this State. Chalk does not care about anything but his own business.

Mr. Sullivan: Look at the man who is complaining!

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! I have noticed that some hon. members have been referring to others by name. I draw attention to Standing Orders, which state that members must be referred to as "the hon. member for so-and-so". An hon. member must not be called "Bleeding Heart Chalk" or "Mr. Lickiss", or referred to other than by the name of his electorate.

Mr. TUCKER: If it is good enough for hon. members opposite to say that I am not concerned about country people, it is good enough for me to say the same about them. I took a point of order earlier today on this subject, but I was ignored. I was waiting for the Minister to "come in". I thought there would be someone silly enough to "come in" sooner or later. If it was good enough this morning for such an accusation to be made, when I took a point of order, it is good enough for me to make one now. Let's not make flesh of one and fowl of another.

It is obvious that the Country Party, with the aid of the Liberal Party, is again using the electoral machinery of this State to bring about a gerrymander worse than we have ever seen before. Again the Government parties are endeavouring to produce a concentration of tiny seats in the south-east corner of the State. The Treasurer endeavoured to hide this aim by saying that our proposals would have reduced representation in the North and the West. It will be seen that there is to be a retention of three zones, and, with the attempt to produce a concentration of small seats in the south-east corner of the State, I say advisedly that this redistribution will be the same old story all over again.

There are again to be the zones classified as Brisbane, provincial city and country, or whatever the terms are. They are to be the same zones under which citizens in, for

example, Townsville South are regarded as being in a provincial seat with 18,000-odd people, whilst right next door, in Burdekin, Ayr and Home Hill, the people are regarded as country citizens, and there are only 8,000 in each electorate. The citizens of Maryborough are classified as provincial, whilst right next door those in Tinana are classified as country people. That was typical of the rotten things that were done in the last gerrymander, and we can look forward to similar things being done again under the three-zone system.

This legislation will perpetuate the rotten gerrymander that has existed in this State since 1957. Queensland provides a typical example of a skilfully conceived gerrymander, with country votes frequently having three times the value of city votes cast only a few miles away. Votes cast in Ayr, for example, are worth two or three times those cast in Townsville.

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen: You did a very good job of that in 1949.

Mr. TUCKER: No-one can say that. This legislation shows that the Liberal and Country Parties are against, not in support of, those in northern, central and western Queensland. It is directed to minority control by means of the weighting of electorates in minority areas. Once again the minority area I talk about is South-east Queensland. Here is clear evidence of the Government's indifference towards the North and its insincerity towards a realistic redistribution that would benefit all corners of the State.

Under the 1958 redistribution the number of electorates in the metropolitan area was increased by four. That has been mentioned this afternoon. Under this redistribution the number of electorates in the metropolitan area is being increased by two. Surely that must be at the expense of country electorates.

Only the Australian Labour Party has representation throughout the State. Of the eight largest electorates in Queensland, the electorates that the Treasurer was talking about, the A.L.P. holds five and the Country Party holds three. The Treasurer was crying this afternoon about the western electorates, but his party holds none of them.

Mr. Houston: They can't get a candidate out there.

Mr. Lee: They wouldn't have anybody like you out there.

Mr. TUCKER: At least I am making my own speech; I did not have to get the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha to write it for me.

Of the 31 seats held by the A.L.P., 20 are outside the metropolitan area. The A.L.P. is the only political party in Queensland that has seats in all three existing zones—country, provincial city and metropolitan. The A.L.P. holds every provincial-city seat in Queensland except Townsville South. These are facts and figures that Government members

do not like to hear. The A.L.P. has representation throughout the State. The A.L.P. stake outside the metropolitan area is greater than that of any other political party in Queensland. The Liberal Party has only two seats outside Brisbane—Bowen and Lockyer. It does not hold a single seat in any other provincial city. The Country Party does not hold one seat in Brisbane or the provincial cities, yet it is the dominant partner in the coalition. It has no representation in most places other than the tiny rotten boroughs that exist throughout Queensland. As I say, it is not represented in the metropolitan area, nor is it represented in the provincial cities. The Liberal Party is virtually unrepresented anywhere in the provincial cities; it has only two or three seats outside of Brisbane. This is the coalition that is ruling Queensland. Where are the Government parties ruling Queensland from?

Mr. Sullivan interjected.

Mr. TUCKER: The hon. gentleman can go on hoping, but I think he might get a surprise in his own area very shortly. The Country Party does not hold a seat in the provincial cities, which are the centres of country population growth, country industrial expansion and country commercial life.

It is a complete negation of democracy that the Country Party, which is representative of so few electors, should in fact be able to dominate the rest of Queensland. In this legislation we are faced with the type of sickening gerrymander that was sired by Playford in South Australia—I do not know whether I have to call him "Sir Thomas", or something like that—and nurtured by this coalition Government. He came up here and gave the Country Party ideas. It is a system geared to gain the maximum effect from the minimum Country Party vote. The same thing is being put forward today.

Much has been made of the fact that the Country Party is representative of country electorates. Let us see what happened in 1969 in regard to country electorates and the Country Party's efforts in them. The Country Party makes an attempt to field a full team of candidates only in the country zones, yet Labour still gains almost as many votes in those zones as the Country Party does. Because of the way the boundaries are drawn, we have been badly under-represented there.

Let us look at the gerrymander in country areas, where the Country Party seems to claim that it reigns supreme. In the 1969 election, the Labour Party gained 132,839 votes in the country zone, which gained us nine seats; the Country Party obtained 165,730 votes—only 30,000 votes more than our total—which won them 26 seats. The Liberal Party gained 17,105 votes for two seats, and the Q.L.P. got one seat.

If we are talking about a gerrymander, this is a perfect example of what is going on, what has gone on, and what will continue to go on in Queensland under this legislation. I emphasise that the Labour Party obtained 132,839 votes for only nine seats and the Country Party 165,000 votes for 26 seats. In other words, looking at it on a proportional basis of 13 to 16, for 13 the Labour Party won nine seats and for 16 the Country Party won 26 seats. If any hon. member opposite can claim that this is honest and decent, I should like to know where he comes from.

Mr. Wallis-Smith: No wonder they want a pledge for no three-cornered contests.

Mr. TUCKER: That is correct. One can see why, under this sort of gerrymander, they want to keep people out of the country areas. Even the hon. member for South Coast must feel ashamed when he hears these figures. He talks about electoral justice! Why should any man in his area, or in the area behind it, be any better or any worse than a man in Townsville? Yet, under the electoral injustice obtaining in Queensland at the present time, a vote for him is worth more, and this will be perpetuated under the zones laid down in this legislation. It is favouritism, designed to give an unfair advantage to one political party by virtually disfranchising thousands of Queenslanders with other political views.

I quite frankly believe that a Government elected on distorted and gerrymandered boundaries will not be responsive to the wishes of the people. On many occasions, because of the gerrymander and the fact that the Country Party is dominant and does not understand the wishes of the great majority of the people, bad government has resulted. The Government brings forward ideas and retracts them a little later when it gets cold feet. This is the sort of thing that has been occurring and will continue to occur.

Dealing now with the work of the redistribution commissioners who are to be appointed, I repeat my query of the other day: what man of integrity would serve as a redistribution commissioner in the light of everything that has occurred in the last few months? We have heard statements that Bowen and Isis will go.

Mr. Chalk: Ned Hanlon told me across the Chamber in 1949 that I'd go—and I went.

Mr. TUCKER: I wouldn't believe what the Treasurer said about Mr. Hanlon. The Treasurer would make something up in a flash if it suited him.

In the light of everything that has occurred in the past few months, what man of integrity would serve on the proposed commission? Will a man who accepts appointment to the commission be rewarded with a knighthood in the New Year's Honours List? I have no doubt that some juicy

carrot will be dangled in front of certain men to entice them to become members of the commission. The Australian Labour Party believes that the commissioners should be required to give their reasons for drawing the boundaries that they decide upon.

(Time expired.)

Mr. R. E. MOORE (Windsor) (5.51 p.m.): I have listened with a great deal of interest to members of the Opposition, and I cannot help being appalled by their hypocrisy. They have talked of gerrymander; yet Labour's past history has been full of gerrymander. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "If you want to find a man's weakness, look for the failings he has the quickest eye for in others."

Mr. Bennett: My information is that you're going to be put on the Law Reform Commission.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: Well, they couldn't do better.

