

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 7 OCTOBER 1937

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Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. G. Pollock, *Gregory*)
took the chair at 10.30 a.m.

QUESTIONS.

HEAVY VEHICLE FEES ON PETROL TANK
MOTORS.

Mr. WALKER (*Cooroora*) asked the
Minister for Transport—

“What was the amount in respect of
each tank motor supplying petrol stations,
or, if not a uniform amount, what were
the various amounts paid in 1936-1937?”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS
(Hon. P. PEASE, *Herbert*), for the
MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT (Hon. J.
Dash, *Mundingburra*), replied—

“The information is being prepared”

OPERATION OF FARMERS' ASSISTANCE
(DEBTS ADJUSTMENT) ACT.

Mr. WALKER (*Cooroora*) asked the Secre-
tary for Agriculture and Stock—

“In reference to his answers to my
questions on 2nd and 30th September
relative to the highest amount involved
in any one composition or scheme of
arrangement under the Farmers' Assist-
ance (Debts Adjustment) Acts, will he
kindly state such amount to the nearest
£1,000, without mentioning the name of
the client concerned?”

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith,
Mackay), for the SECRETARY FOR AGRI-
CULTURE AND STOCK (Hon. F. W.
Bulcock, *Barcoo*), replied—

“I would refer the hon. member to
my reply of 30th September, 1937.”

Hon. E. M. Hanlon.]

PAPER.

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Report by the Deputy Auditor-General on the operation of, and matters relating to, the agreement between the manager of the Golden Casket Art Union and Golden Investments.

PUBLIC HOSPITALS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES' CONTRIBUTIONS.

ORDER FOR RETURN.

Mr. NIMMO (*Oxley*): I move—

“That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing the following particulars:—

“1. The name of each hospital district;

“2. The component local authorities in each such district;

“3. The amount of the precept on each such local authority for 1937-1938, and the total amount of all such precepts.”

Question put and passed.

FAUNA PROTECTION BILL.

INITIATION.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*): I move—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirability of introducing a Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the protection, preservation, and propagation of fauna, and for other purposes.”

Question put and passed.

SEEDS BILL.

INITIATION.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*): I move—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirability of introducing a Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the sale of seeds for planting or sowing, and for other purposes.”

Question put and passed.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—ESTIMATES—THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH ALLOTTED DAYS.

(*Mr. Hanson, Buranda, in the chair.*)

ESTIMATES IN CHIEF, 1937-38.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS,
RELIEF OF ABORIGINALS.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) [10.36 a.m.]: I move—

“That £59,937 be granted for ‘Relief of Aborigines.’”

The present vote shows an increase on last year's. That is due to some extent to the increase in the cost of commodities required

[*Hon. E. M. Hanlon.*]

for maintenance. The department requires flour, meat, and other articles in large quantities, and, in addition, there has been an increase in the number of aborigines in our settlements.

Fantome Island Settlement has grown to be quite a large institution as a result of efforts made by my department to clean out the venereal disease that existed amongst natives in North Queensland. This settlement is now one of the largest settlements we have in Queensland, and good work is being done in this direction. The department is also endeavouring to improve the services rendered to more or less unspoiled natives in the far West and on the Cape York Peninsula.

During my visit there we saw that the mission services were doing excellent work up to a point for the young aborigines, training them and keeping them at school. The young aborigines were taught to wear clothes and the missions educated them to about third-grade State school standard. They were taught to live in houses, but when they reached maturity, through lack of funds, the missions were unable to provide suitable occupations for them. The natives were then thrown on their own resources and had to hunt for a living, and actually the good work done for them in their youth rendered them less capable of resisting exposure and life in the bush, and to some extent lessened their capacity to provide for themselves. Much sickness among them is due to the fact that in their childhood these young natives were kept clothed and lived an inside life, but when they reached maturity and went into the bush, because they had no changes of clothes and so sometimes wore wet clothes, they caught cold. In one district there was a heavy incidence of tuberculosis amongst them. My department proposes to carry on the good work done by these missions and help by making provision for water, ringbarking, clearing of land so that an occupation will be provided for them in their settlements.

There is a popular belief that the aboriginal will not live a settled life, but will always be on the walkabout. The reason why the aboriginal in Queensland is often on the walkabout is that he used always to walk about looking for his food. Those aborigines who have been found an occupation in a settlement are content to live there. It was when they had no food that they were forced to hunt for it in the bush. I am satisfied that as a result of the development that has been carried out the remaining section of the full-blooded aboriginal population in the northern part of our State can be settled in village life and in time made self-supporting.

I am sure that the increase in the vote will not be begrudged to the department in view of the extensive work that is being undertaken.

Mr. MAHER (*West Moreton*) [10.40 a.m.]: The work of helping the aboriginal population of the State is a very important activity of the Government. We owe the native people of Australia something of this kind because the white man has not only taken over their country, but has often treated them shabbily.

Recently the Minister undertook an extensive tour of the territory in which aborigines are still in a semi-civilised state,

although in the care of mission stations and Government settlements. I do not know what that visit cost the State, but if it was a reasonable amount it certainly may have served a very good purpose. The Minister had an opportunity of coming into personal contact with the men and women in charge of the missions that are being conducted by the religious denominations and of meeting the heads of the Government settlements, as well as seeing for himself just how the work is being done. I hope that as a result of that tour the aboriginals will continue to be properly cared for. We look to the Government to see that a fair deal is given to the remnant of our black population.

Mr. WELLINGTON: There is one well provided for in the Eventide Home, Charters Towers—Jupiter Mossman.

Mr. MAHER: I am glad to hear that. There are, however, one or two phases of this vote upon which I should like some information from the Minister. It appears to me, from a study of the Estimates, that the aboriginal population at Palm Island has declined by 32, although the staff has been increased by two. That seems a rather peculiar movement, and I should like some explanation of it.

It is sad to notice that there has been a heavy increase—50 per cent.—in the aboriginal inmates of the lock hospital at Fantome Island. Some of the blacks become the victims of degraded white men, and venereal disease spreads readily amongst them. Whilst they are at liberty they are, of course, a menace to the whole population. So it seems that venereal disease amongst the aboriginals of North Queensland is not on the wane, and whilst we may be somewhat alarmed at the increase of 50 per cent. in the number of inmates at Fantome Island, at the same time if what the Minister says is correct—and I do not doubt it—that that increase is due to the vigilance being exercised by the Government officers in the North in getting all the diseased aboriginals into the hospitals where facilities are provided for their treatment, the Government are to be commended.

There has not been much variation in the aboriginal population and the staffs at the Cherbourg, Woorabinda, and Palm Island settlements and the lock hospital at Fantome Island between 1931-1932 and the present time. In 1931-1932 there were seventy-six aboriginals to each member of the staff in all these institutions, and sixty-eight in 1937-1938. There is a slight upward trend in the proportion of staff to the aboriginals to be cared for. However, I do not begrudge, and I do not think that the general taxpayer begrudges, the expenditure on these institutions, which are performing a useful service for a section of our community. As a matter of fact, the system adopted in Queensland for the treatment of our aboriginals is admired by the well-wisher of aboriginals in all parts of Australia, and we owe a debt of gratitude to the Chief Protector, Mr. Bleakley, for his lifelong interest in their welfare. He has carried out this humanitarian work with credit to himself and with advantage to those under his care. He may well be proud of his achievements.

Mr. JESSON (*Kennedy*) [10.47 a.m.]: I could not allow this vote to go through without congratulating the department on the way in which it has controlled this social

service. Our congratulations should be extended specially to the Chief Protector, Mr. Bleakley, for his excellent service to the black people of the State. I desire also to compliment those police constables and sergeants who are the legal protectors of aboriginals in the outback parts of the State. In most instances the police officers take the utmost care of these people, looking after their savings, advising them in every way, and generally acting really as god-fathers to a great number of them. Especially is that so in the bush and on cattle stations.

Last year I complained that the blacks and their families were being exploited on cattle stations in the north-western parts of the State. I pointed out that they were compelled to work round the clock for a very small wage. I am thankful now to be able to say that after investigating the matter thoroughly the department has been instrumental in putting a stop to the practice to a certain extent. Of course, it is very hard to stamp it out altogether. The main purpose of my representations at that time was to show that on many of these cattle stations blacks were compelled to work round the clock at driving motor lorries, for instance, and that not only were they being exploited, but also that they kept white workers out of these jobs. I thank the department again for what it has done to remedy this evil practice.

I suggest that the Minister should co-operate with the Tourist Bureau with the object of including Palm Island and adjacent islands in the itinerary of tourists, because this is one of the prettiest spots along the coastline of Queensland. Here we have lovely green islands with waving palms set in the blue ocean and surrounded by fascinating coral reefs. Fish and oysters can be obtained in abundance. As a beauty spot the place is worthy of greater publicity than it gets.

Orpheus Island, off Palm Island, is a recognised rest home. It is admirably situated and well conducted, but gets very little publicity.

We often receive pamphlets compiled in the Southern States dealing with the aboriginal question, but it is evident that the compilers know very little about the practical side of it. It would be a good advertisement for Queensland and a wonderful opportunity for tourists if Palm Island was included in their northern itinerary. This would also enable them to become acquainted with what the Government are doing to help the aboriginals.

Mr. EDWARDS (*Nanango*) [10.52 a.m.]: The men and women in charge of the work among the aboriginals deserve our commendation. No one can depreciate the interest that they have in this great national work. A visit to our aboriginal settlements compels us to realise the great opportunities now given to this diminishing race to lead useful lives. The settlements are well conducted and the education that is imparted to the children is a credit to those in charge of it. Many of the children are educated to a high standard, equal to the State school standard. It is because of this wonderful work that the officials, from the Chief Protector downwards are deserving of the thanks of the community.

The aboriginal settlements are capable of being developed to a greater degree. It

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is absolutely essential that the inmates should be encouraged to work, and no opportunity should be lost in that respect. Take the Cherbourg settlement for example. Splendid results are being accomplished there, but it is capable of further development. Irrigation could be applied to agriculture on the banks of the watercourses, which would not only make the settlement self-contained but also help it to be carried on economically.

The half-caste is a serious question at these settlements. Every possible encouragement should be given to half-castes to disappear gradually from the settlements, where their ever-increasing numbers give rise to a difficult problem. Those who have given close study to it freely admit that many half-castes possess exceptional qualifications. A half-caste with a fair education is able to carry out much practical work, almost equal to that accomplished by a white man. I think the department would be wise to pursue a policy that would mean their gradual decontrol.

After all, it is not in the interests of the settlements to keep these half-castes there, because that will result in a considerable increase in the population there. When I visited Cherbourg with the late Home Secretary, Mr. Stopford, I saw the children lined up, and it was very difficult to tell whether some of them were not white children. This is a very important question, and I think it would be wise to allow the half-caste to become independent.

The location of the Cherbourg settlement is a matter of some concern. It has been said from time to time that it is desirable that it should be removed to an island away from the white population. I realise the removal of the settlement is a big problem owing to the heavy expenditure that has been incurred on improvements.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: I do not approve of the policy of giving the natives only the inhospitable land in this country, as has been done in the past.

Mr. EDWARDS: I am not suggesting that. I believe the settlements should be developed in every possible way.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: They cannot be developed unless they are on good country.

Mr. EDWARDS: I was going to say that poor country would be of no use to them. I am not suggesting they be put on poor country. The point I wish to make is that it is not desirable to have a settlement of this description adjacent to a big town containing a white population.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: There is no first-class country in Southern Queensland that is not occupied.

Mr. EDWARDS: After all, a place like Frazer Island might be considered.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: These people are mainlanders.

Mr. EDWARDS: The Minister has no doubt more information on this matter than I have. I realise the difficulty that arises from the enormous amount of money that has been spent at Cherbourg. I believe it is in the interests of the aboriginals to see that they do a certain amount of work,

but in some cases difficulty is experienced, especially if it is a very hot day. Every encouragement should be given to them to cultivate plots of their own. I think the Minister will admit that the Cherbourg country could be converted into very good farms.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: It should have been self-supporting years ago.

Mr. EDWARDS: I think it is a settlement that could be made self-supporting. It is not right that the Treasury should be called upon year after year to provide money for a settlement that should be self-supporting.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*) [11 a.m.]: There should be no objection to the amount of this vote. We have taken everything from the aboriginals and we certainly owe them a good deal. The Government is under an obligation to do something for them. The hon. member for Nanango has suggested that they be put on the land, and not for a minute do I suggest that anything should be taken from them. The only way to treat the aboriginal is to mete out to him the same treatment as is given to the whites. He should be taught to do the same things that they do. I know of half-castes who are doing very well for themselves and are very capable farmers. There is also a pure-bred aboriginal who farms capably.

There is no reason in the world why these dark people should not equal the whites as farmers. I dare say they would not do the same amount of hard work, but that is not to be expected of them. Nevertheless, a considerable number of these aboriginals are good workers. There are a number of our own people who will not take to work, and so we are not in a position to throw stones at the aboriginal. In this city there are a fair number of white people who at any time would prefer charity to work, and I do not know whether on the average there is much difference in this respect between the white and the dark population. There is no reason at all why they should not be encouraged in every possible way to enter upon primary industries. Those who are capable and willing to strike out for themselves outside the settlements should be permitted to do so. I take it that that principle underlies the aim of this sub-department, and the more it is followed the better for the country and for the people concerned. Of course, there are difficulties in placing dark boys in employment. Numbers of whites are prejudiced against him, even though he may be a good worker. These people do not care to have their services and that may be a difficulty.

No opportunity should be lost to encourage the aboriginals to strike out for themselves. The settlements are fairly well conducted and everything that it is possible to do for them there is done. Certainly nobody begrudges the money expended on their care.

Mr. NIMMO (*Oxley*) [11.4 a.m.]: I do not cavil at the amount of this vote. The Minister, apparently, had a very good trip in the North.

As a matter of fact, some of the photographs published in the Press showed that the Minister had quite a wonderful time. I was struck by the shy look on some of the little black tots when the Minister was

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patting them on the head. I believe eventually he won them over. I can imagine that all these settlements were very pleased with his visit and I think it was a good idea for him to go out and see them. Later on we shall, no doubt, have his name well sprinkled over the northern part of Queensland. I do not know whether the blacks take names like Jones or Smith, but if so we may have a Hanlon Jones or a Hanlon Smith one of these days. They will possibly use his name for quite a number of things, as they were very pleased to see him. However, that is by the way. I am not saying anything nasty about the Minister.

THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: Is that flattery?

MR. NIMMO: Yes. They appeared to be very pleased to see the Minister.

THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: A very fine tribute.

MR. NIMMO: As a matter of fact, it was, and the hon. gentleman must have had a glorious holiday. I quite agree with the objects of his visit—to see for himself the conditions under which they were living.

For years past Queensland has been the only State in the Commonwealth that has done its duty by the natives. There is no doubt that Queensland has tried to play the game and I am pleased that the Minister is carrying on that work. We are fortunate in having a man of the calibre of Mr Bleakley in charge of the sub-department. He seems to have devoted his whole life to his job and it is a very good thing that we have somebody of his type handling it. Judging by what we read from time to time in Southern publications, Queensland is fortunate in having a man of his ability in that position.