Mr. Casey interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! I warn the hon. member for Mackay.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: Another quotation—I think it is Shakespeare's—is, "Methinks the lady doth protest too much." Members of the Opposition have protested so much because they have not been able to live with the rotten gerrymanders they have perpetrated in the past. Now they are trying to pour the dirt onto us.

Mr. B. Wood: Do you like quoting other people?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: No, I do not; however, I shall quote some of the figures that have been referred to by Labour. Let me refer to Labour's redistribution prior to the 1947 election.

Mr. Houston: How old were you then?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I was just a boy. On that occasion the A.L.P. obtained 42.9 per cent. of the votes, whereas the combined Liberal-Country Parties received 44.26 per cent. of the votes.

Mr. Marginson: What year was this?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: This was 1947. The result was that the A.L.P. won 35 seats, whereas all the coalition parties obtained from that gerrymander was 23 seats. The Labour Party says that Sir Thomas Playford came to Queensland and taught the Liberal and Country Parties how to gerrymander. If Sir Thomas Playford had taken a lesson out of Labour's book, he would still be in office. If we wished, we could have followed the example set by Labour. However, we have not chosen to do so, and we do not intend to do so in future, because we believe in fair and equitable redistribution.

In 1950 the A.L.P. received 46.35 per cent. of the vote, whereas the coalition parties obtained 48.08 per cent., yet the Labour Party won 42 seats and we won 31. And Labour talks about gerrymander! In the 1947 election Labour obtained an additional 12 seats on a minority vote, and in 1950 it won an 11-seat majority over the Country-Liberal Party on a minority vote. Opposition members should not talk about gerrymandering with a record like that. Those figures might be trumped up a little because they are taken from a report given to a Labour-in-Politics Convention. I would not doubt that they are, and that we did a little better than they disclose. These are Labour's figures and would show Labour in the best possible light. Labour's past history rather damns that party.

Reference has been made to increases in the number of seats. At the time of the 1935 redistribution there were 575,288 voters in Queensland. The next redistribution occurred in 1949. By that time the number of electors had increased by 145,239 and Labour increased the number of seats by 13 in a gerrymander—

Mr. Houston: Did your party oppose the redistribution?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I was not here. I do not know what happened.

Mr. Houston: It supported it.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: Labour had the numbers. The then Opposition would have supported a redistribution by all means. This is a numbers game; if a Government has the numbers, as we have, it can devise a fair, equitable and just redistribution, which we are doing.

Mr. Wright: Did you sign the pledge?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I do not sign pledges.

Between 1949 and 1958 the number of voters increased by 110,871 to 831,398, whereupon our Government increased the number of seats by three, compared with the increase of 13 by Labour for an extra 145,239 electors. Since 1958 there has been an increase of 129,557 in the number of voters, giving a total of 960,955. If we chose to do so we would have every justification for increasing the number of seats. In Labour's day the number of seats was increased in a gerrymander so that Labour could make political gain, but Labour almost made a mistake because it won seats by a small margin. On this occasion we will not increase the number of seats. I suspect that Labour's reason for not wanting to increase the number of seats is not based on altruistic motives, but simply because Labour feels that, with 78 seats, it will gain an advantage. However, Labour has made a mistake. Our redistribution will be equitable and, because of our popularity, thanks to the good legislation we have introduced relative to health matters, water conservation and so on, Labour

has not Buckley's chance of defeating us for a very long time. We are not worried about the situation.

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

Mr. R. E. MOORE: Before the dinner recess I was about to quote some figures relative to the 1935 redistribution.

Mr. Houston: That is when you had hair on your head?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: That would be right. The Leader of the Opposition has never seen a bald-headed donkey.

I do not intend to read the list of electorates, but taking them from A to Z, the electorates had enrolments of, to the nearest thousand, 9,000, 8,000, 9,000, 8,000, 8,000, 10,000, 9,000, 10,000, 8,000, 8,000, 7,000, 7,000, 8,000, 9,000, 8,000, 9,000, 8,000, 10,000, 9,000, 9,000 and so on. It is obvious that there was some uniformity in numbers in that redistribution.

However, I do not say that this was not a gerrymander because the lines could have been bent around to suit. This was done with Mt. Coot-tha, and it was certainly done with Nash which took in Gympie and an area about half a mile wide all the way up to Maryborough. There have been all sorts of gerrymanders.

Mr. Hinze: They are the masters of gerrymander.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: That would be true.

Mr. Hinze: Anything we have learnt about gerrymanders, we have learnt from Labour.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: We have not learnt anything about gerrymanders. I am sorry I cannot agree with the hon. member.

From the fairly uniform figures in the 1935 redistribution, let me go to the following figures, again working from A to Z, in the 1949 redistribution: 9,000, 9,000, 4,000, 9,000, 4,000, 11,000, 4,000, 9,000, 11,000, 12,000, 14,000 and so on. That indicates how the gerrymander was worked out. And then Opposition members talk about one vote, one value!

Mr. Casey: You are not being fair to the Committee by quoting those figures like that. You should relate them to the electorates.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I suppose I could do that. Those are the figures for the electorates from A to Z. All the hon. member needs to do is to look up the polling details to see which electorates they are.

Mr. Houston: Which is the electorate that starts with Z?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: That is Wynnum—Z for Wynnum. I must be allowed a little bit of poetic licence. Many people have claimed that there should be one vote, one value.

Mr. Houston: Do you believe in that?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I do not believe in it, no. Of course I do not. The term is a misnomer. To have one vote, one value we would have to take the total number of voters in Queensland and divide it by the number of electorates. The only place where there is one vote, one value is Russia or some other totalitarian country where there is only one party to be elected. There would be no problem in Russia with one vote, one value. If hon. members opposite feel that it is such a good thing, I remind them that their party was in office for 40 years, with the exception of three years during the depression (which has enabled them to blame someone else for the troubles of that time), and, if their party wanted to clear up voting problems, it had plenty of time to do it. I therefore advise hon. members opposite not to talk about what they would do if by some mischance they became the Government. We should all take the view that what is just is equal, rather than what is equal is just. I think that that is the crux of the problem.

When this legislation has been passed, the commission will receive a submission from the Labour Party, one from the coalition parties, one from the Q.L.P., and any submissions that citizens may care to put forward. The commission will then weigh all the pros and cons and effect a compromise within the provisions of the legislation. It is quite wrong for Opposition members to say that the members of the commission will be corrupted to do the Government's bidding. We will put up our submission, the Opposition will put up its submission, and somewhere along the line there will be a compromise. In the Federal sphere certain people felt that they knew where boundaries would be drawn, but, when the redistribution was made, it was quite different from what they had predicted.

Another matter brought up was the retention of electorate names. In the case of names that have some historical significance, the argument is valid. I would not mind having the name "Windsor" retained, because I shall be its representative for a long time and it would save me having to worry about the name of my electorate. In all seriousness, I can see that, with the passage of time, some suburban electorates must be swallowed up, and their names just could not be retained. In electorates such as Barcoo, where the name is taken from perhaps a river or a shire, there may be good reason for retaining the name. However, I should like to see electorates named after statesmen or other famous people in Australian history. If an electorate so named had to be abolished, the

name could be retained because it would have no connection with the specific area and could be used elsewhere.

Mr. Baldwin: Tell us the significance of Albert and Windsor.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: If the hon. member cannot figure that out for himself, I am not going to tell him.

The criticism that has been levelled at the commissioners, yet unnamed, is to be regretted, and I feel that the hon. member opposite responsible for it could surely not have meant it. No-one would be so foolish as to make such a criticism. I also hope that I hear no more tonight about gerrymandering. I have been blown to pieces the argument of hon. members opposite by pointing out how bad their record of gerrymandering is. We have never been guilty of gerrymandering, so I hope that I hear no more about it tonight.

Mr. BROMLEY (Norman) (7.25 p.m.): The figures recited so fast but not so fluently by the hon. member for Windsor sounded like the approximate dividends for each horse in the third leg of the T.A.B. treble. However, I will not waste any more time on that other than to say that the hon. member certainly went through the figures very quickly.

I am not going to make an emotional speech at this stage because the Premier and his shadow Premier, the Honourable Gordon Chalk, have certainly taken a hiding over the last six to eight months from the faceless men on the central executives of the Country and Liberal Parties.

Mr. Sullivan: Mr. Chalk is not a shadow Minister. There are no shadows on this side.

Mr. BROMLEY: I will accept that interjection, but in my opinion Mr. Chalk, as the honourable Minister for Lands refers to him, is the shadow Premier.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wharton): Order! Hon. members know that they should refer to each other as hon. members. In the book of rules I have been handed I do not see any reference to a shadow Minister or a shadow Premier. I ask hon. members to uphold the decorum of the Committee and refer to each other as hon. members.

Mr. BROMLEY: I referred to the Minister as "The hon. Minister for Lands." He will admit that, too.

To my way of thinking the Premier has been vacillating all the time on this matter of redistribution, particularly in his attitude towards it. At least the Treasurer has stuck to his guns almost all the way through, although probably they have not had any bullets in them anyway.

It was reported in the Press and broadcast on the A.B.C. news that the Premier said yesterday that there would be no Bill unless he got his way, meaning that there would be no Bill unless his wishes coincided with

the wishes of the Country Party bosses. In reply to a question last week about electoral boundaries, the Premier said, in effect, that this was a matter of Government policy, and he refused to answer the question on that ground. From a study of the various electoral Acts I have always understood that electoral boundaries and enrolments were the business of the commission.

Government speakers have used various figures against the A.L.P. this afternoon. It is said that figures do not lie, but it is well known that some females juggle the truth about their "figures" by wearing foundation garments. Let me point out that in the 1969 State election the Country Party gained 165,730 votes and won 26 seats, whereas the Australian Labour Party gained 132,839 votes and won nine seats. By deducting 132,839 from the Country Party vote, it is seen as a matter of logic that 32,891 votes elected 17 Country Party members. Those are official figures. We can juggle figures around just as well as Government members. In other words, the Country Party won 17 seats with an average of less than 2,000 votes per seat. It is no use arguing against that, because those figures are taken from the last election results.

We have publicised and made clear our proposals. They are printed and available to anyone. They are honest and fair, as the Leader of the Opposition said earlier. The Government proposals are similar to those they have advanced over the years—a gerrymander. They are unjust, unfair, immoral and dishonest.

In the setting up of a commission, I believe that some thought should be given to the operative Acts in Great Britain, one of which was enacted in 1949 and the other in 1958. The 1949 Act established a permanent boundaries commission for the purpose of the continuous—I stress the word "continuous"—review of the distribution of seats at parliamentary elections.

It provided for four permanent boundary commissions, each of which must submit periodical reports. I think that is a good idea and should be considered. The fact that the commission is a permanent one is most important. I believe that factor is a "must" for any commission. I believe that we should have a permanent boundaries commission and to support my claim I should like to briefly quote from that Act. As I said, it provides for a continuous review and it reads—

"The Boundary Commission may depart from the Rule if it appears to them the departure is desirable to avoid an excessive disparity between the Electorate of any constituency and the electoral quota, or between the Electorate of a constituency and that of a neighbouring constituency."

I think that is fair enough and, in fact, it coincides with some of our submissions today. The procedure of the boundaries commission is that it reviews a particular area

or areas. In effect, this is similar to the provisions of the English Act of 1958. The procedure there is to look at the various boundaries, make inquiries and then set up constituency boundaries. The commission is obliged to make local inquiries. It is obliged to do that, whereas a commission in Queensland is not. In Queensland it receives submissions, but the English commission is obliged to make local inquiries as to whether a particular boundary suits the people or the particular area concerned. Apart from the local inquiry that the commission is obliged to make, many people, of their own volition, come along and give evidence or put submissions before the commission before it finally comes up with electoral boundaries. In the last redistribution, 70 local inquiries were held including seven second or re-opened inquiries, and as a result the commission decided in 40 cases to review or modify its recommendations.

There has been some talk about the publishing of these suggestions because the Queensland Government has not seen fit at any time to publish the commission's inquiries or even the report of any electoral boundaries commission. I have never seen a report. I have seen the Act but nothing else. In South Australia the 1969 report of the electoral commission was published. This document I have here is only Part I, but it is an indication that the South Australian boundaries commission, under a democratic Government, was able to supply to the public full copies of the report.

I ask the Government to consider making reports available to the public. It is idle for the Government to claim that the publication of reports is expensive, because all the people of Queensland are vitally concerned about this matter of redistribution. Anticipating rejection of my request on the ground of expense, I should like to deal with some of the ways in which the Government has wasted money over the years. Firstly, it has spent a good deal of money on the purchase of an official aircraft. Secondly, it has wasted a huge sum of money on garden parties and functions, which, to my way of thinking, are completely unnecessary.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wharton): Order! I would like the hon. member to stick to the Bill or to matters close to it. I do not want him wandering wide of the mark.

Mr. BROMLEY: I am trying to show the Government the need for publication of the findings of the commission.

The Electoral Districts Act of 1958 closely follows the English Act. Section 13 of our Act provides:—

“If at any time—

The number of electors for any electoral district or the numbers of electors respectively enrolled for any two or more electoral districts . . . is or are so much above or so much below the

applicable quota or the respective applicable quotas . . . that, in the opinion of the Governor in Council, it has become necessary to make—

A complete redistribution—that is to say, a redistribution of all of the electoral districts for the State; or

A partial redistribution . . .”

If areas either become overloaded or do not have their quota, a redistribution of electoral districts can be made at any time, on the approval of the Governor in Council.

Section 12 says that consideration shall be given to the following matters in any redistribution—

Community or diversity of interest; means of communication; physical features; the boundaries of areas of local authorities and divisions of local authorities; and probable future movements of population.

Certain hon. members have made comparisons between places such as Mt. Isa and Redcliffe. Surely there is no community of interest or means of communication between those two places.

I am anxious to learn whether or not the Bill provides that a redistribution can be made at any time, so that the public do not have to wait until the Government parties settle their quarrels before there can be a redistribution. Irrespective of which party is in power, surely a shift of population warrants a redistribution.

I do not wish to deal with my electorate, but I would point out that owing to certain features in it, like the freeway, approximately 900 voters were forced to leave, and, as well, because it is an old electorate, a fair number of the electors have passed on, while, at the same time, the younger electors have married and shifted to outer suburbs. The result is that since I was elected to Parliament approximately 3,500 people have left my electorate. A redistribution should have been made before the 1966 election.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wharton): Order! There is far too much conversation in the Chamber. I should like to hear the hon. member, and I am sure that the hon. member wants us to hear him.

Mr. BROMLEY: I am glad that you want to hear me, Mr. Wharton.

I was dealing with the need to print reports of the electoral commissions. I was on the A.L.P. redistribution committee when the Federal boundaries were changed. The Commonwealth Government wisely saw fit to produce printed material that was available to everyone. If the Commonwealth Government can do that, surely our Government can do likewise. We cannot wait until the new maps are printed to decide whether the boundaries will meet common interests, or suit certain persons. I understand that the Liberal Party has already submitted plans, and I should imagine that the Country Party has also done so.

When introducing the Bill the Premier referred to the electoral districts commission to be established. The A.L.P. believes that the commission should comprise five members, namely, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Queensland, or a judge appointed by him from the Supreme Court Bench, as chairman, the Surveyor-General, the State Electoral Officer, the Professor of Government at the University of Queensland and a representative of the Local Government Association. Those proposals are well known because we have circularised them. Those members could then deliberate in a completely impartial manner and, being people of integrity, they would no doubt do so.

Today, a Liberal member made some comments with which I agree to a certain extent, but I believe I should take the matter further. It seems to me that the Premier and members of the coalition parties have weakened in their desire to give the 18, 19 and 20-year-olds a vote. Even members of the Young Liberal and Young Country Party groups have been strangely silent about this proposal in the last two weeks. Only members of the Young Labour organisation have had the courage to continually press their suggestions and A.L.P. policy about lowering the voting age to 18. I believe that 18-year-olds should be given a chance to vote so that they may accept responsibility in society. To further my submissions on this matter I should like to quote from the report of The Committee on the Age of Majority which was prepared in Great Britain in 1967. On page 39 of the report the following appears—

"The main arguments in favour of reducing the age to 18 we have already set out as arguments for reducing it at all. The age of 18 seems to us the most suitable because—

(1) There is undeniably a great increase in maturity towards that age."

I agree with that entirely. It then states—

"(2) The vast majority of young people are in fact running their own lives, making their own decisions and behaving as responsible adults by the time they are 18."

In the main, persons of that age are responsible citizens, irrespective of what members of the Liberal Party may say. I believe that, by 18, they have developed a sense of responsibility. The report continues—

"(3) Those of our witnesses who seemed most closely in touch with the young favoured 18 as the age at which it was not only safe to give responsibility, but undesirable, if not indeed dangerous, to withhold it."

(Time expired.)