Some time ago I read a book by Mrs Kemp entitled "Our Desert Country" in which she referred to the aboriginal life in the far distant parts of Queensland, and described how the blacks had disappeared from those areas. She eulogised the wonderful work done by the blacks on the cattle and sheep stations there in the early days of settlement. She also said that with the disappearance of the blacks life there had become very lonely. The people living there seemed to miss them very much, and I wondered whether the sub-department could explore the possibilities of inducing blacks to go out to these far-distant places again to help in their development. I do not suggest that we should use them as cheap labour, but that they might be sent out to help in the very strenuous life in that territory.

THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: They are available for employment now and are employed on cattle stations.

MR. NIMMO: I notice from the report that many have been taken, but many more could have been taken if available. They seem to have disappeared from the country on the Diamantina River and Cooper's Creek.

THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: They have disappeared because their food has been taken away. If you kill his game the aboriginal must disappear or live without food.

MR. NIMMO: That is so, but food could be kept there for them. Mooraberrie is one of the stations Mrs. Kemp mentioned and she said that after the blacks disappeared from the country a great deal of trouble was experienced in getting female labour to look after the homes. When the blacks inhabited that territory they proved very valuable as domestic servants.

My object in rising at this stage was to pay a tribute to the department for what it has done for the aboriginals of Queensland, and to suggest that it investigate the desirability of settling blacks in that area once again so that they may increase and do much to develop that country.

MR. CLAYTON (Wide Bay) [11.11 a.m.]: I am always pleased to see the Government taking an interest in the welfare of the Queensland aboriginals. If one reads the early history of Australia—of Queensland in particular, one learns that the men and women who pioneered the country received great help from the blacks. We should continue to be interested in their welfare. I know that the Chief Protector of Aborigines is taking a very keen interest in his work and is performing an excellent humanitarian service for their benefit.

I, too, was pleased that the Minister saw fit to tour North Queensland for the purpose of visiting the missions and aboriginal settlements. The Press reports of that tour conveyed to us quite a fund of information that we did not have previously. I remember that when the late Mr. Appel toured those areas some years ago, the expense of the trip was criticised severely.

THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: They are still picking up the bottles.

MR. CLAYTON: I suppose the Minister took his in a cask. The expense of that trip was criticised severely, and, I think, unfairly. I do not propose to criticise the recent tour of the present Minister because I think that it was right to undertake that trip.

The Cherbourg settlement is in my electorate, and I suggest to those hon. members who have not yet visited that settlement, that they would be well advised to do so, as they will then have some idea of the splendid work that is being done there and of the facilities provided for educating the children and for giving medical treatment to the inmates. The settlement matron has control over everyone there and the staff are carrying out their work creditably. The matron and nurses of the hospital and the school teachers are to be commended for the service they are rendering.

I should like, however, to refer to the situation of the settlement. The town of Murgon is expanding and naturally, with that expansion, the settlement is being brought closer to the centre of population. I should have no objection to transferring the settlement to some other site where suitable land may be available. At the present time it is on excellent land, but I think that it would be to the benefit of both aboriginals and the white people of Murgon if it could be shifted further from the township. I should like to be sure, however, that it was not transferred to country that was unsuited to agricultural or pastoral pursuits. The hon. member for

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Nanango mentioned establishing the blacks on Fraser Island. We know that Fraser Island, sometimes called Sandy Island, is nothing more than a sand heap, and in my opinion it would be useless to establish a settlement there.

I am in favour of placing these settlements on the best agricultural land so that the inmates may be encouraged to engage in farming operations to some extent. It is true that the aboriginal is disinclined to work for long hours on end, and that the young men prefer to take ringbarking and clearing contracts, while the girls who have received a fair education are willing to enter domestic service. Probably later on the girls return to the settlement, or marry while they are in service.

The Government are doing a splendid service in these settlements, but I should like hon. members to visit Cherbourg and pass an opinion on the settlement themselves. It was the practice of the late Mr. Stopford frequently to take a party of hon. members to the settlement.

Mr. GAIR: Then you would criticise the expense incurred.

Mr. CLAYTON: I have not criticised such expenditure. I pointed out that hon. members opposite criticised the expense incurred by the late Mr. Appel in his visit to North Queensland many years ago. Visitors to the Cherbourg settlement are very hospitably received by both the white and black people. I remember that on the occasion of one of our visits, when the black people were introduced to us, we were informed that one was named Jimmy Edwards and another Willie Russell. That must be of interest to the hon. member for Nanango, and perhaps it would be, too, to the late Mr. W. A. Russell, one time member for Dalby in this Parliament. Perhaps the name of "Hanlon" may be attached to some members of the black tribes in North Queensland—the Minister has said that that would be a compliment. I trust that as time goes on and the Minister makes more frequent visits to these settlements further honours may be conferred upon him in that his name will be found in other settlements.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) [11.17 a.m.]: There is nothing to be ashamed of in earning the gratitude of the aboriginals of this State. We should be proud to think that the aboriginals are grateful for what is being done for them at this belated hour. For quite a long time they were abused, ill-used, exploited, and even shot, poisoned, and starved. They were fed with flour containing arsenic by some of those glorious chaps who developed this country in the early days, and it is refreshing to know that the aboriginals are grateful to-day for what the State is doing for them.

The Leader of the Opposition mentioned that, whilst there had been a decline in the black population at Palm Island, the staff had increased. Palm Island is not an aboriginal settlement in the ordinary sense of the term. It is a place to which aboriginals of all kinds are transferred when they get into mischief or give trouble, or are unable to look after themselves elsewhere. There is not a special tribe, or a special class of aboriginal at Palm Island, the majority being sent there because they

are unable to look after themselves outside. Hence the black population is always rising and falling, because at times there is a large influx. As men earn their liberty and get jobs, or half-castes obtain exemption, they leave the island. The increase in the staff is due to the increase in the work that we are doing to-day. There is a trade instructor to teach the young black people trades and a farm overseer to supervise the development of the land. Our objective is to run enough cattle on Palm Island to provide the meat and milk requirements of the settlement.

The hon. gentleman in suggesting that the requirements of the department can be based on the formula of so many aboriginals to one employee is unconsciously looking at the problem in the same way in which it has been analysed for generations past. It is the wrong way. We do not keep aboriginals like children keep guinea pigs. That is the wrong outlook of Australians in regard to them. The outlook in the past has been that we should keep aboriginals in just the same way as we keep a pet, and that is why aboriginal settlements have not developed in the way they should have done.

There is no reason why the Cherbourg settlement should not be entirely self-supporting. A herd of cattle has been built up on that settlement. On visiting Cherbourg some years ago I found on one side of Barambah Creek dairy farms with fine haystacks and ample supplies of fodder for winter feed, while on the other side of the creek the settlement, which consists of beautiful land with a plentiful supply of water and exactly the same rainfall, fodder was being bought to carry the cattle through the winter months. That is wrong. The settlement needs to be developed.

We have had to disabuse the minds of the employees of the settlement of the view stated by the Leader of the Opposition this morning that the work of the settlement is to be judged by the proportion of officials to aboriginals on it. We have to break down the idea common to most people that aboriginals must be kept on these settlements in much the same way as we keep pets. Our job is not to keep feeding and clothing aboriginals; it is to restore that racial pride that has been ground out of them by white people. We must restore their confidence and capacity to live and look after themselves.

We must not believe the stories that the aboriginals are not workers. That has been told to me too often. I know they can work. They would not be kept on station properties if they could not and would not work. As I travelled down our coast I saw them working at Portland Roads and Port Stewart unloading cargo from the "Wandana" on to luggers to be taken ashore. They worked just as hard as any white man. They can be encouraged to work, but they have never been given the proper encouragement until recent years.

We propose to instal irrigation plants at Cherbourg and Woorabinda settlements. The Cherbourg plant will be installed shortly—provision is made for it on these Estimates—and with it Cherbourg should be able to provide ample fodder to feed its excellent dairy herds, in addition to its beef cattle. There should be no shortage of fresh green vegetables or fruit at Cherbourg. This food

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can be grown at Cherbourg—and must be grown—with the idea of teaching the aboriginals that they must earn their own living and look after themselves.

The Torres Strait islanders are an entirely different class of aboriginal. This year we are trying an experiment there. In the course of my tour I met the councillors from the various islands. We had a long conference with them. We have decided to give the Torres Strait islanders home rule, that is to say, allow them to look after their own affairs. Each island will ballot for the required number of councillors who will be responsible to the protector for the conduct of the island. The whites will have nothing whatever to do with the affairs of those islanders.

It is rather interesting to read again the items on the agenda paper to be discussed at that conference. I noticed such subjects as matters pertaining to their boats, the wages of men in employment, and the native store. An interesting discussion took place on the question whether strong drink should be allowed to the islanders or not, and the councillors voted against allowing any liquor on the islands. The result of the poll read—

Drink 3. Stop drink 31.

So they are evidently entering quite seriously into the task of governing themselves. We had some very interesting discussions and they arrived at very important decisions. The local protector at Thursday Island tells us that they have entered on the task of government with great enthusiasm and that great development work is being done on the islands. The councillors are encouraging the people and the people are responding to that encouragement, and there is more agricultural development. That is very good, and, as a result, the natives of the Torres Strait islands will be made much more comfortable and contented.

The half-caste is a problem that has to be faced. We often hear visitors to aboriginal settlements say, as we heard an hon. member say this morning, that they saw children who were almost white, and they wondered why they should be there. The difficulty is that you cannot take them away from their parents. When I was at the Cherbourg settlement last year I saw a little girl with very fair hair and a milky skin covered with freckles, but she has a coloured mother and you could not take the child away from the mother. The aboriginal has the same maternal affection as any other woman in the world, and because the child is white you cannot adopt the rather barbarous proceeding of removing that child from the mother, to whom in turn it is attached. Consequently, one does see some rather startling sights on the settlements. You may see a child as black as the ace of spades cheek by jowl with a child whom you would never suspect of having any colour in it. That is one of the difficulties the department has to face. You cannot do anything but educate them. They can be educated and trained and when they reach manhood or womanhood careers can be found for them.

We have an interesting experiment going on with half-castes at Hammond Island, in Torres Strait, at a mission conducted by Father Doyle. He is encouraging half-caste families to shift over there from Thursday Island. The island has been proclaimed an aboriginal reserve, there is a little village

there, and it is becoming an important settlement. When these people were on Thursday Island they were the lowest strata of society, but on Hammond Island they are the highest strata of society because it is their own island. They have their own village, their own church, their own institutions, their own gardens and palms, and the men go backwards and forwards in their boats—it is only a short run—to Thursday Island, where they work during the day.

Mr. MOORE: Do they fish?

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: Some of them work on Thursday Island on the waterfront and on boats, and their wives and families live on Hammond Island away from interference by white people. That is a tremendous advantage. A young half-caste girl is generally looked upon as legitimate prey for a sailor or anybody else who happens to be on the loose in Thursday Island, but the fact that they live with their parents in their own home on Hammond Island makes for greater protection for these girls. That experiment has been a great success.

In the south we are going to do something similar at Purga where the Salvation Army has a mission station at which it has been dealing with all kinds of aboriginals, a number of half-castes among them. What we propose to do is to transfer all the full-bloods from Purga to any other settlement that they will agree to go to and make Purga a purely half-caste institution. We propose to build a village there with proper homes for the people, and let them have their own store and not merely the ordinary school but a rural school, and allow these people to live in their own village and go to work wherever they can, and those who like to develop their own land to do so.

They will be at liberty to take a job anywhere they can get one. The old story that the aboriginal will not work must be taken with a grain of salt. Those at Purga get a great deal of employment in clearing, farm labouring, and so on, and they do the job set them quite well.

Half-castes must be got away from the full-blooded aboriginal and established in a village of their own. At the same time, white people must be kept out of such a settlement. The result will be that in a period of years there will emerge a good class of individual who will be more readily absorbed in the white population. The treatment of a half-caste as an aboriginal is retarding his progress, and we do not think that he should be so treated. In the Bill dealing with aboriginals that is now being framed it is proposed to have a separate part dealing with half-castes only, and thus put them on an entirely different footing to the ordinary full-blooded aboriginal.

One of the difficulties is to find a suitable term to designate the half-caste. After all, "half-caste" is not a very nice term. There was the same difficulty in coining the word Creole to distinguish cross-breeds. There must be a different term to distinguish half-castes from aboriginals. One of the requests made to me by the people in the Torres Strait islands was that they should not be referred to as aboriginals. They complained to me quite strongly that they were not as the mainland aboriginals, but a distinct people; and they are an entirely distinct people. They are very independent.

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In the new Bill there will be a part dealing with such islanders. We shall cease to use the term "aboriginal" so far as the Torres Strait islanders are concerned. Another part will deal with cross-breeds, and a further part apply to the mainland aboriginal.

After my return from the North between 100 and 200 Northern half-castes were given complete exemption from the Act. The inhabitants of Hammond Island are exempted. They may run their own villages and look after themselves. They are free from any interference from the police or anyone else.

Hon. members will remember that a year or so ago power was given to the Chief Protector to take control of any half-caste or cross-breed, and there was quite an outcry among the half-castes, who feared that they would be put under the control of a settlement. The underlying motive of such a provision was to give this official power to remove a dangerous, offensive, or low half-caste from association with the decent half-castes, who had their freedom and exemption from the provisions of the Act. There is the power to cancel that exemption. Any half-caste who is a danger to the peace or morality of his associates can be promptly brought within the provisions of the Act and removed to a settlement. The objective was gradually to remove the half-caste from association with the full-blooded aboriginal. This is a job that will require many years of patient work and probably a good deal of expense, but we have been trying to do it.

Item (Relief of Aborigines) agreed to.

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS AND GRANTS.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) [11.34 a.m.]: I move—

"That £125,202 be granted for 'Charitable Institutions and Grants.'"

The members of the Committee will observe that there is an increase of £4,464 in this vote. Naturally, the cost of these institutions increases with the population. There is an increase in the number of inmates, and consequently we must provide for additional maintenance.

Mr. POWER (*Baroona*) [11.35 a.m.]: I take this opportunity of congratulating the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs on the aid he has rendered to "Sunsetholme" in my electorate. This institution is doing very good work. It is run by the Council of Churches. In addition to making a grant of £75 to "Sunsetholme" the Minister some time ago made a further sum available for repainting, renovation work, and the installation of electrical appliances that have added to the comfort and welfare of the inmates. This home has been in existence for a considerable time, and as I said quite a number of old couples live there. In passing I mention that recently a couple of the inmates decided to get married. Their ages were in the vicinity of eighty and ninety, and after their marriage they left the institution.

Generally speaking, the work carried out by our charitable institutions is well worth the effort and the cost. It is nice to know that old people in the eventide of their life have the opportunity of going to such homes. I wish to convey to the Minister the thanks

[*Hon. E. M. Hanlon.*]

of the people living at "Sunsetholme" for the help he has given them. I trust that he will be able, when finances permit, to increase the grant. There is a good deal of work to be done in the maintenance of these homes, and were it not for the support of the Government many of them would have difficulty in carrying on.