Mr. BALDWIN (Logan) (7.46 p.m.): I rise to support the case put forward by the Leader of the Opposition and other Opposition members that the facts and material given to us by the Premier in his introduction

were meagre to the point of his perhaps deliberately attempting to disguise the true import, implication and later effects of this very important legislation. Even the last-minute alteration of the title of the Bill carries a high degree of significance, which I shall refer to later. The limitation placed on us by the lack of information given by the Premier makes me wonder just what is in the Bill. One Government member and three Opposition members, including the hon. members for Belmont and Norman, mentioned the right of the 18-to-21-year-olds to vote.

The information the Premier has given on the zones and the number of electorates in each zone, that is, 28 country, 20 provincial and 30 metropolitan, gives rise to a careful consideration of the implications and what the Government is really up to in this new attempt to retain political power.

Since 1958, the State population has increased by about 25 per cent. The number of electorates will still be 78. Opposition members agree with that in principle for several reasons, many of which have been canvassed in this debate and will probably be canvassed at the second-reading stage. The reduction in the number of country seats is 25 per cent., whereas the population drop in the past 12 years is nearer 15 per cent. Therefore, I consider that my suspicions are rightly aroused. I cannot believe that the Country Party would allow this unless something was being done elsewhere to preserve the balance.

The number of provincial electorates will rise by 50 per cent. With the exception of Townsville, there is not a similar increase in population. Therefore, I again query the significance of these figures. It is our right to oppose, if we see reason to oppose, and to anticipate or forecast the real reasons before the Premier has a chance to have the Bill printed and say, "There you are. Nobody could foresee that this would be the case. We caught you with your pants down, which we always try to do."

Since 1958, the metropolitan population has increased by about 25 per cent., or a little more. The increase in metropolitan representation is about 7 per cent. This bears some significance to the way in which I see it, and I shall be enlarging on this point at the second-reading stage. What I want to point out now is that there is no numerical validity in the proposals as based on the Government's own figures and its own principles as put forward in the 1958 redistribution. There has not been a 33 per cent. increase in population in provincial centres in the last decade, yet there is that probable percentage rise in representation offered to someone. It will not be the Labour Party, which holds all the provincial seats with the exception of one or two. When the maps are published following redistribution, we will see why there has been this rise of

33 per cent. representation in the provincial city areas. These will be critical areas of conflict, of course, in the forthcoming election.

Obviously the greatest zone changes will occur in the metropolitan area because of the population outflow from the centre of the city, for various reasons, and the population inflow to the peripheral and outer suburban areas from, among other things, immigration. This confluence is concentrated in the outer suburban and peripheral metropolitan electorates such as Salisbury and Logan respectively in the south, and Aspley and Redcliffe in the north. These areas are not going to be the scene of the greatest conflict. The Country Party has virtually deserted the field in the nearer metropolitan electorates, in pursuance of a bargain, I would say, that the South Coast area will be shared if the Liberals agree not to oppose any sitting Country Party member, and thus give them a chance to win a couple of provincial city seats to preserve their seniority—perhaps even their survival.

It therefore becomes evident from what the Premier and Government members have said that the proposed Bill is not a gesture to repair the damage they have done to democracy in the last decade, but the last phase of a dying conflict of the most miserable *mésalliance* the State has ever experienced when two groups have got together in a coalition.

The hon. member for Bowen, the Agent-General-elect for London, has said that we should at this stage be debating simply whether a Bill should be introduced to effect electoral redistribution. In other words, we should have no regard to what is or is not contained in the Bill. It is ridiculous to say that we should give an open cheque, as it were, and then have it used against us later that we allowed the Bill to be introduced without demur. That is not the role of an Opposition; it is the role of a group of supine yes men, which the Government would like us to be.

We are greatly concerned over the introduction of the Bill to give a better electoral redistribution. God knows, it is needed! From the meagre mickle that the Premier has read out, we are entitled to say whether or not we approve of the Bill in kind, scope and breadth. We are entitled to add to and modify what we are told in the hope that the Premier and his flagging flock will think better of it before having it printed. But I know that is a vain hope.

I propose to follow up with a few ideas I have about what should have been in such a Bill coming before this Parliament at this stage of the modern 70's. In the first place, referring to what the hon. member for Belmont said on the lowering of the voting age, better electoral redistribution

does include age boundaries as well as geographic boundaries. I had hoped to hear the Premier say something positive about this important matter. But, if there is something of that nature in the proposed amendment, I will buy him a large bottle of fully refined Swiss peanut oil.

Apart from what I have said previously on the contents of the Bill being the last phase of the final death kicks of a Country Party suffering extinction because of its desertion of the mass of the small primary producers who put it where it is, there is the hypocritical body of argument used to try to justify the jigsaw gerrymander that will come out of this Bill. The Country Party has jumped back 20 years or more, to a totally different era that existed at the time of the Labour Government—to a period when Queensland was still riding on the sheep's back, when the major part of this State's work-force and wealth-producers were outside the metropolitan area, and when primary produce was our major export-earner.

If we were to pay attention to the false logic of the senile slobberer from Townsville South and give the greatest voting strength to the greatest wealth-producers for the State, we would have an over-concentration of representation in the south-eastern corner, which he cries about. That is what would happen at the best; at the worst extreme of his argument, we would give 90 per cent. of the representation to that 10 per cent. of the population in the \$20,000-a-year income bracket and over. That would be the logic of his stupid proposal. That was the type of democracy that existed a thousand years ago. That is what the hon. member for Townsville South and his supporters in the Government would impose upon the people of the State now.

Also implicit in the proposals in the Bill, as well as in other legislation introduced into this Chamber, is the country-city conflict that hon. members opposite fan and favour when it suits them. The Premier and the hon. member for South Coast introduced this city-country dichotomy of interest. Only two days ago, when the Minister for Lands introduced the Land Act Amendment Bill, he said that the people of the State were sympathetic to and favoured the legislation. He said that included the ordinary people in the cities. I agree with him, but therein lies a strange contrast to which I will draw attention later.

Government members take a valid statement made by a former Premier, the late Ned Hanlon, dislocate it from the truth of its historical context and attempt to use it to justify a political and social lie today. The lie they are trying to present as the truth is that the Bill is being introduced to protect the interests of the country voter against the interests of the city voter. That is a blatantly misleading statement designed to exploit the sympathy of voters in the metropolis and the provincial cities for the

plight of the country voters, and to mischievously lay the explosive charge that will blow a gap between them and, at the same time, allow Country Party members a chance to escape with their political hides.

The hon. member for Townsville South, who shuns such modern aids as telephones and motor-cars, and who is now probably pushing his bike back to the North, made another suggestion aimed at splitting the wage-earners from the salary-earners. He said that redistribution and representation should also be based on the calibre of the voters. The only calibre he can measure by is their present affluence.

To take such an unsympathetic, undemocratic, un-Christian and absurd statement to its logical conclusion would surely mean that university professors, technologists and professional workers at the top would get the greater representation, and if they lived in an area such as St. Lucia they would get two or three representatives. The suggested transfer of power to an intellectual elite seems to indicate that the hon. member has been frightened by the threatened tripartite division of Townsville, and he is now crawling to the James Cook University and the Townsville business magnates to save his skin from the Liberal axe.

The hon. member for Chatsworth spoke at some length about quotas and the position of Labour in the West. When Labour regains the reins of government, one of the tasks it has pledged to undertake is the rebuilding and repopulating of the West as industries are resurrected and re-established. Then, and only then, will it be realistic to talk about one vote, one value. That is one of the many ideal tasks that Labour has set itself. We are realists enough to appreciate that under the depopulation effects of this Government's ruinous rural policies, it is impossible for us to apply this principle immediately.

The hon. member's party tries to blame us for a situation that it has created. I agree with him in his assessment of the changes which increase the work-loads of members. He has rightly included growth-rate of population with physical size and remoteness as increasing the burden on some members. The Logan electorate is 36th in area in the State. It is well above average area; it is now the second-largest country electorate and the seventh-largest in the State. With a voting population of over 18,000, it has doubled in size in a decade and this is almost the case with its southern neighbour, Albert.

It is now quite possible that at present, with nine houses a day going up in the Logan electorate, it is up with the top three in the State in growth-rate. I am saying all this now, because I can make a very good guess at the awful mess the Government is going to direct the quasi-independent commission to make of the Logan electorate.

The Moreton Regional Advisory Council has estimated that by the year 2000 the area it covers, comprising 17 local shires, will have a population of over 2,000,000—that is, it will more than double in 30 years. The Redlands Industries Development Survey has put the figure at over 2,000,000 in the same period.

I repeat that I am saying all this now although I know it will have little effect because the deal has already been done on Logan, with each of the coalition bits promising the other an equal deal and praying to God that if it cannot take out both the old and the new electorates Labour will get one and so put the other coalition partner in the mesalliance one down. In trying to achieve this very unworthy political-power goal, they will not be able to be, nor will they be, concerned for the good of the people of the area or even for the good of the member who will win the faster-growing of the two electorates they will carve up to obtain their own political power.

In conclusion, Labour will have on its hands the task of undoing all this undemocratic mess that is the cause of what the hon. member for Toowong said this morning was adding to, abetting, accelerating and even condoning the rise of cynicism and the fragmentation that is occurring in our political systems. The average man in the street is now so well educated, as a result of the mass media and all the other ways he has of obtaining knowledge, that he sees through all this political chicanery and says, "So what? To hell with you!" The danger is: who will fill the gap that the Government will have created?

Mr. BENNETT (South Brisbane) (8.3 p.m.): The Premier never ceases to amaze me. I have put him on record on other occasions, and have appeared on "Meet the Press" programmes so prepared to speak of him, as a man of political integrity. He has certainly misplaced the trust I have put in him, and has not lived up to the reputation or the standards I thought he entertained. In addition, I have never seen a man so politically naive that he does not realise when he is getting his own political throat cut by members who are supposed to be loyal to him and supporting him. His own deputy leader is busily engaged in this gerrymandering expedition in conniving, collaborating and colluding with Mr. Robinson, president of the Liberal Party, and Mr. Chalk, Deputy Premier, in an endeavour to rid the coalition Government of its Premier. I can see from the smile of approval I am getting from the Deputy Premier that these are not idle words, and that the information I have is perfectly reliable.

Mr. R. E. Moore: That's not true. Where is the smile? Where is he? He's not even in the Chamber.

Mr. BENNETT: It is a pity the hon. member cannot see his leader; I can. Of course, there are none so blind as those who will not see.

It is perfectly obvious to those who know politics that the cunning, shrewd but politically unscrupulous leader of the Liberal Party—the old campaigner—is prepared to do anything to supplant the leader of the Country Party. Gordon Chalk, the individual, is tired of occupying second place in this Parliament. He is engineering and conniving with other instrumental leaders of his party to get rid of the Premier, because they think he is a burden. Independent of the in-fighting and political intrigue in which the Country and Liberal Parties are fiercely engaged, over the past 18 months they have procrastinated, dilly-dallied, held Parliament to ransom, failed to take the electors into their confidence, and, as well, have made mis-statements and untrue statements in the Press. If the antics of the Government parties today were not so alarming and would not have such serious repercussions, they would be laughable.

Agreement between the Liberal and Country Parties has been reached on only one matter—one common intention.

Mr. Chalk: To “do” Bennett!

Mr. BENNETT: No doubt that is one of the subsidiary intentions, and I shall speak about it later.

The real and common intention of the Liberal and Country Parties is to cheat the A.L.P. in the proposed redistribution. Members of the Government parties have been fighting collectively with that one intention, but they have been handicapped in their campaign against the A.L.P. because at the same time the members of the two parties are cheating one another. The Deputy Premier, more skilled in these matters than the Premier himself, has been taking the Premier for a sucker.

Although I despise insincerity and hypocrisy, I sometimes feel great sorrow for the Premier because he does not know how vicious are the men who sit in the Cabinet room around him.

Mr. Chalk: Oh!

Mr. BENNETT: The Deputy Premier knows what he said about the Premier in the Liberal Party caucus and in the corridors of Parliament House.

Mr. Chalk: I said he was the most honest fellow I have ever met.

Mr. BENNETT: He knows very well that this cheap, dishonest and false campaign to sign certain undertakings and pledges is plain hypocrisy. It is perfectly obvious that the coalition parties are fighting like Kilkenny cats.

Mr. Chalk: Oh, break it down!

Mr. BENNETT: I know the Deputy Premier and the Deputy Leader of the Country Party are bed-mates, but that is only because neither of them will sleep with the Premier.

It has been said that the Government does not want an increase in the number of seats. This has been one of the main bones of contention. If time permits, I shall quote from “Hansard” the words of Sir Francis Nicklin in 1949, when he was the mouthpiece of the Country Party. As well, I shall quote from the speech made by the Deputy Premier at that time, and further statements made on behalf of the Country Party. If I have time to do that, “Hansard” will record how the Premier and other leaders of the Country Party have not only capitulated in this contest but have also severely compromised their conscience and sold out their party. The Premier, metaphorically speaking, like the village blacksmith, smote his chest and said, “I will stand strong; I will lead my party in a courageous manner, fighting for a principle, and, if necessary, I will go down on principle.” He did that, knowing full well that he had a dagger poised over his head in the clutches of his deputy leader. He then capitulated, as he did on the margarine issue.

Obviously Country Party members are political chameleons. They speak frequently about Liberal Party members being Queen Street representatives with no interest in the country areas, but by the same token, to preserve their political hides they forsake their country colleagues and other country candidates by making agreements to come to a truce with the Liberal Party when the chips are really down. What is so awesome about the Deputy Premier? I fail to understand why the Premier is so afraid of him. Even when the two of them were sitting in the latest sophisticated aircraft, bought at considerable expense to the taxpayers, they obviously did not trust each other. I could see by the look on the Premier's face in the Press photograph that he knew that once again the Deputy Premier was double-crossing him, yet he did not have the guts to tell him to get out of the aircraft.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wharton): Order! the hon. member for South Brisbane is getting well away from the principles of the Bill. I have been very tolerant. I should like him to come back to the Bill.

Mr. BENNETT: In introducing the Bill this morning the Premier said—

Mr. Chinchin: You weren't here.

Mr. BENNETT: Why doesn't the hon. member wake up to himself? He spends too much time at the bar. He does not know when I am here and when I am not. I defy anyone to challenge me on whether I am quoting the Premier accurately.

Mr. Chalk: I challenge you to deny that you made \$50 this morning.

Mr. BENNETT: I certainly did not appear for the Treasurer.

Mr. Chalk: I know whom you appeared for, and you charged him \$50.

Mr. BENNETT: For whom did I appear?

Mr. Chalk: A nice fellow.

Mr. BENNETT: The Treasurer would not know. I appeared for one of his mates, who is an alcoholic.

The Premier said, "The measure is a necessary, a just and an efficient instrument". Later he said, "It fulfils the Government's undertaking . . . to effect a fair and honest adjustment of electoral district boundaries".

In view of what we know, and because we have seen a copy of the original proposed Bill submitted by the Premier to the coalition parties, I can only say that the statements made by the Premier this morning about the Bill are pious platitudes, sanctimonious hypocrisy, virtuous verbosity, unctuous and ugly, greasy gripe.

Mr. Chalk interjected.

Mr. BENNETT: It is a pity he is not here. He is afraid to be here when the Deputy Leader of the Government and the Deputy Leader of the Country Party are here together. He is afraid to be seen in their company or to leave his two dirty deputies alone in the one room.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wharton): Order!

Mr. BENNETT: The Country Party proposals have been rejected time and again. At its convention, the Country Party adopted principles and proposals in regard to the draft Bill that was to be presented to Parliament. They were continually and perpetually rejected until finally the Bill, in its draft form, was taken into the joint party meeting, where it was again rejected and a new Bill had to be prepared.

Mr. Chalk: Who's pulling your leg?

Mr. BENNETT: I inform the Deputy Premier, who is hilariously happy tonight because he has flattened the Premier on this occasion, which he does because of his connivance in many other matters, that I was having a very serious conference today—

Mr. Chalk: I'll bet it cost the other bloke \$50, too.

Mr. BENNETT: I was not paid for this discussion. I was talking to a senior member of the Liberal Party executive in this State. He was very irritated with the efforts of the Deputy Premier. He expressed fully the attitude and policy of the executive. I can inform the Deputy Premier—he probably knows already—that the Liberal Party executive, to a man, is completely antagonistic to the parliamentary wing of

the Liberal Party for agreeing to, or suggesting that there should be, no three-cornered contests. This Liberal Party executive member was expressing himself, and as late as half past 4 this afternoon he said that that is not a matter for parliamentarians in the Liberal Party or for any parliamentarian. He said, "We will not be dictated to by members of the Country Party, and the parliamentary wing is not going to flout the policy decisions of the executive."

Mr. R. E. Moore: Name him.