Mr. JESSON (*Kennedy*) [11.37 a.m.]: On this vote I should like to pay a tribute to the Montrose Home for Crippled Children. Great work has been done by the secretary of the home, Mr. Watson, and by the matron and staff. Since I have been a member of this Assembly I have made representations on behalf of this home to the Minister, and I have been able to send crippled children there for medical treatment and education. Although the capacity of the home is somewhat taxed, when opportunities have been available I have been successful in getting children into the home, where they have got on very well. Such homes as these, although subsidised to a certain extent by the Government, are carried on by outside organisations, and it is very pleasing indeed to see that the children, although crippled, are happy and seem to be in the best of health, although many of them are denied the exercise that only the use of their limbs can give. It is gratifying to see how well they are looked after and how much they have benefited from being in such a home. I feel that I should be lacking in my duty if I did not pay a tribute to the good work done in these homes.

I have been wondering whether the adverse propaganda published in the Southern Press will have any effect upon the Government's attitude to the Sister Kenny Clinic. I trust the Government will recognise her great work on behalf of the crippled children of this State. It is pleasing to know that she has been fully recognised—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member will not be in order in discussing that question on this vote. The Sister Kenny Clinic is not a charitable institution.

Mr. JESSON: If that is so, Mr. Chairman, I must conclude my remarks.

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*) [11.39 a.m.]: I should like to say how much this particular vote is appreciated, and I offer my thanks to the Minister on behalf of many of the electors of Queensland who have had need to take advantage of the funds available from this vote. There are many institutions that have been helped by the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs under this vote, and they are all doing exceptionally fine work. I know the excellent work a number of them are doing.

I have not had the opportunity of visiting the Benevolent Asylum at Rockhampton, but I know that splendid work is being done at the Boys' Home at Brisbane. I also know that the Brodribb Home at Toowoomba is doing excellent work, and I am confident that the grant made by the Government to it is money well spent. "Sunsetholme" is also doing splendid work, and although the amount proposed to be granted to it is only £75, it is spending a great deal of money in its efforts to help the inmates.

I have visited the Queen Alexandra Home at Coorparoo on several occasions. Although this vote provides for only £200 for that

home, that is not the total value of the help that the Minister has given it. He has done much to equip and build that home and make it capable of doing exceptionally fine work for the boys and girls in it. A number of men and women started this home some years ago. They acquired a cottage and took in as many children as they could. At first they could accommodate only about six children, then the number increased to eleven, and as time went on they found that there were more calls for their help. So the home has grown to its present great proportions. I thank the Minister for the special help that he has given to this home to enable it to care for such a great number of boys and girls as are now cared for in it. An invitation is extended to every hon. member of this Committee to visit that home and see just how they are being cared for. Anyone who takes an interest in the workings of that home can see an improvement from day to day in both the outlook and appearance of the children.

For the Margaret Marr Memorial Home, another home that is doing splendid work, £100 is provided, and £300 for the Creche and Kindergarten Association of Queensland. It was proposed to establish a Creche and Kindergarten Association in some of the other larger towns of Queensland, but I am not sure that that would be a wise step. I think that the homes already in existence in those places are doing all that is required. I do not think that there is any need for us to look after children during the day in any but the metropolitan area. I do not think that we should extend the system to the smaller towns.

Another home, at the opening of which I had the opportunity of being present, and in the operations of which I have taken a keen interest, is the William Powell Home for Discharged Prisoners. The establishment of that home was a very fine thought on the part of an old gentleman who was chaplain of our prisons. He travelled the State in the execution of his duty as chaplain and he conceived this means of trying to do something for men who are discharged from prison. Such men are virtually thrown on the mercy of a hard world, which generally adopts a cold attitude towards a person who has been in prison. Much as I regret to say it, many persons can see no virtue in a man who has made a slip and are not prepared to extend to him even the smallest drop of the milk of human kindness. In their eyes there is no good in him. But the Reverend William Powell could see good in these men, and so conceived the idea of establishing a home where they would be kindly received after they have served their sentences, so that they could win back their self-respect and re-establish themselves in society. Discharged prisoners who have gone to this home in despair, certain that they could never be rehabilitated in society, have written from all parts of Australia thanking the superintendent and those who treated them so well at the home, for having given them an opportunity to win their way back to acceptance as decent citizens by society again. This is a splendid work, and the £200 voted for the William Powell Home and the £350 for the Salvation Army Rescue Home is money well spent. I am sure that the service provided by these two very fine

institutions is thoroughly appreciated by the people who benefit from them. I know that the Minister has received favourable reports concerning them, and is satisfied that there is justification for the help they get.

Item (Charitable Institutions and Grants) agreed to.

MOTHERHOOD AND CHILD WELFARE.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) [11.47 a.m.]: I move—

“That £22,402 be granted for ‘Motherhood and Child Welfare.’”

The vote this year shows an increase of £1,168 on the appropriation for last year. The Government are still pursuing their policy of extending the services of the Child Welfare Department to the outback parts of the State. A year or two ago we instituted a system of part-time service in various places adjacent to towns where baby clinics were established, and this year we have increased the number of nurses from forty-eight to fifty. In some centres where previously there was one nurse two have now been appointed, one to remain in the main centre and the other to visit the outlying districts from that centre one day a week or a fortnight.

The Child Welfare Department is providing a splendid service. The figures dealing with infantile mortality indicate the results of the enthusiasm with which the officers of the department are doing their work.

Item agreed to.

HOSPITALS.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) [11.48 a.m.]: I move—

“That £171,000 be granted for ‘Hospitals.’”

The amount asked for this year is the same as last year, and includes in addition to the vote for “Hospitals Generally” grants for the Mater Misericordiae Hospital, the Salvation Army Maternity Home, and the Aerial Medical Service. With the completion of the scheme for Western base hospitals the aerial medical service in the back country will be brought up to a high pitch of perfection. The aerial medical service will obviate the need for long journeys over bad roads by motor cars, and as a result much better work will be done. However, these services are going to cost money, and when they come into operation on a proper scale more money will be required. We cannot expect to give them unless the money is provided.

Mr. MAHER (*West Moreton*) [11.50 a.m.]: As the Minister said, this vote amounts to £171,000 for 1937-38, less than the £177,000 appropriated in the depression year of 1931-32.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: We have restored the grants from the “Golden Casket” funds.

Mr. MAHER: This is the point: that decrease has taken place despite the growth in population and the increase in wage costs due to the recent increase in the basic wage.

One reason for this is that more and more hospitals are being districted, and a greater part of the cost of upkeep is placed on the shoulders of local authorities. According to a return tabled on the 21st September last, contributions by local authorities towards hospitals and hospital districts have been—

	£	s.	d.
1933-34	123,737	12	0
1934-35	126,511	4	0
1935-36	144,150	8	0
1936-37	173,250	4	0

Hon. members will note the steady increase in the contributions by local authorities towards the cost of hospital maintenance. The amount has increased from £123,737 12s. in 1933-34 to £173,250 4s. in 1936-37. During this period six additional districts were constituted but the increased contributions of local authorities in those districts accounted for only £14,965 of a total increase of £49,512 in three years.

According to the return there were seventy-seven hospitals under the district scheme included in forty-three districts, and forty-six hospitals remained outside hospital districts. In 1935-36 the contributions toward hospitals administered by hospital boards were—

	£
Government	268,838
Local Authorities	124,150

In addition, the Government contributed £124,547 towards hospitals not working under boards. The total Government contributions towards hospital administration in 1935-36 amounted to £405,787.

Now, the total profit from "Golden Caskets" ordinary and mammoth, in 1935-36 was £359,642. A certain amount of that profit was used for purposes other than for hospital administration, namely, for hospital buildings and grants to charitable institutions and to unemployed persons. The Government, however, received £248,075 more from "Golden Caskets" in 1935-36 than in 1931-32. What I want to show is that with the addition of nearly £250,000 in their receipts from "Golden Caskets" the Government could well afford to be much more generous in their treatment of local authorities. On the contrary, however, the Government have districted more and more hospitals, often against the wish of the local people, thus increasing the contribution of local authorities.

Mr. GAIR: Against their wish, but in their interest.

Mr. MAHER: That is a peculiar line of reasoning.

Mr. GAIR: It is correct, nevertheless.

Mr. MAHER: It is a peculiar line of reasoning, that we should impose on the people something against their wishes.

Mr. GAIR: It is often necessary.

Mr. MAHER: That is a negation of democracy. A man who says that has a mind that runs on dictatorial lines. The hon. member for South Brisbane is rapidly qualifying to become a Pooh-Bah or dictator, because he would impose on a community something that is directly opposed to their wishes. In other words, if the people of South Brisbane desired to retire the hon. member from his position, according to his line of reasoning he would say that he should stay in it because he believed it to

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be in the interests of the people that he should do so. That is a line of reasoning that I cannot follow at all.

These people in the hospital districts should have their wishes respected. If an important section of the people of the State desire to maintain the existing order of things so far as hospitals are concerned, why should not their opinions be respected by the Government? If the people desire to come under a districting provision of the Hospitals Act, it is understandable that they should be brought under it by the Government, but to administer the Act in a dictatorial fashion and impose on a community a districted hospital against their wishes is an act for which there is no justification. The hon. member for South Brisbane justifies it, and apparently the Minister believes in it; but it is all getting away from democratic principles. Surely the people who live in a particular district should be the best judges of whether their hospital should be districted or not?

The point I wish to make is that the Government have districted more and more of these hospitals against the wishes of the local people, and they have just increased the contributions of the local authorities, whereas the sum of money that has been available to the Government from "Golden Casket" sources since 1931-1932 has grown to the extent of £250,000, and from such source the Government could easily have been more generous with the local authorities than they have been. In addition, the amending Act of 1932, passed by this Government, credited 60 per cent. of local collections towards the Government's share, a principle that was condemned very strongly by the late Mr. Stopford when he was Home Secretary.

The main objections I have to the present method of hospital finance are—

- The unfairness of land taxation for this purpose; and
- The excessive cost to the shire councils and the primary producers.

I shall quote a few instances that serve to illustrate the truth of what I say. Take Bundaberg as an example: I notice that the hon. member who represents that centre is industriously engaged in preparing a speech on this important question, and he may be interested in these figures. The city of Bundaberg has 3,030 ratepayers who contributed a precept of £2,019 for the financial year 1936-1937, which represented 13s. 3d. a ratepayer, whereas the Kolan Shire Council has 821 ratepayers, who paid a precept of £2,118, representing £2 11s. 7d. a ratepayer. These figures demonstrate the unfair disparity that exists between the amount contributed by the ratepayer of the city of Bundaberg and the amount contributed by the ratepayer in the Kolan shire, one of the primary-producing sections of the Bundaberg district. Surely there is room for equalisation there!

In the Committee yesterday the Minister used the argument: who could object to paying £2 11s. 7d. a ratepayer? That is not the question. It is: why should one section of the community be so favoured in comparison with another when the obligation to contribute towards the cost of hospital maintenance rests on all? Obviously, the comfortably or reasonably comfortably situated professional or business man or any other section of the Bundaberg community

who has access to the hospital has a duty to contribute on the same basis as the primary producer. Why should we differentiate between sections of the community? That is the cardinal point. There is a very good reason why all sections of the community should accept their percentage share of the cost of hospital maintenance.

A tax should be devised that would place on the shoulders of all a fair measure of responsibility towards the cost of hospital maintenance. If we impose a relief tax for the purpose of relieving unemployment, does it not seem just that we should impose a tax on all for the maintenance of such an institution as a hospital?

Mr. GAIR: Are you advocating increasing taxation?

Mr. MAHER: I am touching on the matter in passing. I have a proper solution of this problem, and I heard the remarks made yesterday by the Minister. I also heard him yesterday quote the letter written by Mr. Peterson, and I understand the difficulty. I am not offering, as the immediate solution of the problem, a tax on all persons, but in passing am pointing out that there is nothing wrong in the principle that the cost of maintaining hospitals should be spread over the whole community rather than concentrated upon one section, as is done to-day. I have my own ideas of the solution of this problem, and I shall enunciate them in due course. Meanwhile, I point out how wrong it is that the Government should insist on the collection of a tax from one section only of the community in order to maintain the hospitals of this State.

It is indefensible to levy by precept through the local authorities on the primary-producing section of the community, which has a heavy enough burden to carry at present. The primary producer is the dead-end. All taxation is passed on to him, but he cannot pass it on to anybody else, whereas other sections of the community who are more wealthy—business men, professional men, manufacturers, importers, and others—escape the heavy obligations that fall on the land-owning class. If taxation is imposed on some of these other sections to whom I have referred, they have ways and means of passing it on and somebody else carries the burden, but it all ends up on the back of the man who is at the terminal point, the man on the land, the producer of the wealth that enables this country to survive. The Government would be well advised to give serious consideration to this problem, and to even up the cost even if it may be said that in some instances £2 11s. 7d. is not an undue burden for each ratepayer to carry. It is not the sum of £2 11s. 7d. itself that counts, but when shire rates, unemployment relief tax, income tax, land tax, and Federal income and land taxes are added to the other charges that the man on the land has to meet, it makes a very considerable burden for him to carry. It is a very sore point with these men that they should be imposed upon in this way, and find that in important cities such as Ipswich, Rockhampton, Brisbane, and Townsville, professional men, some of them prosperous, who do not own land and so escape all obligations whatever for hospital maintenance. Obviously that is wrong, and

no amount of argument by hon. members opposite can justify it in the minds of reasonable people.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition quoted the case of the town of Charleville and the Murweh shire. That instance will bear repetition. The Charleville Town Council has 607 ratepayers, the precept is £256, and the amount works out at an average of 8s. 5d. to the ratepayer. The Murweh Shire Council, on the other hand, has 527 ratepayers, the precept is £2,397, and the amount works out at an average of £4 10s. 11d. a ratepayer. The Minister had the temerity to tell us yesterday that a resident of the Murweh shire came down to his office and said that the rate was too low and that it should be increased. For the benefit of the Minister I will repeat that—he told us that a resident of the Murweh shire came to him and said, "This rate is too low, we want to pay more." I should like to meet that man.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: Be honest and quote correctly. He asked for more expenditure on the hospital, which would increase the rate he would have to pay.

Mr. MAHER: I understood the Minister to say that this man was asking for a heavier tax.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: He would be by asking for more expenditure on the hospital.

Mr. MAHER: I am sorry, but I understood it to be the other way about. I accept the explanation of the Minister. He would be a unique landholder who would come down and make a request for increased taxation. There is an average payment of £4 10s. 11d. in his shire area as against 8s. 5d. in the Charleville Town Council area. Perhaps, in asking for an increased expenditure he had in mind the fact that ratepayers in the town of Charleville should be taxed to a greater extent.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: You cannot understand his point of view.

Mr. MAHER: See the disparity that exists. Prosperous business men in Charleville can escape with a flat rate of 8s. 5d. as against a landowner, struggling against drought, providing for agistment, moving his stock, taking the ups and downs of life, who is levied upon to the extent of £4 10s. 11d. I say that there is no justification for that disparity.

I have here an extract from the "Courier-Mail" dated 27th August, 1937, which reads—

"Although the population of the Waggamba shire is estimated at 2,500, and that of the town of Goondiwindi at 2,600, the former has to pay £1,728 in hospital precepts to the Goondiwindi Hospital Board, while the town only contributes £166."

Goondiwindi is a fine prosperous town, and it escapes with an obligation of £166, whereas the district, with many small struggling men on small areas of land, has to contribute £1,728. The article goes on to say—

"The Government's share is £2,841. Two owners of freehold land adjacent to

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the town boundary are paying £103 and £70 respectively in hospital precepts, which is more than the whole amount paid by the town of Goondiwindi."

When we find two landowners contributing more than the whole of the residents of an important township like Goondiwindi, I claim that the whole thing is out of proportion.

Speaking at a meeting of the Goolman Shire Council, Councillor Cossart pointed out that something would have to be done in regard to the Hospitals Act. He said—

"The Goolman Council had to pay £1,500 a year for the upkeep of hospitals—money which should be going into the shire's roads. When new hospitals were built at Boonah and Ipswich the hospital tax would be increased to 2d. or 3d. in the £1, and ratepayers would be saddled to an extent that they would be unable to bear. Are we prepared, Mr. Cossart said, to tax them to the extent that they will be driven from the land?"

That is the fear that is working in the minds of all the shire councillors throughout the State to-day. The existing position is bad enough, but what of the future with all these expensive additions, the construction of new hospitals and increased staff that will be essential when those buildings are completed? When the whole of this programme is carried out it is going to impose upon the land-owning classes of the State a burden that they cannot bear.

Mr. GLEDSON: Are you objecting to the improvements that are suggested?

Mr. MAHER: Any improvement that the people are unable to pay for financially is not worth having. If the Government are prepared to meet the extra costs of this ambitious programme, well and good, but if they expect those landowners who find it difficult to meet their obligations to-day to bankrupt their shires in order to meet hospital commitments, to the absolute neglect and detriment of roads and other things that are essential to shire improvement, the principle is wrong and the method of doing the job is wrong.

Mr. KING: That is an exaggerated statement of the position.

Mr. MAHER: I say it is not. Councillor Cossart puts the position fairly. He is a level-headed man and he says that when these new hospitals are built at Boonah and Ipswich the hospital tax will be increased to 2d. or 3d. in the £1 and the ratepayers in that area will be saddled with a burden that they will be unable to bear. What applies there applies in many other local authorities' areas throughout the State. We find the strain difficult to bear even now, and the precepts are rising all the time.

No control or restraint is exercised over these hospital boards. They can incur expense and the responsibility of finding the money is not theirs. They simply impose a precept on the local authority and, by statute, the money has to be paid. So the position has developed that is causing very great fear in the minds of responsible councillors that we shall reach a condition when the shires will become bankrupt in their efforts to meet hospital commitments, and the job for which they were brought into being, namely, the making of shire road improve-

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ments, will not be undertaken for the reason that they will lack the funds to do so.

On the 17th July, 1937, the following article appeared in the "Western Star" at Roma:—

"The Roma Town Council is levied for hospital purposes £300 per annum, while the Bungil shire is levied £1,200. Taking the average valuation of a residential block in Roma as being £100—a high valuation—the householder in Roma pays about 6s. 8d. a year as his contribution towards financing the hospitals. In the case of the shire the 770 property owners—mostly small graziers, dairy farmers, and wheatgrowers—have an average valuation of about £450. The shire resident therefore contributes more than four times as much on the average as the householder in Roma."

THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: You are quoting the poor valuation in Roma against the average in Bungil.

Mr. MAHER: I am quoting an extract from the "Western Star." If the hon. gentleman wants the exact position with respect to Roma I can give it to him.

THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: What is the average of the small farm?

Mr. MAHER: In the area covered by the Roma Town Council there are 960 ratepayers contributing £309 as a precept, which works out at 6s. 5d. a ratepayer. The Bungil shire has 773 ratepayers who contribute a precept of £1,235, which works out at £1 12s. a ratepayer.

THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: You are doing just what I accused you of doing. You are misquoting the valuation.

Mr. MAHER: I am not misquoting it. I am merely quoting what appeared in an editorial of the "Western Star."

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. gentleman has exhausted the time allowed him under the Standing Orders.

Mr. McLEAN (*Bundaberg*) [12.15 p.m.]: I desire to thank the Minister for his sympathetic attitude towards the sick and suffering of the State, and to compliment him upon the efficiency with which he discharges his duties, especially in connection with hospital and medical services. I do not know how he is able to devote to his many important duties all the time they require. The insistent demand by the community for better and still better hospital treatment is bringing a volume of ministerial work that is fast getting beyond the capacity of one Minister, and I, therefore, suggest that an assistant Minister should be appointed to this department to help the Minister in the discharge of his many important duties.

When new nurses' quarters were opened in Bundaberg on Saturday last men of all shades of political opinion were unstinting in their gratitude to the Minister for his splendid services in the interests of hospital and medical attention not only in Bundaberg and district, but throughout the State. The hon. member for Isis joined the eulogy, as did also the Mayor of Bundaberg.

The services provided by the Bundaberg and other hospitals have increased enormously. I am reminded of an opinion

expressed sixty years ago by Dr. W. Gill Wylie, a prominent physician of his day—

“We should limit hospital accommodation to those who have no homes and to those who cannot be assisted at their homes.”

That view is, of course, out of date. It is not my view, nor the view of the Government or the Minister, who are determined to provide an efficient medical service for all the sick and suffering, not merely those who have no homes or cannot be helped in their own homes. All these increased services mean additional cost.

The Leader of the Opposition has not correctly stated the case against the Hospitals Act. I have read the speeches hon. members opposite made when they were in power, and in not one did I observe that they raised their voices against what they now conceive to be the iniquitous method of raising funds for the maintenance of hospitals. They had an opportunity during their three years of office to straighten out the kinks in this method of taxation, but they did not do so. I understand that the matter was discussed by their Cabinet and party with the object of bringing about a change in the method of hospital taxation, but no change was put into effect.

We cannot get a correct view of the present position by quoting aggregate precepts. The Leader of the Opposition said that the amount paid by each ratepayer in Bundaberg was 15s. 3d., but that is not the true position. The workers, who comprise the majority of the ratepayers of that city, pay approximately 6s. a year, and the professional and business man who, it is alleged, evades this taxation have to pay it indirectly in proportion to the valuation of the properties upon which their businesses are situated. The precepts have been adopted by the local authorities themselves.

It is well known that in some shires, where hospitals have been districted the valuations are low. It is therefore necessary to strike a high rate in order to obtain the revenue to carry on the work of the local authority, and also the precept. The hon. member for West Moreton cited the Kolan Shire Council. The majority of its ratepayers are pastoralists holding hundreds and hundreds of acres of good pastoral land. They make a very fine livelihood. A comparison of the rates paid by those pastoralists with those paid by small farmers on a high rate is unsound.

Criticism was also levelled at the increased expenditure under this heading. The many requests for increased hospital accommodation and improved buildings naturally means increased expenditure, the natural corollary of which is increased taxation. The Leader of the Opposition made the statement that he did not believe in improving hospital buildings to their present extent, as it would impose increasing burdens on the taxpayers. Are not the country people, together with their wives and children, who in their pioneering difficulties suffer many hardships and disabilities, not entitled to the best treatment they can get when sickness forces them to enter base hospitals such as that at Bundaberg? Are they not entitled to the efficient medical service and nursing to be obtained there? They are. Yet the Leader of the Opposition says he does not believe those buildings are necessary. In other

words, he says they are not entitled to the consideration they are now receiving. I say definitely that these people are entitled to the best attention possible, and the best buildings that can house them in their sickness and suffering.

I recently read an account of a hospital survey of New York, just completed by Dr. Haven Emerson, Dr. Gertrude Sturges, and their staff, which contained the following illuminating paragraph:—

“The immense and increasing volume of organised medical services is profoundly impressive. Their financing is an intriguing study in itself, requiring the difficult combination of the element of self-support through payment from patients, the element of public support from taxes, and the element of charity. Their outside relationships annually appear more intricate and exigent. Organised medical care in hospitals, clinics, and homes is deeply involved with the private practice of medicine, with the preventive work of Health Departments, with the economic efficiency of the population, and with the organised social services for relief, education, rehabilitation and recreation.”

The report goes on to say—

“Readers of this survey will find sections on matters with which social workers are continuously concerned in behalf of their clients—ambulance service, nursing, care of the sick in their homes, care for chronic disease, convalescent care, services for the mentally sick, the tuberculous patient, the maternity case, the patient who has venereal disease, diabetes, or a mouthful of carious teeth, from out of its mass of details the hospital survey builds up broad conclusions. Hospital services for the general care of the sick poor should be increased. The overcrowded governmental hospitals should be expanded in some degree and relieved further by the fuller use of voluntary hospitals paid by tax funds.

“Organised medical care of the sick in their homes should be developed as an extension of hospital service rather than as an independent enterprise. Out-patient care for public charges in non-governmental institutions should, like hospital care, be paid for out of public funds on an agreed basis. Extension and improvement of services for the chronic sick is a major need.”

That survey was made by a board comprised of members of the medical profession in New York, and they recommend a system similar to the system that the Minister and his department have been endeavouring to establish. Despite that fact the Leader of the Opposition says that he does not believe any new buildings should be erected. On Saturday there was a deputation to the Minister from local authorities asking for a dental clinic in Bundaberg. Will the Leader of the Opposition say that clinic should not be built? I hope when he sees his remarks in cold print he will reflect and change his opinion. The people of Bundaberg and district will not easily forget what he said this morning, that more provision should not be made for the care of the people's teeth.

Will hon. members opposite say there should be no precept on local authorities to

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meet the cost of combating infectious diseases? The local authorities pay up without any demur. If it is reasonable to pay a precept for other purposes it is more necessary when we have to deal with such diseases as diphtheria and scarlet fever. Hon. members are not game to get up and say, "We do not believe the precept paid by the local authorities should be increased as a result of an outbreak of diphtheria or scarlet fever." I challenge them to say they do not believe in it. In order to afford ample protection for people who are stricken with illness, suitable hospital buildings and medical and nursing service have to be provided. It is a serious loss to the community to have people lying ill for long periods, and it is essential that every human aid should be available to help nature to restore them to health again. That policy necessitates an increase in expenditure, and I ask hon. members if they object to that. We do not wish to increase taxation, but we believe it to be essential to provide an efficient medical service in the interests of the people.

I ask the Minister if it is not possible to have infectious diseases brought under the control of the Bundaberg Hospitals Board. I am of opinion that it should be under the control of the board, because they have the responsibility of the upkeep of the infectious diseases hospital.

At 12.30 p.m.,

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Chairman in the chair.

There was a great need for the new maternity hospital at Bundaberg. Approximately, 80 per cent. of the women who enter this ward are the wives of farmers and others on the land, and if to-day one went into that district and suggested, as has been suggested by the Leader of the Opposition, that the maternity hospital should be abolished because of its expense, these women and their husbands would raise their voices in horror at the idea. The need for the maternity hospital was certainly there, and the valuable work that the matron and staff of this very fine institution perform will assuredly prevent an increase in infant mortality of Queensland.

I again take the opportunity of offering my sincere thanks to the hon. gentleman for the very great consideration he has extended to Bundaberg, and I am fully supported by all the residents of that district, irrespective of their political creed.

Mr. NIMMO (*Oxley*) [12.32 p.m.]: The amount of £168,525 asked for by the Government on this vote is altogether inadequate. In the estimates of 1932 only the same amount was asked for. I follow up the point I made the other day that altogether too much economy was exercised in the care of the sick poor of the State.

A great deal of noise has been made about the wonderful buildings erected for hospital purposes. There is no doubt that the edifices are spectacular and supply material for political propaganda, but are they erected for the benefit of the people, or merely for the benefit of the Government? Huge buildings have been constructed, and should require a very great increase in staff to run them. There is no doubt that to-day the hospitals are under-

staffed, and this fact is borne out by the fact that the vote barely equals that of 1931-32.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: Which hospital is understaffed?

Mr. NIMMO: I am referring to the Brisbane General Hospital. I say that it is understaffed to-day. In comparison with the time when the old buildings were in use, and considering the longer distances the nurses have to walk, the staff is altogether inadequate. Something should be done to meet that condition. The Minister must admit that a greater sum should be provided to maintain the hospitals, which are now either double, or nearly double, the size they were a few years ago.

As to hospital buildings, I question whether Queensland is on the right track with her hospital programme. The Government are really adopting Russian ideas, concentrating everything in one place. Huge buildings are erected, in which patients lose their individuality. The institution is so large that it is now well-nigh impossible for relatives and friends of patients to locate them. As the institution becomes even more extensive we shall find that these disabilities become accentuated. The sick like to be in pleasant surroundings where their friends can visit them with a minimum of disability. It would have been better if the Government, instead of concentrating on building in one place, distributed the buildings round the city area. We could well do with a hospital on the south side. In fact, we could do with two hospitals in South Brisbane. What is behind the attitude of the Government? They put up big buildings and they say, "Look what we have done for the people."

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: What we have done for the people is something to look at.

Mr. NIMMO: Yes, from a spectacular point of view, but the people know that these places are too big and doctors cannot give individual attention to patients. Visitors who go to our hospitals are overawed, in fear and trembling, and cannot visit the sick in the same comfort as they would have in smaller institutions.

I am not speaking without the book. The inquiry held into the British hospital system very definitely concluded that the concentration of hospitals was wrong. In a State school of 1,200 or 1,500 pupils the master has almost no control over his pupils. He cannot leave the impress of his individuality upon them. He only knows a few. On the other hand, a master controlling a small school of, say, 400 pupils, can give better teaching. The same principle applies to our hospitals. Huge institutions develop into huge workhouses, where the people are bundled in and treated more or less as Socialist groups. The patients are only known by numbers. If an institution was established in South Brisbane, and one at Indooroopilly or Corinda on similar lines to our Brisbane General Hospital, doctors could give individual treatment to patients, and the patients would be better off.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: You are talking rubbish.

[*Mr. McLean.*

Mr. NIMMO: I knew the Minister would say that I was talking rubbish, but I am giving my opinion.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: It is rubbish.

Mr. NIMMO: It is only a matter of opinion. I have my opinion, and I know that were I in the Minister's place I would not have such a huge institution, and I would not go in for that kind of propaganda at all.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: That explains why you will not be in such a position.

Mr. NIMMO: We will wait and see. I recognise that because the Brisbane General Hospital is such a huge institution it is not giving the sympathetic and genuine treatment that patients would get in a smaller hospital. Take, for instance, the Mater Misericordie Hospital in South Brisbane. That is only a small institution. Patients prefer to go there than to the General Hospital because it is not such a big institution and their identity is not lost, they are not submerged.

These big institutions are being established all over the country. In the Stanthorpe area, in which the hon. member for Carnarvon is interested, they are rushing up a hospital costing £25,000—a hospital not wanted in the district. A smaller hospital is what the people require. The hon. member knows that the people do not want institutions of that size erected there. The Government are building that hospital just because it is going to give the party a certain amount of advertisement and employ a number of workmen, but the Minister is not providing any funds to run it. That money has to come from the people themselves. They have to pay the piper.