Mr. BENNETT: I know what happens when anybody in the Liberal Party is named. Somebody goes out and sticks a bomb under his house. Probably the hon. member for Windsor would do something outrageous and vicious.

Mr. Chalk interjected.

Mr. BENNETT: I get more information from executive members of the Liberal Party than the Deputy Premier. They get tired of his chicanery. Mark my words. He may laugh now and put on a bold front, but it is only a facade. I can assure him that he will be directed that there are to be three-cornered contests. Those who will not have three-cornered contests will have their endorsements withdrawn. They will get their thick political skulls cut off.

Mr. Row: They will join the Country Party then.

Mr. BENNETT: They might join the Country Party. They would be prepared to join any party in an effort to get back into Parliament. They would even join the Communist Party if they thought that could win them a seat. I imagine that the last step of degradation, if they could not get into the Communist Party or the D.L.P., would be to join the Country Party.

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. BENNETT: Speaking of rats—

Mr. Chalk: Speaking of what?

Mr. BENNETT: Rats. I have been looking at the Deputy Premier for the past 10 minutes.

Electorates and districts are supposed to be determined, *inter alia*, on matters of common community interest. I am sure that the hon. member for Kurilpa must realise and concede that it was a shocking redistribution. Oh, he has gone again. He is never here.

Mr. Chalk: There he is.

Mr. BENNETT: He is sitting over here with us. That confirms it. He must concede that it was a shocking redistribution in West End on the last occasion by Percy Wright, acting under the dictates of this Government. I shall speak later about the reward he got for it. It was an extraordinary reward he

got, as a junior barrister of not very great standing, within a few months after this dishonest distribution that he engineered.

Mr. Hughes: Say something if you are going to say it. I challenge you to take me on at the next election.

Mr. Chalk: He won't even be there.

Mr. BENNETT: I indicate to the Deputy Premier, in reply to his remark that I will not even be there, that in regard to the resignation of the Chief Justice of Queensland, I have already indicated that I am not available for the job and I will not accept it. I will be here, all right.

Mr. Chalk: You told me the money was not enough. Will you admit that?

Mr. BENNETT: Yes, I admit that. I am getting much more than the Chief Justice. The Treasurer cannot buy me out of this House by bribery or any other method.

Thanks to gerrymandering in West End, the boundary is like a dog's hind leg and West End is divided into two electorates. Part of West End is in South Brisbane, and part is in Kurilpa. Kurilpa, incidentally, is an Aboriginal word meaning "land of the field rat". We all remember how Mr. Peter Connolly, Q.C., one of the prospective appointees as Chief Justice of this State, was gnawed into by the field rat that arrived from the Liberal Party and gnawed the stumps from under him.

I was about to say that on 31 March, 1949, Sir Francis Nicklin, who was then Mr. Nicklin and Leader of the Opposition, expressed the policy of the Country Party when he moved a motion that the 75 seats then being provided for under a redistribution Bill be reduced by not less than 10 to 65. The moving of that motion is recorded on page 2356 of Volume 195 of "Hansard". Mr. Nicklin also advocated the principle of one man, one vote. In order that we may now understand the position of the Deputy Premier, I may say that on that occasion he supported Mr. Nicklin.

Government Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BENNETT: I do not mind fair interjections, Mr. Hooper, but it is a bit much when they are crying out like jackals.

Mr. Hughes: You must admit it was the Communist vote that kept you in.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BENNETT: On that occasion in 1949, the Deputy Premier, who was then the hon. member for Fassifern or some such electorate—

Mr. Chalk: For what?

Mr. BENNETT: Lockyer. He supported his then Leader, Mr. Nicklin, on the principle of one man, one vote.

Mr. Chalk: Did I?

Mr. BENNETT: Yes. The Treasurer has changed his tune now.

(Time expired.)

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister for Mines.

Mr. WRIGHT: Mr. Hooper, I was on my feet first.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. WRIGHT: Mr. Hooper, I was on my feet first.

Mr. CAMM: We have just had a speaker from your side. Have a bit of sense.

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister.

Hon. R. E. CAMM (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (8.23 p.m.): I have been rather amazed to hear several speakers from the other side of the Chamber endeavour to claim credit for forcing the Government to introduce a Bill to effect redistribution of the electorates of Queensland. Nothing could be further from the truth. An undertaking was given by the Premier and Deputy Premier during the last election campaign that before the election in 1972 a redistribution would be effected in Queensland, and that is exactly what is happening. The population of various areas changes from year to year, and the closer a redistribution is to the time of an election, the fairer it is.

I propose to read from the Constitution of Queensland, which empowers the Government to effect a redistribution. There is no time limit prescribed. Redistribution is not governed by the number of years that a Government is in office, or the number of years between each redistribution. The Constitution reads—

"to alter the divisions and extent of the several counties districts cities towns boroughs and hamlets which shall be represented in the Legislative Assembly and to establish new and other divisions of the same and to alter the apportionment of representatives to be chosen by the said counties districts cities towns boroughs and hamlets respectively . . ."

It is laid down in our Constitution that a Government, when it deems fit, realising the inequalities that have come about through drift in population, can effect a redistribution. A redistribution is really an acknowledgement by the Government of the day—whatever Government it might be—of its responsibility to ensure that the electors of the State are given fair and equitable representation in the Parliament, which, after all, is the ultimate guardian of the rights and privileges of the individual. I will put it another way and say that electoral redistribution is electoral justice, made in an endeavour to ensure a balanced framework of representation. That is exactly what we have endeavoured to do in introducing the Bill.

Some metropolitan members seem to be under the misapprehension that the population growth has been in the city area. Nothing could be further from the truth. Many electorates in the city area have fallen in voting strength since the last redistribution.

Mr. Bennett: Not in the Greater Brisbane Area.

Mr. CAMM: Yes, in the Greater Brisbane Area. We have had a growth in population in the fringe areas; we have had a growth of population in the rural-city areas. Therefore the Country Party argues that the redistribution should be on the same basis as before: the metropolitan area with a certain number of seats, the provincial cities with a certain number of seats, and the rest of the State divided up so that the total number of seats shall be 78.

Mr. Houston: Is that what you really want—78?

Mr. CAMM: That is what we have decided on. I know that members on the other side of the Chamber would not know what negotiation or conciliation means. When two parties who are working together are prepared to negotiate and conciliate in their deliberations, it makes for the good government of the State. I am sure that the people of Queensland will recognise that that is good government.

I remind the Leader of the Opposition that 13 electorates in the metropolitan area now have fewer voters than they had in 1960. Of the 38 country seats there are only 10 electorates that have a reduced number of voters. They constitute mainly the western areas. Of the 12 provincial cities only one—the electorate of Rockhampton South—has suffered a reduction in the number of electors. Because of the growth in provincial cities, it was decided that their representation should be increased from 12 to 20. The Premier enumerated the new provincial cities that would be incorporated in the Bill. A while ago somebody said, "What is the relationship between Mt. Isa and Redcliffe? What is the relationship between Cairns and Mackay?" They are all cities, or they claim to be cities. Mt. Isa has now been proclaimed a city, so it is justly entitled to be classed as a provincial city. Cairns, Bundaberg, Mackay and Maryborough are all provincial cities. Does anyone deny that Redcliffe should be considered a city? The Gold Coast district is entitled to be declared a city area.

Mr. Bennett: What about Gladstone?

Mr. CAMM: It is incorporated in the Central Queensland division of provincial cities, with Gladstone and Rockhampton constituting one district.

Mr. Houston: Why?

Mr. Wright: Why?

Mr. CAMM: Because they have an affinity.

Mr. Wright: What is the affinity?

Mr. CAMM: While Gladstone may claim to be a city, Gladstone in itself has not enough people to be classed as a separate electorate. Other small cities in the State do not have sufficient numbers to be classed as cities.

Someone asked: "What will be the quota for these provincial cities?" I do not think it is necessary for this Parliament to lay down what the quota will be for a particular electorate. Surely the quota for Mackay will be the City of Mackay; the quota for Cairns will be the City of Cairns. Surely if one man is capable of representing Mackay, another man should be capable of representing Cairns, even if the population might be a few thousand more. The same thing follows for all cities.

Mr. Bennett: Are you going to tell the commission that?

Mr. CAMM: No. I envisage that the commissioners will be able to work this out for themselves when they see enumerated in the Bill the various provincial cities that are outlined. With three electorates in Townsville, they will be able to work out the quota for each, as they will for the three in Toowoomba, three in the Gold Coast, three in the Rockhampton-Gladstone area, two in Maryborough, one in Bundaberg, two in Ipswich, one in Mackay, and one each in Mt. Isa and Redcliffe, as enumerated in the Bill.