The hon. member for Kennedy said the other day that nurses at the old Ingham hospital fell through the floor because the buildings were in such a bad state of repair. Can any hon. member of this Committee criticise the wonderful work that has been done in connection with hospitals throughout this State in past years? These hospitals grew as the country developed, and although the buildings were not grand, the treatment given to the patients was remarkably good. Compare the death rate of the past with that of to-day. Have the Government made any wonderful improvement in that direction? I venture to say that they have not. I believe that the statement of the hon. member for Kennedy is something that he has conjured from his imagination, because I have never known of any institution that was so badly looked after that anything like that could happen. You, Mr. Gledson, know what a splendid institution the Ipswich hospital was when it was conducted under the system of voluntary subscription. Because of the action of the present Government in whittling away certain privileges and levying heavy taxation upon the people many persons stopped contributing to the hospital, with the result that it has to be socialised. That hospital was run by the people for the benefit of the people, and until we can return to that state of affairs we are not going to get the best out of the people.

How are the nurses treated to-day as compared with a few years ago? Take the

General Hospital in Brisbane. Do you know, Mr. Gledson, that the nurses at the General Hospital in Brisbane have to depend for their fruit supply upon what the visitors bring to the patients? Do you know that fruit is not available to the nurses there, or, at least very little?

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: If a nurse gets you she will pull your whiskers.

Mr. NIMMO: That information has been supplied to me by the nurses. They say they get no fruit unless it is brought in by visitors to the patients. The position as to vegetables is almost as bad. Is that a state of affairs that is to be desired? I am telling the Minister facts, things that need investigation.

This vote is exactly the same as it was in 1931-32. Any hon. member with common sense knows that the bigger the institution the greater the amount needed to conduct it properly.

I say emphatically that even at this eleventh hour, the Minister should review the whole hospitals position of Queensland. We have doctors in Queensland who are as competent as the doctors in any other part of the world. We should encourage those men to attend the hospitals instead of discouraging and driving them away. We want the benefit of the best available. We do not want to insult any specialist who may offer his services voluntarily. We should give some consideration to these men. Greater staffs should be provided for the hospitals that are already erected. Instead of having in Brisbane one huge hospital situated in the one part of the city, the Government should give immediate consideration to the building of a hospital on Annerley road, or at the top end of South Brisbane, so that the people round Sunnybank and neighbouring areas, instead of having to travel long distances to an institution where they cease to become human beings and become merely numbers so and so, may enter a handier and smaller building and be treated by doctors they know. They could avail themselves of the services of a doctor that they knew and one who thoroughly understood their case. This is a very vital matter because very often a doctor is perhaps unable to diagnose the exact cause of the illness of a patient until he has attended him for, say, a fortnight, but in a huge institution the patient may be visited by Dr. Smith to-day and Dr. somebody else to-morrow and thus the patient may not be able to get the attention that his case merits.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: All the things that you do not know about hospitals would fill many books.

Mr. NIMMO: And the things that the Minister does not know about hospitals would fill many books, too. I admit that he is trying to do his job but it has run away with him. He has gone in for this hospital propaganda that I have mentioned, not for the benefit of the sick poor, but for the benefit of his own party. He has decided to erect large hospital buildings merely to advertise his party.

I think that the majority of hon. members will agree that there should be greater decentralisation of hospital services. The Government have done the wrong thing in

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constructing huge hospital buildings in one quarter of the city instead of embarking upon a system of decentralisation and thereby encouraging individual attention to the sick poor.

Mr. KING (*Marce*) [12.47 p.m.]: After listening to the remarks of the hon. member for Oxley I wonder whether he believes in a hospital system at all. At the outset he said that the hospital accommodation throughout the State was inadequate, but later he said that he did not believe in the construction of the large hospital buildings at the site of the present Brisbane General Hospital. How can he reconcile those two statements? They show the mentality of the hon. member, and his opinions are also the opinions of other hon. members opposite who are attacking the whole system of hospital administration. I wonder whether they believe in a system of hospitals at all. They have tried to say that the hospital accommodation is inadequate here, that something is inadequate there, and that something is wrong somewhere else. If they were honest they would at least admit that since the Minister has been in charge of the department he has done his best to provide an efficient hospital service and that wonderful improvements have been made. I understood the hon. member for Oxley to say that because hospital buildings are big a doctor cannot stamp his individuality on the patient. Apparently he suggests that a doctor should go from ward to ward marking each patient with a die or rubber stamp to indicate that he had visited him. I understand that the hon. member has travelled throughout the world, that he has seen big cities and big buildings. He must know that by the construction of the big hospital buildings at Bowen Park modern medical conveniences are being provided, and that a doctor can visit any ward and give proper attention to any patient.

I have never listened to a more puerile argument in a responsible Chamber than the one that came from the hon. member. One would gather from his remarks that the medical superintendent had to be led around the institution. One would also think that these large buildings were erected to fool and prevent the medical superintendent from going around to see the patients. We build these big buildings because they are required, and because the people desire them, and because they are necessary for the care of the sick poor. Succour must be given to our sick and suffering. Hospital buildings are not erected for ornamental purposes, but as part of a scheme of social service. No argument from the Opposition can destroy these facts. It is mean to attack our splendid hospital system merely for the purpose of criticising and belittling the Government.

The Leader of the Opposition very strongly objected to the districting of hospitals. For the purpose of making comparisons of the cost to local authorities he quoted figures for the town of Charleville and the shire of Murweh and other local authorities. I intelligently interjected, "What would you substitute in its place?" and he said that his suggestion would be made in due course. That proves conclusively that he was not endeavouring to place before the people a substitute in the form of a better scheme than the one now administered to by the Minister, but was merely attempting to

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burke discussion in a desire to hamper the Government in their work. If a Leader of an Opposition criticises a scheme and complains that it does not come up to required standards, it is his duty, as the leader of a party, to suggest some other scheme that will give better service. The Leader of the Opposition said that such a scheme will be proposed by him in due course. Are we to await it until he delivers his policy speech at the next elections? The only deduction that can be made is that he has no alternative to submit and is only indulging in political skirmishing, in order to depreciate the policy and administration of the Government. He is only indulging in political propaganda.

I congratulate the Minister and the officers under him, from the Under Secretary downwards, for their very efficient administration and control of hospitals. They provide a wonderful social service. The organisation of the department and its facility to co-ordinate was shown recently in the reported outbreak of infantile paralysis. A conference of responsible authorities, presided over by the Minister, evolved an effective medical barrier to the spread of this disease in Queensland. Prevention of disease is more advantageous to the community than a well-conducted offensive after an outbreak. The Minister, his officers, and the responsible authorities rendered good service to the community in this matter. Everything that is good can be said of him. I cordially agree with the sentiments expressed by the hon. member for South Brisbane that the progressive and humane social service policy of the Government is much appreciated by those who are compelled to seek medical aid. He said that the wealth of the nation was not to be found in its trade, its industries, or its buildings, but in its people. No matter how young or how old we are we hang on to life with the utmost pertinacity.

The Opposition should recognise that in Queensland we have the best system of hospital control in the whole of Australia. The efficiency of that control has been demonstrated on numerous occasions in combating disease; and the most recent instance was the efficacious manner in which the outbreak of infantile paralysis was dealt with.

Mr. JESSON (*Kennedy*) [12.56 p.m.]: The hon. member for Oxley made some very scandalous statements, so scandalous that I venture to say if he ever goes to the General Hospital he will be tarred and feathered.

Mr. DEACON: If you get in there will be trouble.

Mr. JESSON: You are too miserable to get into any hospital; you are heading for the boneyard.

Nurses are born, and not made. These nurses work for a very low wage, and regard their duties as a labour of love, and it is regrettable that any hon. member should cast any reflection on them. The hon. member for Oxley said that the only fruit they got was what they stole from the patients.

Mr. NIMMO: I got that from the nurses.

Mr. JESSON: The hon. member came here with his tongue in his cheek and said that some nurses told him the only fruit they got was what they took from the patients. That is a scandalous thing for anybody to say. I venture to say that if the hon.

member made that statement outside he would soon find himself in the law courts, where some of his filthy lucre would be fished from him.

Mr. NIMMO: I would say it outside.

Mr. JESSON: The hon. member is not game to say anything of the sort. The hon. member could just as well say that they stole the patients' eggs.

The hon. member also objected to the erection of big buildings. Anyone possessing average common sense will appreciate the advantage of a centralised hospital. Banking institutions do not have one teller in a building in George street or Roma street and another teller in Queen street. The same thing applies to any large store in the country. They do not have the grocery department at one end of the street and the clothing department at the other end; they have them in the same building in order that the people may get quick and efficient service. I have made representations on behalf of poor people who were in need of special medical attention, and through the good grace of the Minister they were brought down for treatment by a specialist at the Brisbane General Hospital.

Mr. NIMMO: Other Governments have done that.

Mr. JESSON: I am not saying any other Government have not done it. I am merely pointing out that by a system of centralisation these cases may be dealt with in one building. I hope that the time is not far distant when we shall have large base hospitals in every important centre in Queensland such as Townsville and Rockhampton.

At 2 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. JESSON: The Government are to be complimented on the mobile medical unit they have established to be used in cases of emergency. I know of an instance where members of that unit were sent by plane to Gayndah, where there was a suspected case of infantile paralysis. It is remarkable that members of the Opposition have the audacity to attack the hospitals.

Mr. MAHER: Who attacked the hospitals?

Mr. JESSON: In the presence of the Leader of the Opposition the hon. member for Oxley said that hospitals were a waste of money, and in a previous debate said that the Government were doing the wrong thing in spending "casket" funds in bricks and mortar for hospitals. Then this morning he had the audacity to make the scandalous statements that the nurses stole fruit off patients, and that was the only fruit the hospitals gave.

Mr. DEACON: He said the nurses did not get fruit.

Mr. JESSON: He said they took it off the patients and I challenge him to say it outside this Chamber.

Mr. MCLEAN: He stated that he objected to additional buildings being provided.

Mr. MAHER: That is not correct. Who said that?

Mr. MCLEAN: You said it before.

Mr. MAHER (*West Moreton*): I rise to a point of order. The statement made by the hon. member for Bundaberg is incorrect. I said the Government could do more for the

country people. I criticised the system of raising funds to maintain hospitals.

Mr. JESSON: Hon. members opposite do not know what they say until they read their proofs in the morning, they contradict themselves so often. It is very hard to know what they do actually say. Any person, and more particularly one who makes a statement in Parliament that casts a slur on nurses, who are giving their services—

The PREMIER: The nursing profession is one of the most honourable in the world.

Mr. JESSON: I have said that previously. I have said that nurses were born, not made, and theirs was a labour of love.

The PREMIER: A good thing cannot be said too often.

Mr. JESSON: It is scandalous for anyone to attack the hospitals. No hon. member on the Opposition benches has said anything in favour of Labour's administration in the building of hospitals and the conduct of them. The whole tenor of their statements has been in the other direction, and some of their remarks would not be made outside this Chamber. The hon. member for Oxley insinuated that the doctors were all at sea, and that the doctor rubber stamps his patients every day so he will know that he has been round. A patient enters the hospital to be cured, whether he is known to a doctor or anyone else. The Queensland hospital system is so good that persons from other States have visited Queensland to inquire into our administration. One should compare our hospital system with those in the South, and particularly that in Sydney, where there are small cottage hospitals scattered indiscriminately round the suburbs, and one of the chief hospitals, the Prince Alfred Hospital, is situated in one of the main streets. The advantages in Queensland are remarkable. For anyone to condemn the efforts of this Government to help the sick, maimed, and the wounded is scandalous.

This morning I mentioned the Sister Kenny Clinic. I should like to know from the Minister if notice has been taken of the adverse criticism published in the Southern Press regarding this clinic, and whether it will have any effect on him or those in charge of the administration of the clinic. Sister Kenny is doing splendid work. The whole of the cost is borne by "casket" funds. It is a very fine effort.

I wish to thank the Minister on behalf of the people I represent for laying the foundation stone at the new Ingham hospital. Quite a noise was made this morning by the hon. member for Oxley about statements I made yesterday to the effect that the old building was falling down and nurses were injured by walking on rotten boards. I give the Moore Government credit for one thing—they did build part of the hospital out of "casket" funds. Part of the hospital got into such a state of disrepair that the nurses had no accommodation, but when the new hospital was erected the nurses were shifted into the brick building. Prior to that they had no sleeping accommodation. The new wing is not used as a hospital yet, but when it is the nurses and the patients will have reasonable comfort. At the time when the Moore Government were in power it did not matter where the nurses lived. Although the district was represented at the time by a member of the same political creed as the present Opposition, he did not

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make representations in the matter. I am sure that if representations had been made the Government would have listened to them and tried to make the hospital a better place. The whole scheme is now under way, and in twelve months we shall have a hospital as good as any other in Queensland.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN (*Dalby*) [2.8 p.m.]: It appears from the speech of the hon. member who has just resumed his seat that remarks from this side of the Committee in regard to hospitals were construed as a vicious attack on the hospital system in Queensland. The Opposition are not opposed to hospitals generally, but we have a right—and we exercise that right—to make comments with a view to making things better for hospitals, the persons who use them, and the persons who contribute to hospitals. After all is said and done, the money used for hospitals comes from the pockets of the people. The Government claim that they are doing this and that in regard to hospitals, but they are not doing this work from money out of the pockets of Ministers. They are only doing what they are doing because, in different ways, they have collected taxation from the people. They are spending that money in various parts of the State. The Government are only spending money provided by the people to make conditions better for those who have to use these institutions. We on this side of the Chamber claim the right to criticise if we wish, and we do not agree with the hon. member for Kennedy that we were making an attack upon hospitals. We make our observations with a view to bettering the conditions in them, and bringing about more economical results than those now obtained.

Quite a number of authorities in various parts of the world, men who know more about the subject than the hon. member and myself, claim that it is not a good practice to concentrate hospitals on one site. They hold the view that extensive hospitals are a mistake and that it is better to have several smaller hospitals situated at distances from one another. When experts give their opinions, we laymen should pay heed to them. The policy of the present Government is to concentrate hospitals, and a number of authorities in England and other parts of the world say that that policy is wrong. Surely we have the right to draw attention to the opinions expressed by those experts?

It must be admitted by all hon. members that the present method of collecting hospital taxation is inequitable especially when one takes into consideration the amount paid by the farmer as compared with that paid by the man who owns a block of land in the city or town. Take any of the country towns as an example. Take a block of land in the town of Goondiwindi, of an area of one-quarter or one-eighth of an acre. A hotel or big business building may be erected on that land. If the Victorian method of collecting taxation was in operation in Queensland, that land in the town would be taxed on its rental value, so that if it had a rental value of £10 a week, and a farm of 640 acres of land had a rental value of £10 a week, both owners would pay the same hospital tax. Under the Queensland system, the property on which the hotel is erected may be valued at £200 and the hotel be returning a profit far in excess of the profit earned by a

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farmer with 640 acres, yet the owner of that land in the town would pay perhaps only £1 a year as hospital taxation whilst the farmer with 640 acres with a valuation of £1 an acre a year would have to pay taxation on a valuation of £640. It will be seen that the present system is unjust.

Mr. JESSON: Why did you not alter it when you were in power?

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: We were not in power for any great length of time and as far as I know we found some difficulty. I was not the Minister of that department. No doubt there are obstacles to overcome to-day, but I think that there is a fairer way of levying that taxation. For instance, the population of the town of Goondiwindi is as great as that of the whole of the rest of the shire.

The money contributed by each person in the town is considerably less than the amount contributed by each person living in the surrounding districts, and that applies to Roma and other towns, too. There are quite a large number of public servants, such as station-masters, postmasters, and others, who own no land in the localities, but they, their wives and families are entitled to hospital benefits although they need not contribute towards the upkeep of the hospitals at all.

Mr. RIORDAN: They contribute indirectly.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: The hon. member overlooks the fact that the ratepayer contributes both directly and indirectly, and that is the unfairness of the present system. A professional man may invest, say, £20,000, £30,000, or £40,000 at fixed deposit, in Government loans, or in some other way, that will yield him a steady return, but he is not compelled to contribute even 1s. towards the maintenance of hospitals, although they are there for his benefit if necessary.

Mr. JESSON: He does not pay any rates either,

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: He pays income tax, but as the hon. member for Kennedy points out he pays no rates. Surely we can devise some scheme whereby all persons who benefit from hospitals should be called upon to contribute towards their cost. I have no objection to the payment of a certain amount of taxation for hospital purposes, nor do I think anyone else has. Our objection is that the present method is neither fair nor equitable. Some change is essential. Surely we have brains capable of devising a scheme whereby the cost of hospitals is spread over the whole community! One of the fairest methods would be to have a tax similar to the unemployment relief tax, where people paid according to their income. We could, perhaps, fix a hospital tax of 2d. in the £1 on incomes. It may not be necessary to fix the rate so high. Perhaps a half-penny or even a farthing in the £1 on incomes not exceeding the basic wage would be enough, and then perhaps 1d. in the £1 up to £500. In that way the obligation would be borne by the community as a whole.

Mr. JESSON: Do not some local authorities reduce their valuations so as to dodge the payment of hospital taxation?

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: Some of them may do that, but they were compelled to do so because of the injustice of the present tax. Take Toowoomba and district as an example. The people in the local authority areas in the Toowoomba district are mostly poor

people struggling to make a living from the land, and when they realise that they contribute ever so much more for the upkeep of hospitals than the city of Toowoomba, with a population of 25,000, is it not natural that they would decide to try to escape some of the taxation by reducing their valuations? I do not blame them for that. If I was a member of one of those local authorities, and I saw that the shires were contributing ever so much more than the city of Toowoomba with its 25,000 people I should like to do something to reduce the burden of hospital taxation on my ratepayers.

Mr. JESSON: You must not forget that these 25,000 people are helping to consume the produce grown by the primary producers.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: And the hon. member should not forget that there would be no city of Toowoomba, with its 25,000 people, if there were no primary producers to produce the foodstuffs for them. The same applies to Warwick, Dalby, Roma, and other places. What would be the fate of these cities and towns if there were no primary producers? The hon. member knows perfectly well that after all is said and done the city people do not keep the country people. It is the farmers who keep the city people. If the cities did not consume a pound of butter produced in the country, the primary producers would still continue operating, because the whole of their production can be marketed overseas. In fact, there is hardly any necessity to market any butter or wheat locally. The overseas market can absorb the whole of our production. The city does not fix the prices of those products; it is based on overseas parity. Therefore, the city does not keep the primary producer. On the other hand, the primary producer not only feeds the city, but also keeps the people therein employed, and creates their wealth and profits. There is some argument for a different system of hospital taxation.

Mr. RIORDAN: You have not suggested any.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I have. I have suggested a graduated wage tax on the same principle as the unemployment relief tax. Of course, I do not suggest that the incidence of the tax should be similar. If, for example, £100,000 was required annually for the upkeep of our hospitals, that amount could be raised by a graduated tax on wages. We could exempt the poor people, and, perhaps, all those wage-earners in receipt of less than the basic wage.

Mr. JESSON: Less than £500 a year?

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: That is only a matter of detail. Such a form of hospital tax should meet with the approval of all parties. Party politics should be excluded altogether from the policy of hospital upkeep. It is the duty of all sections of the people to care for our sick and suffering, and provide the best attention possible for them. All parties should confer in order to bring about a better and more equitable hospital tax than exists at present.

The Minister seems to lean more to districted hospitals than non-districted hospitals, and give them more favourable treatment. Apparently that is because his Government brought that policy into being.

Mr. HILTON: That is not true.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I am making my statement, and whether it is true or

not I have a right to express it. As I say, I am inclined to think the Minister inclines towards districted hospitals in the distribution of money. He does not appear to give the same financial help to non-districted hospitals.

Mr. HILTON: Why not ascertain the position before you make that statement?

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: Quite a number of hospitals in my electorate do not get the treatment they should, and the reason apparently is that they are not districted. I am giving the Minister a public opportunity of saying that is not the case. Quite a number of non-districted hospitals are operating in my electorate successfully. Quite a number of districted hospitals would revert to the old basis if the people served by them had an opportunity of expressing their opinion. In other cases they would vote in favour of the existing system. I am satisfied that where boards have control economy is not studied to the same degree it is where the hospitals are working under the voluntary system. I do not say that the patients who attend a board hospital do not get as good attention as they get in the voluntary hospital, but there is a great difference in the management between the two classes of hospital. There are four or five voluntary hospitals in my electorate, and the people have managed to keep those hospitals free of debt and put away money for a rainy day.

The policy of the Government does not encourage hospitals to put away money during a good period to meet a lean period. For example, some years ago the Miles hospital had a credit balance of several thousands of pounds, and the Government of the day told the hospital committee that they were therefore not eligible for assistance in "casket" funds; that the Government only helped the hospitals that were down and out.

Mr. HILTON: When did that happen?

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I think that was when the late Mr. Stopford was Home Secretary. As a result of that intimation, the Miles hospital committee gradually used the bank balance. Hospitals should be encouraged to accumulate bank balances during a period of plenty when the people can subscribe well in order that they shall have a fund to help them when times are lean and people cannot afford to give anything to the hospital. We should encourage the country districts to make hay while the sun shines and put away something for a rainy day, thus avoiding the necessity for the Government to give aid to hospitals to prevent them from going insolvent. I do not think anybody can reasonably support the view that a hospital whose supporters are more liberal than supporters of other hospitals should not get help. The people who are free with their money should not be penalised for the stingy ones, but they should be encouraged to support their hospitals.

I am of opinion that in certain localities money has been spent on the erection of hospital buildings for political purposes—for the purpose of obtaining votes. In certain districts an old hospital building is pulled down although it has been serving the purpose and £10,000 or £15,000 or £20,000 is spent on a hospital simply for political purposes. It is done so that the

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Labour candidate can say, "Look what I was able to get. I was able to get £20,000 spent on this new building. I was able to get you this, I was able to get you that." That is all done in the endeavour to win the seat for Labour.

Mr. McLEAN interjected.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I am referring to the money at the disposal of the Government, which can be used for political purposes. Do hon. members mean to say it is not being so used?

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I know perfectly well it is used for political purposes in many districts. I remember a Minister went to Proserpine and told the people he would do this and that. He promised them the sun, the moon, and the stars. In an election campaign Ministers travel throughout the State and members of Parliament do the same, making promises that if they are elected amounts will be placed on the Estimates so that the localities in which they speak will have this, that, and the other thing. After the election is over the promises are forgotten.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: You know there is an end to your story.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: Some persons in my electorate remark that Dalby will be neglected because I am an hon. member of the Opposition. One opponent said, "What is the good of having a member of the Opposition in Parliament? He can get nothing. If we had a man representing the Government he would get the Dalby Hospital pulled down and £25,000 would be spent in erecting a new building."

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: There is no town in Queensland that has had better treatment from this Government than Dalby.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I know that. I have only mentioned Dalby to illustrate my point. Dalby has received very good and fair treatment, and I have nothing to complain about in my own electorate from this point of view. I am merely giving instances of what is said during an election campaign. It will be said, "Dalby is a more important centre than Goondiwindi, yet there they have a hospital costing £35,000 simply because they have as a representative in Parliament a member of the Government. If we had a representative in the Government party Dalby would have a similar hospital to Goondiwindi." That is all done for political purposes.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: You know when the money is available a modern maternity hospital will be built at Dalby.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I thoroughly understand that. I am not complaining about what the Minister has done in Dalby. I am merely pointing out what happens during an election campaign when candidates go out into the country. Ministers speak in little towns and suggest, "If you get rid of Godfrey Morgan you will get this, that, and the other."

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member has exhausted the time allowed him under the Standing Orders.

[Mr. Morgan.

Mr. BRASSINGTON (*Fortitude Valley*) [2.33 p.m.]: The hon. member for Oxley made some mis-statements this morning. He made a wild, ridiculous, and unfounded charge with regard to the administration of the Brisbane Hospital. I do not know what is wrong with him. His statements are entirely unfounded. He makes them in this Chamber from day to day, and nobody appears to know with what object or where he obtains his information on which he founds these charges. The hon. member is suffering from mental indigestion and a form of verbal diarrhoea. He says anything at all apparently with the desire of securing votes.

May I be permitted to briefly state the position regarding the treatment of the staff at the Brisbane Hospital? The hon. member said that the nurses were not receiving fair treatment, that they were refused this, that, and the other thing. This important institution is under the control of the Brisbane and South Coast Hospitals Board. The employees are covered by an award of the Industrial Court, which provides for a 44-hour week.

Last, but not least, a further examination of the position discloses—and I defy the hon. member for Oxley to say otherwise—that the conditions of nurses and other employees in that institution are far ahead of those of similar employees in similar institutions in any other State of the Commonwealth.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: The hon. member for Oxley cut out their afternoon tea when his party were in power.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I was just coming to that. I was going to specify the treatment hon. members opposite gave to them when they were in power. His statements in regard to the supply of food for the staff are ridiculous, unfounded, and altogether out of step with facts.

Mr. NIMMO: Have an inquiry!

Mr. BRASSINGTON: If this Committee is to assemble for the purpose of discussing ridiculous points raised by the hon. member we shall waste a good deal of valuable time. I regret having to do it, but I must explain the position in its true light in reply to the hon. member. I repeat that his statements were unfounded and apparently were made for mean political propaganda and advantage. It is not fair for an hon. member of this Committee to endeavour to stampee any section of the community in an attempt to gain political advantage over this Government.

Mr. MAXWELL interjected.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: And the hon. member for Toowong was as much to blame as any of the others during the period from 1929 to 1932. We heard a loud cry this morning from the hon. member for Oxley demanding better conditions and a better deal for the employees at the Brisbane General Hospital. We take the opportunity to tell hon. members opposite that when they were in power—including the hon. member for Oxley—they denied the provisions of an award to the employees. The award was suspended, and the employees were forced to accept any conditions that were offered. They also lost other concessions they enjoyed under the previous Labour Administration. We on this side of

the Chamber must draw the attention of the people concerned to the action of hon. members opposite when they attempt to mislead the people on this rather important issue. There are no grounds for the charges made by hon. members, and it is right that we should accuse them of not being sincere by pointing out to them and the people the treatment they meted out not only to nurses, but to every other class of worker in hospitals throughout the State. Had I been a party to the vicious treatment meted out to them from 1929 to 1932 I should not have attempted to get up in this Chamber and tried to frame a case against an Administration who have done and are doing their best not only by the employees at the General Hospital, but also those at every hospital. Their conditions at present are good, and the best offered for that class of work in any part of Australia to-day.

Mr. HILTON (*Carnarvon*) [2.39 p.m.]: As one who has had experience in the administration of hospitals I shall deal briefly, and dispassionately with the remarks made by certain hon. members opposite. The thought that emerges, after listening to their remarks regarding the financing of hospitals, is that they are talking with their tongues in their cheek. I well recall that when the Moore Government were in power they appointed a royal commission to go into the whole question, and as a result of its findings the then Home Secretary issued a letter virtually apologising for not being able to devise any better system than the present one.

The present Leader of the Opposition says that he has a cure for the trouble, but he is keeping it a close secret. He was a member of the Moore Government Party, and if he knew of some better system of financing hospitals, he should have come forward with that information at that time and placed it before the Royal Commission on Hospitals or before his Government. The present system of financing hospitals is not a new one, it is a very old and well-established system. In Great Britain the whole of the responsibility of financing hospitals is placed on the shoulders of the local authorities. If the whole of the responsibility was placed on the shoulders of the local authorities in Queensland the burden undoubtedly would be too severe. Here the Government contributes 60 per cent. of the amount by which expenditure exceeds receipts. If a system of taxation is sound in Great Britain and other European countries it cannot be argued that its application here is unsound. If it were not for the hypocrisy indulged in by hon. members opposite, who misrepresent the position, the majority of the people in Queensland would not have one fault to find with the present system of financing hospitals. I venture to say that the majority of the ratepayers favour the present method.

Reference has been made to the Goondiwindi and Stanthorpe hospitals. Goondiwindi was one of the first country hospitals to be districted, and it was districted at the request of the people in that area. The Leader of the Opposition and his deputy made reference to the fact that two big graziers holding freehold land adjacent to the town of Goondiwindi pay more between them towards financing that hospital than the whole of the landowners in the town area. I venture to say that under the voluntary system those two landholders paid a great deal more towards financing that

hospital than they do at present. In fact, I hear very few comments, and certainly no complaints in that area, about the system of maintaining the hospital. The people of that district are public spirited, they take a pride and keen interest in their hospital. They are very grateful to the Minister for the interest that he has taken in it and for the help that he proposes to give the board in the near future. It is proposed to erect a new modern maternity hospital, and the ratepayers there are looking forward to the day when their institution will be raised to the standard that is so desirable if adequate medical service is to be given.

It is pleasing to see the various hospital boards of Queensland striving to bring their institutions up to date. As one hon. member said yesterday, at one time a person who was going to have an operation performed always made for some big city or town in the belief that he would receive better treatment there. Now, with the wonderful improvement that has been effected in our hospitals system, such persons are content to go to their own institutions. They take a pride in them, and, generally speaking, their medical officers and nursing staffs are second to none in the world.

I recall, also, that under the Moore regime, the members of the board of the Goondiwindi hospital refused to reduce the wages paid to nurses when that Government requested them to do so. That was a laudable action on the part of that board, and I am pleased to see that most of those men are still members of the board, and are conducting the institution in a way that is a credit to them.

There are two hospitals in my electorate under the voluntary system, and I was surprised to hear the unworthy statement made by the hon. member for Dalby that the Minister was not giving a fair measure of help to them.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I said that he leans a little bit to the board hospital.

Mr. HILTON: That amounts to the same thing. I think that the majority of the men who comprise the hospitals committees at Inglewood and Texas are not of my political colour, but if we were to ask them their opinions concerning our hospital policy they would undoubtedly say that the Minister had been very fair indeed to them and within reason had given them everything that they had asked.

Mr. NIMMO: The Inglewood hospital has not been brought under the Hospitals Act.

Mr. HILTON: I did not say that it had. I said that it was one of the hospitals that were still being conducted under the voluntary system and that the committee were very anxious to co-operate with the Minister to bring their hospital up to the desired standard. I believe that in the course of a few years there will not be a hospital in Queensland that cannot be regarded as a hospital in the true sense of the word. The members of the Texas committee were a little bit diffident about asking the Minister for all their requirements, but after they had made contact with him and realised how interested he was in their work and how he appreciated their efforts, they laid their plans before him, and in a very short time Texas will also be able to boast of a very up-to-date hospital.