Some members have been talking about the gerrymandering that will take place. Of course, if we look at the past record of the A.L.P., we realise that its members are experts in the art of gerrymandering. In 1957 there were several seats in the Far West—one at Charters Towers with a population of 4,463. There was an electorate in Brisbane, held at that time by a Liberal member, whom the A.L.P. sent to the polls with 28,289 electors.

Mr. Houston: That was a Labour man who held that electorate. We had one member for 28,000 voters.

Mr. CAMM: Unfortunately for the A.L.P., it was won from them at that election by a Liberal member.

Mr. Houston: It was not.

Mr. CAMM: It was. Mt. Gravatt has been held by a Liberal member ever since.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Leader of the Opposition has had his opportunity to address the Committee and I have allowed him to make a tremendous number of interjections. I am not going to tolerate a barrage of interjections.

Mr. CAMM: In 1957, Queensland had a voting population of some 750,000. In 1970, and by the time we go to the polls and the rolls are completed, I am sure there will be a voting population in this State of more than

1,000,000. Yet over the last two months we have heard the A.L.P. crying out that we must not have one extra seat in this State.

Mr. Houston: You agreed to that.

Mr. CAMM: They say, "We believe in the principle of one man, one vote." I wonder what the people in the country areas of Queensland think about that? I wonder what the hon. member for Barcoo thinks about the principle of one vote, one value, or the hon. member for Cook who complained today about the size of his electorate? How big would his electorate be if the A.L.P. was in charge of this redistribution? A.L.P. members claim that certain things would be done, but we all know that they would not do what they, as members of the Opposition, claim they would do.

I remind members that the insistence on 78 seats means that the people of Queensland have fewer parliamentary representatives per head of population than any other State in Australia.

Mr. Houston: That is not true.

Mr. CAMM: It is. We have one House in this State while other States have two. I am speaking about parliamentary members in State Parliaments.

Mr. Bennett: Do you think we should have more?

Mr. CAMM: This furphy of the A.L.P. members—one man, one vote! Do they ever sit and think about the responsibility of a country member as compared with that of a member in the metropolitan area? One could ride round some of the metropolitan areas on a pushbike in a day. That is no discredit to the member representing the area; he represents a certain number of people, and good luck to him, but what responsibilities does he have? He has some social problems, he might have a school or two and some hospital problems.

Compare that with the responsibilities of a country member. He could have one or two sugar mills in his electorate and, therefore, represent up to 1,200 sugarcrowers, so he may be required to have a working knowledge of the sugar industry. As well, his electorate could contain two or three sawmills, or a timber plantation, so he could be expected to know something about the timber industry. Alternatively, his electorate could possess some of this State's great tourist attractions, so he could be required to have a working knowledge of the tourist industry. Do any metropolitan members have to deal with those problems? A country member could have as many as 28 schools in his electorate, which means he would have 28 P. and C. associations that call on him for assistance. As well, he could have two big hospitals, so he would need to be conversant with the workings of hospital boards. On top of all that, his electorate could contain as many as 30,000 or 40,000 head of beef cattle, and

he would be required to have a working knowledge of the cattle industry. The knowledge exhibited in this Chamber by Opposition members makes us realise how limited is their understanding of rural matters. Country members must gain a very wide knowledge of their electorates if they are to give effective representation to their constituents.

This idea of one vote, one value is only a furphy, and I do not think that the A.L.P. would introduce it in a redistribution, even if it had the chance of doing so.

The Leader of the Opposition talked about 10 months' fighting between the Country and Liberal Parties. Does he not realise that negotiations can go on for a long period of time without there being any fighting? Does he not realise that in any negotiations either party can go to the Press and say, "This is what we desire to do." Does he not realise that the other party might desire to do something else? In this instance I am sure that when the negotiations are completed the people of Queensland will realise that we have come up with a redistribution that will give them fair representation in this State. As I have said, members of the Opposition do not appear to have any idea at all of what negotiation and conciliation mean.

Mr. Houston: What do you call the move against the Premier last year—conciliation?

Mr. CAMM: That was a meeting, and the Leader of the Opposition will experience the same thing before long if he continues with his antics or delivers speeches like the one he delivered today. He will experience exactly the same thing in his party if he is not careful—and it might not be a member who is in this Chamber but rather one who comes in deliberately to put the Leader of the Opposition in his place. Then the Leader of the Opposition will realise what a poor show he has put up.

The hon. member for Barcoo has claimed that certain parts of his electorate should be left with him and other parts taken away. Does he really believe he has the right to dictate to the commission where his boundaries will be? We have not presumed to delineate any boundaries in the Bill. All we have said is that the metropolitan area, which will comprise the City of Brisbane and the fringe areas, and the provincial cities shall contain a certain number of electorates and the remainder of the State shall be divided into 28 electorates. We have not presumed to tell the commission where the boundaries will be. I assume it will be every member's right to make representations to the commission as to where his boundaries should be.

The hon. member for Townsville North claimed that of the eight most thickly populated electorates in Queensland, five were held by the A.L.P.

Mr. Houston: He did not say that.

Mr. CAMM: Yes, he did, in his speech.

Mr. O'Donnell: He said five out of the eight western electorates.

Mr. CAMM: He said of the eight most thickly populated electorates in this State, five were held by the Labour Party. I would say that of the eight most thickly populated electorates in Queensland, five are held by the Government and three are held by the A.L.P.

Honourable Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Ipswich East is not in his usual place in the Chamber. If he desires to interject, he must return to his seat.

Mr. CAMM: The hon. member said that of the eight largest electorates in Queensland, "population-wise", five are held by the A.L.P.

Mr. TUCKER: I rise to a point of order. I did not say "population wise". I said that of the eight largest electorates, five are held by the A.L.P.—and so they are.

Mr. CAMM: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is now talking about acres. For months and months we have been told that we should not talk about acres, or cattle or sheep; that we should talk about people. Now he wants to "big-note" his case by saying that Labour holds big areas. Why can he not be consistent, instead of decrying the claim of the Country Party that these widespread areas should have a different basis of representation from the cities and other highly populated areas? So much for the one man, one vote policy that the A.L.P. has been espousing.

I do not often reply to the hon. member for South Brisbane, but he brought my name into the debate by saying that I was conniving with the Leader of the Liberal Party against the Premier. That is typical of the speeches of the hon. member for South Brisbane. His speech tonight was full of skanderous innuendoes, vindictiveness and untruths. It must have been engendered by a feeling of jealousy about someone else being in power—power that he aspires to, although he knows that his prospects are hopeless. He knows very little about the Bill, and it is typical of him that he should criticise me and the Deputy Premier. I have seen him so often slink around this Chamber and, by directing questions to relevant Ministers, try to obtain information that would assist him in defending in court some unfortunate person who happens to go to him for assistance.

Mr. BENNETT: I rise to a point of order. That is the type of suggestion that is advanced invariably in this Chamber . . .

Mr. Lee: The truth hurts.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BENNETT: . . . by men without any brains, who have not got an argument. It is untrue, and for the purposes of the record, I ask that it be withdrawn.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member has asked for a withdrawal of the statement.

Mr. CAMM: If it is offensive to the hon. member I will withdraw it. He referred to men with no brains. It is a well-known fact amongst confidence men of the world that the easiest men to "con" into doing things are those who consider themselves to possess above average intelligence.

Mr. WRIGHT (Rockhampton South) (8.44 p.m.): The importance of the Bill before the Chamber is indicated, firstly by the number of speakers who have entered the debate and, secondly, by the high standard of contributions to the debate by members of the Opposition. Many valid points have been raised of which the Minister should take note. Other than members of the Opposition, the only member who made any points worth listening to was the hon. member for Toowong. For once I am somewhat in agreement with him. In the main, the comments or criticism of Government members in rebuttal have simply been based on delving into the past.

Mr. Chalk interjected.

Mr. WRIGHT: Without exception, Government members from the Treasurer who is interjecting to the wizard from Windsor, have done nothing but go back to 1935, 1945, 1957 or 1958 to point out what Labour was supposed to have done. We might ask ourselves therefore why Government members have decided to adopt this attitude of attack? Why should they emphasise what Labour has done in the past? Why have they tried to make out that Labour gerrymandered the electorates? I have given these matters consideration and the only reason I can think of is that this Government intends to do the same.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. WRIGHT: It seems that the Government has in mind doing exactly what Government members have said Labour has done. I ask Government members: if Labour did gerrymander any electorates—and I say "if"—what right does that give this Government to do so? If Government members say that this is the reason, are they therefore admitting that this is their purpose? Is that why they have adopted this attitude of attack? They know how these maps are drawn up and they intend to have some reason or some excuse—a vendetta, one might call it—for getting back at Labour for what it did to them for 40-odd years. If that is the reason, it is action in the negative, but it is what we have come to expect from this Government.