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The hon. member for Oxley made some extravagant statements concerning the new hospital at Stanthorpe, but I should like to inform him that the proposal to build that hospital was supported right up to the hilt by the biggest ratepayers in the district. One of the members of the board, who has been associated with the hospital at Stanthorpe for the past forty years, supported the building of the new hospital and he is definitely not of my political colour. In fact, he is the right arm of the Country Party movement at Stanthorpe, but he supported the proposal to build the new hospital. He worked for it, he voted for it, and in his paper he sponsored the idea all along the line. When the building was completed and the people were given an opportunity to do something in the way of donating furnishings, one of the largest ratepayers came forward and said, "I should have much pleasure in furnishing a private room at that hospital. I do not want to spare expense. Whatever you desire to have done in that room I shall carry out." That man was Mr. Rogerson, of Pikedale Station, who I think is one of the biggest ratepayers in the Stanthorpe shire. That was his attitude towards the new hospital.

Mr. NIMMO: He has always been public-spirited.

Mr. HILTON: He is, and is also one of the biggest ratepayers in the shire. I am making these statements to prove to hon. members opposite who have made such unworthy remarks about our hospital policy, that many of the big ratepayers are wholeheartedly behind it. They are public-spirited men who take a keen interest in the affairs of their locality and like to see an up-to-date hospital for the comfort and convenience of the sick, as well as for the nursing staff who have to perform arduous duties.

Our hospital policy is a wonderful policy, and I believe it will set the standard for the other States. As a matter of fact, they are looking upon us with envy even at this stage.

In conclusion, I should like to express my thanks and the thanks of the people in my electorate to the Minister for the wonderful interest he has displayed in our hospitals. I desire also to add my measure of appreciation of the efforts of his very worthy Under Secretary, Mr. Chuter, who is also one of the keenest and ablest men on the hospital question in any part of the world to-day. He has always taken the greatest interest in the hospitals of Queensland and has been willing to assist at all times.

Mr. NIMMO: We all agree with that.

Mr. HILTON: If the hon. member agrees with those remarks he must also agree in the main with this great hospital policy that is being administered by the Minister and Mr. Chuter.

Mr. NIMMO: No.

Mr. HILTON: That being so I cannot understand the unworthy and extravagant remarks that have emanated from hon. members opposite to-day.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*) [2.50 p.m.]: I am surprised at the views expressed by hon. members sitting behind the Government. They have all boasted that the present system of hospital taxation is a wonderful one, mainly because they are not called

upon to contribute towards it. They are all perfectly content that others should pay for the upkeep of the hospitals and they and their constituents should reap all the advantages. That is a very miserable, mean way of looking at a public question. There was not an hon. member on the Government benches that did not indirectly express that view. They all exulted in the fact that neither they nor their constituents were called upon to pay as much as other people. That is why it is such a great and splendid system—because they and their constituents get all the advantages for little or no payment the system must be good, in fact the best in the world! That opinion is merely based on the fact that they have not to dip into their pockets. All their glorification of that system has that basis—that "Someone has to pay more than our people." We must have our hospitals, but what can we think of people who desire not only to get out of their just contribution but also to place the entire financial load on other people unfairly? The one virtue of the present system is that they have not to pay for it! The cost of any public-hospital system should be borne as equitably as possible by all sections of the community. No one should exult at dodging such a public duty as hon. members sitting behind the Government are doing. It simply means that they are favouring a system that enables their constituents to obtain a bigger advantage from it than those who are forced to pay.

Mr. WELLINGTON: Why not nationalise the hospitals?

Mr. DEACON: Any system, even nationalisation, would be better than the present one. Any system that makes one section of the people pay for benefits obtained by the other is not equitable. Hon. members opposite are simply gloating over the fact that they have not to pay, that someone else must. The present system of taxation is not based on population or the needs of a district, but on the unimproved value of land, no matter how it may be owned or to what use it is put. It has been pointed out over and over again that there is a tremendous difference in the return from unimproved land on which a business is erected as compared with that from unimproved land that is devoted to farming or grazing purposes.

The farmer or grazier has to put a larger amount of capital into the land, and, on the average, receives a smaller income than the owner of a business, and he has to pay three or four times as much in hospital tax. That is the present system—the one that hon. members opposite support. Under this system the small farmer pays more than hon. members do, although they get a much bigger income than the ordinary farmer. While hon. members opposite pay a few shillings a year the average farmer has to pay as many pounds. That system suits hon. members opposite.

Mr. RIORDAN: Let us hear your system.

Mr. DEACON: I suggest that we should have one based on income so that every man would contribute according to his income. We realise that hospitals must be maintained. We wish to see a system in operation that will provide enough money for the efficient control of the hospitals. Why should hon. members of the Government side object to their constituents' paying as much as others in similar financial

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circumstances have to pay? This system favours the cities and gives the city people an advantage over the people in the country. The city people have not to pay rail or motor fares for transport to the hospital. They are taken free of charge. Their people have not to travel any distance to see them, and they pay less for its upkeep. In spite of this there is an outcry from every city member when it is pointed out that the city people are paying much less than the country people. They think it is quite right. That is the only thing that appeals to them—the fact that they are paying less. No meaner view was ever put forward in this Chamber. No party has ever taken such a narrow view. Hon. members opposite are just trying to dodge their own obligations or to enable their constituents to dodge their obligations. That is the only reason why they oppose the system we suggest.

We want a fairer system; not one that will injure the hospitals, but one that will give them ample support and at the same time ensure that every member of the community pays according to his means. Is there anything wrong with that system? The fact that we have not been able to institute it so far is no argument against it; and we should not cease in our agitation until we have such a system in operation. It is time hon. members opposite abandoned the view they are taking now—that this is the best system because it gives an advantage to their city constituents.

Mr. RIORDAN (*Bowen*) [3 p.m.]: Just lately the Bowen Hospitals Board, was formed to control Proserpine, Bowen, Collinsville, and Mount Coolon hospitals. Prior to the districting of the hospitals, the Bowen hospital—known as the Kennedy Hospital—was endeavouring to get money to pay the wages of the staff. The staff were not paid their wages for three or four weeks, and were asked to allow them to run on so that the hospital could buy essentials. There was a shortage of linen, so that there was only one sheet to a bed. The number of pillow slips was inadequate, and the crockery had almost gone. That condition of the Bowen hospital, brought about by the voluntary system, is an instance of the weakness of the voluntary scheme. There were ructions in the committee. Indignation meetings were held. The unionists working in industry withheld their contributions. The Government were continually being asked for advances for three to six months ahead. Moreover, some twelve or eighteen months prior to the hospital board's taking control the average number of patients, at the Bowen hospital, was down to six or seven, but to-day it is round about thirty.

The hon. member for Oxley made reference to a statement made by the hon. member for Kennedy as to the foot of a nurse going through the floor of a ward. There is no exaggeration in the remarks I am about to make. Till the time the board took control at Proserpine—I do not know whether it has been rectified now—when it rained (and it rains there frequently), the nurses had to leave their rooms and sleep under the house. Such was the position under the voluntary scheme. Progress could not be made, the most that could be done was to run the hospital.

At the Collinsville hospital the miners contributed as much as 5s. 6d. a week for its maintenance. The squatter made no contribution but was prepared to send his staff to and use the institution himself. Under the district system the industrial worker or other person may become a contributor under a scheme in which 9d. a week entitles him to free treatment at the hospital.

The whole hospital system is now working a great deal better than before. At least there is some discipline with regard to the doctors. That did not exist previously under the hospital committee. These remarks refer particularly to Bowen. Instead of the hospital committee's controlling the doctor, the doctor controlled the committee. A different spirit now exists. The institution has the respect of the people, who show their appreciation by making use of it, instead of entering a private hospital as formerly.

The hon. member for Oxley made a very slanderous statement about the nurses at the Brisbane General Hospital.

Mr. MAHER: You know he made that in a jocular vein.

Mr. RIORDAN: He did not—nothing of the kind. He was at the apex of his argument when he made the statement that the nurses there were in such a position that they were forced by hunger to take the food of inmates.

Mr. MAHER: That is a wrong interpretation.

Mr. RIORDAN: The hon. member should not have made the statement if he did not mean it.

Mr. MAHER: It is a common thing for patients to offer surplus food to the nurses.

Mr. RIORDAN: It was a slanderous attack upon women who perform a noble service to this country.

The present system of districting hospitals is such that no further improvement can possibly be made. A great deal of criticism has been levelled at the Government by hon. members opposite, but none of them have been able to put a scheme before the Minister for consideration. They were in office for three years, and they made it a plank in their platform that they were going to do away with the existing system of district hospitals. They never attempted to do it.

The voluntary system has failed. I should like to see this Government take steps to immediately district all hospitals.

Mr. MAHER: Against the wishes of the people concerned?

Mr. RIORDAN: I feel sure that once the people experienced the benefits of the district scheme they would not return to the old voluntary system. When some hospitals were districted they owed over £1,100, but the Minister started them off free of debt and definitely said that the improvements he had promised when the voluntary system was in operation would be carried out at the expense of the Government.

The hon. member for Dalby said that the Minister made promises during the Bowen by-election that he would do certain wonderful things in the way of building a hospital at Proserpine. I know that plans have been drawn for a new hospital at that centre, and when the people are ready to proceed with

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the building he will make a grant to them from the "casket" funds. When a £25,000 hospital is erected in any town or district, the people ultimately find that they have only to bear the cost to the extent of about £6,000. I am sure the people would not return to the voluntary scheme.

Mr. WELLINGTON (*Charters Towers*) [3.9 p.m.]: There are two hospitals in my electorate, the Charters Towers hospital and the Hughenden hospital, neither of which has been districted. In the heyday of Charters Towers there were enough donations to the hospital to enable it to carry on, but latterly, owing to an influx of unemployed from the West, it is difficult for the Charters Towers hospital to carry on under the voluntary system. Districting would not be fair up there because most of the population are in the city council's area.

When the Minister was in Charters Towers with his Under Secretary some years ago, Mr. Chuter came to an arrangement with the Dalrymple Shire Council, the Charters Towers Town Council, and the hospital committee, and since that time we have been working under that arrangement. Previously, the Charters Towers hospital received a grant of £500, but last year it was found necessary to apply for £1,000. Thanks to the Minister that amount was granted.

The Charters Towers hospital is one of the best equipped hospitals in Queensland. Quite recently they installed a modern X-ray plant and other equipment that was essential to the efficient treatment of the sick. While the Minister was in Charters Towers a deputation waited upon him, and the Minister granted their request for aid.

The Hughenden hospital is carried on under the voluntary system, but there a great number of railway employees and business men contribute so much each week towards its maintenance. Unfortunately, the small landowners in the outside districts have not been able, during the past few years, to contribute as much as they did previously. The finances of the hospital are now in such a state that the committee has had to ask the Minister for a grant of £300 to paint the hospital. I hope that the Minister will accede to that request.

Mr. GAIR (*South Brisbane*) [3.11 p.m.]: When the Leader of the Opposition was speaking this morning I interjected that although hospitals were districted against the wishes of the people, such action was in the best interests of those people. The hon. gentleman experienced great difficulty in understanding my statement, and he said that he could not understand my reasoning. I am not in the least surprised at that, but I believe that any ordinary person of average ability, who had any knowledge of the position would readily understand what I meant.

It is not difficult to realise that people who, under a voluntary system of financing a hospital, would be free from any hospital taxation, whether direct or indirect, would be opposed to the districting of hospitals. As I said yesterday, when discussing the vote for the Chief Office, those hospitals that were conducted under the voluntary system were being maintained by a handful of generous, public-spirited persons who were anxious to do something for the benefit of the whole of the community in which they lived. It was not uncommon, when hospitals were being maintained voluntarily, for one or

two station owners or property owners in a district to arrange race meetings and other functions with the object of raising funds for the hospitals, and the people of the community in general were not asked to contribute anything. Is it any wonder, therefore, that those who enjoyed the benefit without the responsibility of payment, should be opposed to the districting of their hospitals? Is it any wonder that they would object to any system under which they would have to pay an equal share towards the maintenance of their hospitals? Naturally, they will complain about their hospitals being districted, but, like the hon. member for Bowen, I am one of those who believe that the sooner the Government district all hospitals in the State the better for the people of Queensland.

I said yesterday that it has been my privilege to accompany the Minister on a tour of certain parts of the State. On that occasion I had the opportunity of visiting several hospitals. In some instances the standard of the hospital was a disgrace to the Government of the State, but it is pleasing to know that the Minister promptly decided to have the necessary improvements to the buildings and equipment carried out so that the people could get better treatment.

Splendid work is being carried out at the Mater Misericordiae public hospital, in the electorate of South Brisbane. It is one of the best hospitals of its kind in Australia. It is a public hospital in every respect, although it is controlled by a religious body of women. Its doors are open to all, irrespective of class, creed, or colour. I desire to thank the Minister for the financial help that he has given to that hospital during the past five years. I regret to say that under the Moore regime this and other hospitals were financially starved. The grant to this hospital was considerably reduced by the Moore Government, and during the last year of their administration it did not receive 1d. from the "Golden Casket" funds to help it to provide the very excellent service that is always available there to the public. While we appreciate what the present Government have done there is still room for further financial assistance to both this hospital and the Mater Misericordiae Children's public hospital, which is also giving an excellent service, particularly to crippled children. I appeal to the Minister to give favourable consideration to my request for further financial assistance for these excellent public hospitals in South Brisbane.

The out-patients' department is an important phase of every hospital service, and one that should be maintained at a very high standard. Unfortunately, I have received complaints to the effect that patients who have to attend the out-patients' department of the Brisbane General Hospital are required to wait for very long periods before they receive attention. It has not been within my power to confirm these complaints, but if they are true such a state of affairs is very unsatisfactory. When a person meets with an accident or has to attend the hospital because he is sick, medical service should be available with the least possible delay. It is very irritating for the victim of an accident or a sick person to have to wait in the casualty waiting room at any hospital for a long time for medical attention. I appeal to the department to watch closely

[*Mr. Riordan.*]

this phase of hospital administration so as to maintain it at the highest standard. Apart from these complaints, the service provided by the hospital is excellent, but it is important that even this branch should not be open to criticism.

I commend the Minister for the issue of the regulation under the Hospitals Act of 1936 calling upon private hospitals to furnish certain information to the Director-General of Health and Medical Services. This regulation makes it incumbent on the owners of private hospitals to provide the department with full particulars respecting all cases treated therein. That is a very necessary precaution. I am given to understand that some private hospitals in the metropolis indulge in a questionable and doubtful class of medical work. As it was stated yesterday, our people are the real wealth of this country, and it is our duty to protect them in every possible way, especially from such questionable and improper medical practices. I hope that the regulation will have the desired effect of bringing to book several unscrupulous members of the medical profession who, aided and abetted by nurses, are carrying on this doubtful class of medical service.