In the two years I have been here I have seen what is going on. The Government has done nothing but degrade Parliament and

members of Parliament. Is it any wonder that the people despise and look down on members of Parliament?

An example of what many people think of members of Parliament is outlined in this letter to the editor headed "Standard of politicians". It reads, in part—

"But what of the politicians?

Who are they, and what urges many of them to become members of Parliament. Some are dedicated at least in the beginning and their maiden speeches are an inspiration to would-be orators, but, alas, they fall on deaf ears, like a voice crying in the wilderness."

This letter goes on to attack members of Parliament. It continues—

"Others are opportunists, lured by the big prize of a parliamentary salary, the pomp and power that go with the salary, the patronage, the numerous travelling and social concessions"

and so on.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will get back to the measure.

Mr. WRIGHT: I am getting back to the measure. The point is that the image of members of Parliament is pretty well tarnished and that the action taken by this Government has done nothing to enhance the standing of politicians or of this Parliament. This has been seen many times. There is a credibility gap opening up so wide that nothing will be able to stop it. And no wonder, when we think of past legislation which was supposed to be brought forward but never hit the deck. We have only to think of the margarine legislation and go back to the Cooloola dispute and royalties on coal. Is it any wonder that the people of this State are questioning the right of this Government to redistribute—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Inch: He used the word "redistribute".

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the hon. member for Burke that if he continues to interject while I am on my feet I shall deal with him under standing Order No. 123A.

Mr. Inch: He used the word "redistribute".

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I appeal to the hon. member for Rockhampton South to keep to the measure before the Committee.

Mr. WRIGHT: As the hon. member for Burke pointed out, I did mention the word "redistribute".

I believe that the proposed redistribution is another indication of what can be expected from this Government. It is no wonder that people are worried and concerned that their democratic rights will be denied them. We have received many letters about this. Many people have contacted me about it.

From the points raised by members of the Opposition, the Government should wake up to itself in this matter. Government members

talk about going back into the past. I think that 1958 is an indication of what has gone on under this Government. Think of electorates like Merthyr, Townsville North and Rockhampton South. The electorate of Rockhampton South was built especially for the Mayor of Rockhampton, Alderman Pilbeam. We know that this was so. So much was it gerrymandered that it took a swing of 13 per cent. to take it away from him. But this happened. The electorate of Rockhampton North was drawn in such a way that the member has to travel through the electorate of Rockhampton South to get to one part of it.

Let me reiterate that the Premier stated that this redistribution is necessary and that it will be better. I wonder for whom it will be better. I am taking my own area as a case in point. Rockhampton and Gladstone will be the basis of three seats. This is supposed to be something that will be better for the area, something that will be in the interests of everybody concerned. No doubt there are many political reasons for it.

I believe this is a blatant gerrymander. Why join two cities 80 miles apart? The Treasurer has frequently told us that when it comes to the allocation of funds there is nothing in common between Gladstone and Rockhampton. He is the one who has destroyed Rockhampton. He is not interested in Rockhampton. Now, when it comes to redistribution, he wants to see this area gerrymandered. In the three electorates combined there are 35,000 voters. Why, then, is not a similar situation found in Ipswich, where there are 33,000 voters and only two seats?

At the last redistribution one of the Rockhampton electorates was made a safe Labour seat and the other was made a Liberal seat. Rockhampton North now has 15,000 voters. Rockhampton South has 11,800, and, as the Minister for Mines said, that number is gradually decreasing. In making Rockhampton North a Labour seat, the boundary was taken across the river so that 2,500 Labour voters were taken from south of the river to make sure that Mr. Pilbeam was not seriously challenged in Rockhampton South.

Why is Gladstone being joined with Rockhampton? After all, what has Gladstone in common with Rockhampton? It would not matter what kind of electorate Rockhampton North was turned into, because Mr. Thackeray has the drive and initiative to win any seat.

It is said that it will be the responsibility of a commission to draw the new electoral boundaries. I am wondering what type of fools the Government thinks we, and the public, are when it asks us to believe that there will be no direction of the commission. Does the Treasurer mean to say that he would allow himself to be destroyed politically?

Mr. Chalk: No.

Mr. WRIGHT: I warned the Treasurer once before that he would be dusted off the political blackboard, and that will happen, too. However, I do not think he would purposely do it to himself.

We are told the commission will be fair. If it is going to be fair, it should have no hesitation in making public its reasons for drawing the boundaries as they are drawn. Why should it not do that? The commission should set out its reasons, dealing with quotas as well as boundaries. If the commission is fair and sincere, and if the Government is honest, there will be no objection to the publication of such information.

One of the other matters on which I wish to comment is the principle of one vote, one value. An article appeared in the Press a couple of years ago under the heading, "Debasement of the Citizen's Right. Judgment blasts loaded voting in a Democracy." It reads—

"An American Supreme Court judgment is being circulated to members of the Queensland Parliament relating to the one-man one-vote principle."

Some extracts from the judgment were quoted, one reading—

"The right to vote freely for the candidate of one's choice is the essence of a democratic society, and any restrictions on that right strike at the heart of representative government. And the right of suffrage can be denied by a debasement or dilution of a citizen's right just as effectively as by wholly prohibiting the free exercise of the franchise."

I believe that to be a democratic right, and if, because of the way in which electorates are drawn, one vote becomes equivalent to five or 10 votes, or even two votes, elsewhere, it is completely wrong and should not be allowed. Legislators should not represent trees and acres of land. Apparently the Minister for Mines is trying to make out that members in some country areas have tougher jobs than those representing close-knit communities. The Minister talks about hospitals. I have four in my electorate. The Minister talks about schools. I have 15 in my electorate. The Minister talks about aged people's homes. I have four in my electorate.

Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt: You are a boy—an utter boy. Grow up!

Mr. WRIGHT: The Minister is called "Morse Code" for when he speaks he goes "dit-dit-dah, dit-dit-dah."

Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt: I'll have you on any time you like.

Mr. WRIGHT: I do not think that size should be a consideration in deciding how an electorate should be drawn. It is quite obvious from looking at the activities of Federal members that if a member has good facilities he can cope with 50,000 or 60,000 people. As the hon. member for Cook has said, we need better facilities for members in Queensland.

Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt interjected.

Mr. WRIGHT: I heard a squeak, but I am not quite sure where it came from.

We need better facilities and we need better conditions. It is well known that members from outside areas do not get enough in air fares to come to Brisbane and return to their electorates. Hon. members such as the hon. member for Cook cannot get completely around their electorates because of the way the Government discriminates against them. Something must be done about telephone, postage and other allowances. Surely that would be a better way to solve the problem and give the electors better representation than to carve up electorates and reduce them in size, as some hon. members opposite want. I simply echo the expressions of other hon. members on this side: I believe that the Bill provides an opportunity for the Government to demonstrate if it is really fair and honest. I have my doubts on that score.

Mr. MURRAY (Clayfield) (8.56 p.m.): I will be very brief. Like most hon. members, particularly those on the Opposition side, I am looking forward keenly to studying the Bill when it is printed. It is quite obvious that the Opposition intends to vote for the Bill. Generally speaking, I think their remarks have been quite complimentary. Despite all their sham fighting, I am sure they will vote for it.

I want to make one observation. When we study the legislation I am quite sure we will find that the Government has introduced a Bill that is as fair as it can be and does not contain anything that could cause it to be labelled a gerrymander. But I think we are beating the air a little until we get the Bill and have a chance to study it.

I want to make my position clear. No doubt most hon. members will make some simple calculations after they receive the Bill. They will have to be simple for me to make them. If my calculations reveal to me a gross inequality or a disparity of the order of, say, two to one when one area is compared with another, or that the vote in one electorate is worth double or half the vote in another electorate, and it is apparent that the inequality may become even greater, I shall certainly argue against the Bill and vote against it. However, I do not believe that the Government would do this. I reiterate that we really cannot do or say very much until the Bill is printed and we have a chance to study it to see what the Government's intentions are.

Motion (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to. Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Bjelke-Petersen, read a first time.

The House adjourned at 9.2 p.m.