Mr. DANIEL (*Keppel*) [3.22 p.m.]: I propose to bring before the notice of the Minister the projected closure of the Emu Park out-patients' department of the Rockhampton hospital. I understand that the Rockhampton Hospitals Board has deferred its closure for one month. A hardship will result to the people of the district if this department is closed. Although it is known as a convalescent home it is in reality an out-patients' department. The total cost of this department last year was £580. The revenue received from the people of Emu Park was £90, leaving a deficit of £490. Of this sum the Government found 69 per cent., or £294, and the local authorities 43 per cent., or £196. I understand that about £100 of the precept is collected in Emu Park and its environs, leaving the remaining £96 to be financed by the other part of the local authority area. The population in Emu Park would not at ordinary times exceed 350, but in the summer season this number is increased to between 2,000 and 2,500. The additional population come mainly from areas in the hospital district. Consequently, it would not be a very heavy burden if the remaining part of the local authority area was asked to contribute the other £96 in order that this out-patients' department could be kept open. If this department is closed the people of Emu Park will either have to journey by car to Yeppoon, where there is a hospital, or by train to Rockhampton. Quite a number of the people there are relief workers, and a large number are pensioners, the cost of living and rents there not being high. It would be a hardship on these people if they were compelled to journey to Yeppoon or Rockhampton for medical attention. Where would these relief workers and pensioners obtain the money to pay the car hire to Yeppoon or the train fare to Rockhampton? I maintain that it would be a hardship to these people if that home was closed.

When speaking recently about social services for the people, the Premier said, "Who would be so sordid as to endeavour to compute in terms of filthy lucre the service that is being given to the people by social services such as hospitals?" or

words to that effect. I subscribe to those remarks. After all, the sum to be found by the local authorities controlling this service is only £196, of which £100 has to be found by the people directly interested. When the convalescent home was handed over to the Rockhampton Hospitals Board some years ago it was given as a gift by the people of Emu Park, and at the time the chairman of that board promised that if the convalescent home was closed at any time he would see that they always had some substitute service in that centre. I urge upon the Minister to take what action he deems necessary to ensure that this service is not lost to the people in Emu Park.

I also wish to draw the attention of the Minister to the lack of medical service in the Wowan district.

For more than twelve months the people in the Wowan district have been without the services of a doctor or hospital. It is true they have an ambulance service there, and I was told by the ambulance officer that he has found it necessary to confine women in the Wowan district on two occasions during the last twenty-four months. I maintain that the people in the outback—who are said to be the backbone of the country—are deserving of a much better medical service than is afforded by an ambulance officer, no matter how efficient that officer may be. There are roughly about 800 people in the Wowan district, and I urge upon the Minister to investigate the position and see if something cannot be done to give the people in that district a much better medical service than they are getting.

Mr. GLEDSON: Would not the board deal with that?

Mr. DANIEL: I believe it is outside the province of the board. Unfortunately, there does not seem to be any nucleus from which to build up a hospital and medical service there.

I wish now to briefly refer to the road from the railway siding to the Westwood Sanatorium. I took this matter up last January, and it has been tossed from one department to the other. I have been like the sea: going in and out of departments with this difference—I have not been shifting any sand. The sand is still there, as I found it when I started investigations in January. I believe this road has been asked for for many years. The file goes back four or five years at any rate. At the outset the reason put forward for not building the road was that there were no relief workers available in the Westwood district. I find that the matter has now developed to the point that the Department of Health and Home Affairs has asked the local authority to give an estimate of the cost of the work. What are the officers of the Main Roads Commission at Rockhampton doing? Surely to goodness the departments of the Government are not so divorced from one another that they cannot co-operate. In justice to the Minister, I admit that I have not interviewed him in regard to this matter, although I have conferred with the heads of the department. The Under Secretary knows full well the state of the road. He had to keep his hand to his mouth to prevent his teeth from rattling when journeying up and down the road in the old sulky he rode in there. I urge that the investigation be expedited and

Mr. Daniel.]

the work be taken in hand as early as possible to ensure the sick people some small comfort when travelling between the institution and the railway station.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) [3.31 p.m.]: I understand the Rockhampton Hospitals Board decided that the convalescent home at Emu Park was no longer necessary, and proposed to close it. Representation made by the hon. member who has resumed his seat and by the residents of Emu Park were forwarded to the hospitals board, and I understand that there is a postponement of the closure to see if any revenue can be raised to keep the home open, if possible.

As to the other point raised by the hon. member for Keppel, naturally local roads are the concern of the local authority.

Mr. DANIEL: This is inside—from the gate up.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: As money is available, the work can be done. Much money has been spent in altering and enlarging the institution at Westbrook, which now houses all the bad tuberculosis patients in the State. The last of the Dalby inmates were transferred to Westbrook.

Mr. DANIEL: They have been asking for a road for five years.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: The accommodation for patients at the institution was more urgent than the provision of a road for the comfort of those going backwards and forwards on business to it. The available money has been allocated for the supply of the additional services, equipment, and so on, required in the hospital, at which very good work is being done by the medical officer in charge. He is an authority on tuberculosis of at least Commonwealth fame, and at present is taking a post-graduate course. He is performing very valuable work in the investigation and treatment of the disease. Everything will be done to make the surroundings as attractive as possible when the money is available. The gardens and surroundings are indeed very good. The institution is a very attractive one, and as money is available everything will be done for the comfort, not only of patients, but also of visitors.

The hon. member for South Brisbane raised the important question of the policing of private hospitals. An Act passed last session put the control of private hospitals under the State. Previously, the registration of private hospitals was a matter for the local authority. The department has laid down definite standards for equipment and safety. The old wooden buildings used for private hospitals purposes will be gradually eliminated. Buildings of a fireproof nature will be compulsory, as will also a properly qualified nursing staff. Under the old system a large number of private hospitals carried on without an adequate nursing staff to look after the welfare of the patients.

In addition, some very undesirable institutions have been refused renewals of their licenses. One in Brisbane, which figured in the recent death of a girl following an operation, has been closed altogether. I think it is time that Parliament realised that something should be done in the interests and safety of young mothers—perhaps unmarried

[*Mr. Daniel.*]

mothers—who are tempted to go into these institutions for the purpose of abortion. The practice is one which is growing, and not only is the illegal operation a breach of the law—a very serious breach at that—but tremendous harm is done to the health of young women as a result. To the public, uninformed, it might appear as if the Government are not paying sufficient attention to this practice. They may think the Government acquiesce in the practice of abortion, because they see cases unearthed in which death follows illegal operations and no prosecutions follow. It is a very difficult thing to get evidence that will enable the Police Department to bring offenders before the court.

For that reason, I have repeatedly said that the profession itself will have to police its members.

There is one way in which a medical man practising abortion can be got at, and that is by the medical profession's assisting the Government, firstly, in securing evidence that will bring about the trial of any offending practitioner, and, secondly, by providing evidence to give the medical board the authority to deregister any such practitioner. I have in mind a case of a young girl whose body was about to be cremated. The police received advice that everything was not in order with regard to her death. They arrived at the crematorium while the service was being conducted, and by going round to the back of the building they took charge of the body after it had allegedly been passed into the furnace. That body was brought into the city, where a post-mortem examination was conducted by the officers of my department. The examination showed that this girl had conceived before the age of consent—seventeen years—and the evidence was that she had died following an illegal operation. It showed that she had been pregnant for some considerable time before her death. The medical man who conducted the post-mortem examination showed that it was impossible for the medical officer who attended the case not to have known that the girl was pregnant. Her breasts were full of milk. The child had evidently been murdered—there is no other way in which one can describe what had happened. However, when it comes to securing evidence for a conviction we find that other medical men cover up the practice. I do not wish to suggest that the great bulk of medical men in Queensland indulge in such practices. Nobody condemns this practice more strongly than the general run of doctors themselves, but they have the wrong outlook in dealing with it. They fail to realise or sense their real duty to the community, and seem to be actuated by the idea that it is better to cover these things up and prevent the public from knowing that there are members of the medical profession who for a fee or reward will commit murder. In that outlook I find the ground for my complaint against the medical profession generally. I say it is the duty of every practising man to help the Government in bringing such an offender before a court, having him convicted and punished for his offence. But the reverse is the case. In this instance the doctor who had the girl in his care, when it was evident that the child was going to die, called in another practitioner to cover him up, and they certified that death was

due to pneumonia or some complaint of the lungs.

Mr. MOORE: In that case they had an X-ray photograph.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: Yes. The practitioner called in a radiologist, who took an X-ray photograph of the lungs. The radiologist could not be accused of any crime. He came in, saw the girl in her nightdress and took an X-ray photograph of the lungs. His reading of the X-ray was correct. It showed a congestion of the lungs that could be due either to pneumonia or to sepsis following abortion, but the complaint is against another practitioner who was called in as a consultant.

Mr. MOORE: He was shown the photograph.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: But he should have done more. He was called in as a consultant in connection with a girl who obviously was going to die, and he could not have done his duty without examining that girl. To examine that girl's chest at all he must have been aware that the breasts were full of milk, and consequently could not have helped knowing that the girl had recently either given birth to a child or had had a miscarriage. Knowing that, he must read the real reason for the markings on the radiograph of the lungs of the girl. He could be under no misunderstanding whatever. Those markings could be due to a lung complaint, or they could be due to sepsis following a miscarriage. Having touched the girl at all, he must have known immediately what was the real reason for the markings as shown by the X-ray.

Further, the Cremation Act provides that another practitioner who has had nothing to do with the treatment of the patient must certify that there are no suspicious circumstances surrounding the death. The object of that provision is to ensure that there is no possibility that any crime has been committed and that the death is due to natural causes in keeping with the certificate before the body is destroyed by cremation. However, that medical officer, acting on the idea that it is far better to cover up these things and not let the people know that there are certain medical practitioners who should be in gaol, issued a certificate for cremation. I very much doubt whether he examined the body at all. I read through the depositions very carefully from end to end—and a very great file of papers it was, too—to see why it was that no prosecution took place. Judging by what transpired at the inquest, I formed the conclusion that that doctor, knowing the reputation of the practitioner who had signed the death certificate, refrained from examining the body so that he would not know that an abortion had been committed on that girl.

I referred the matter to the Crown Solicitor's Office from the coroner and they say that there is not enough evidence to go on with the prosecution. I have referred it to the Medical Board and they have decided that the practice at that time was not infamous conduct in a professional respect. I cannot imagine conduct more infamous than that of that doctor. However, as a layman, and not being in a position to dispute medical evidence, I asked the Director-General of Health and Medical Services to take those depositions, read them

through and give me his opinion. He has summed up the proceedings in a paper that I am going to lay on the table of the House for the information of hon. members. He makes no bones about his opinion that anybody with the slightest medical training at all would know that the girl had died as the result of an abortion.

There was no reason why the Medical Board should attempt to cover up that practice and allow that man to continue his practice as a doctor. Although the evidence that we can proffer may not be of such a nature as to secure a conviction on a charge of murder, at the same time there is enough evidence to convince any decent practitioner that these doctors are unfit to be registered as medical practitioners and allowed to carry on their practice. That is what I have been asking the medical profession to do. They can police the profession themselves, because they are given tremendous power. The Medical Board has the right to deregister any medical man who it thinks is guilty of professional misconduct. The reply of the chairman of the board was that the practitioner is allowed the right of appeal to the Supreme Court. He is, but his appeal to the Supreme Court is against the justice of the decision of the Medical Board. Surely to goodness in cases like that there are enough medical men available who will give evidence that such conduct on the part of a medical practitioner is infamous conduct. That is the only decision they have to arrive at.

I think it is time that the community knew that the Government are not acquiescing in this horrible practice, that we view the increase in it with very grave alarm indeed, and that we propose rigidly to investigate any suspicious deaths that may take place in these private hospitals. The Director-General of Health and Medical Services has power to refuse to license such hospitals and closed the hospital where the death occurred, but the medical practitioner who was responsible for the operation is still practising and is still entitled to call himself a doctor. The medical profession will have to alter their tactics; they will have to accept the responsibility that goes with the authority given to them. It must be remembered that when authority is given to any body of men or any individual there goes with that authority always the responsibility to do the right thing. It is no good these people desiring to have the authority that they have without accepting the very grave responsibilities that are involved. The medical profession are given the authority under the Medical Act. We know the delicate work that the medical profession have to perform, but they are given power to control the profession by being able to register or deregister, to lay down who shall practise and who shall not, and rigidly exclude every doctor who does not conduct his practice in an honourable way. The Medical Board has the authority to control the profession itself. If it desires to have that authority then it must also accept the very grave responsibility that goes with it. If not its members should resign and make room for others who will stand up to their authority. The great bulk of the medical practitioners in this State are decent clean-living men and women and they will have to make up their minds to remove this scandal from the profession.

Hon. E. M. Hanlon.]

They could do it quite easily if they would loyally help the Medical Board and the Government to get rid of these dishonourable practitioners. I lay on the table of the Chamber a copy of the report referred to for perusal by hon. members.

(Whereupon Mr. Hanlon laid the paper on the table.)

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: There has been a considerable amount of discussion concerning hospitals generally. The Leader of the Opposition complained that the Government created hospital districts against the will of the people concerned, but that is not correct. The Government create districts and appoint hospital boards to control these institutions only in localities where the people fail to maintain a satisfactory service. We have never brought a hospital under the Hospitals Act where it was successfully carried on, unless we were requested to do so by the local people, the hospital committee, and in some instances by the local authorities themselves.

Quite a number of local authorities in areas where voluntary hospitals are operating make large donations from their revenue for the maintenance of such hospitals. We always give a subsidy on those donations at the same rate as on private benefactions. Many hundreds of pounds are thus given by local authorities to enable hospitals to carry on. They realise the necessity of a hospital, and that is the only reason for making the donations. If not, why should the Government spend money on subsidising the donations? It must not be thought that we have nothing else to do with money than pour it out on unnecessary financing of hospitals. Surely to goodness hon. members realise that the Government are hard put to it to find money for the many services for which the people are crying out! We must scrutinise our accounts very carefully to keep our hospital expenditure, which is 50 per cent. greater than the local authorities are asked to make, to as low a figure as possible. Some local people object to a hospital at all. Some are even of the opinion that it is waste of money to provide hospital services. At one time there were those who subscribed to the opinion that it was a waste of public money to provide money to educate the children of the working class, but in these enlightened days the great majority of the people realise the necessity not only of educating our children but also of providing an efficient hospital service for the community.

Some persons, too, object to any form of government service. Recently we had the spectacle of a little community in the metropolitan area seriously objecting to a proposal by the Brisbane City Council to extend its sanitary services to their district. That district had no sanitary service, yet its residents thought it to be a tremendous infliction to be taxed £1 a year to have a weekly service for the removal of their nightsoil. They thought it looked as if they were becoming too darned "flash," and that it was unnecessary "flashiness" to have a sanitary man calling at their residences weekly to remove their nightsoil. We had to do the right thing, irrespective of whether the people had such a mean outlook—or, shall I say?—would not realise the necessity of providing for the health and wellbeing of their district. It is the object of the

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Government to cater for the great masses who require first-class social service.

It was also suggested by one hon. member opposite that the Government should be more generous in their treatment of local authorities. I do not think he realises how generous we have been. It is only since this Government came into office that subsidies have been granted to hospitals for building purposes. That system was inaugurated because we desired to keep the capital cost of buildings to the hospital boards as low as we could. Every subsidy given in that respect by the Government is a relief to the local authority in that hospital district.

Let me show what relief the Government have afforded in hospital maintenance only. Since the "Golden Casket" was established £980,000—just on £1,000,000—has been given as donations to maintenance of hospitals. That is a tremendous figure. I am not alluding to any £10 grant or the Government's share of the hospital precept; I mean grants to reduce the cost of running hospitals. Since the financial year 1933-34, when we were getting our hospitals reconstruction policy into its stride, we decided to help the people to keep the charge of hospital buildings on local authorities down as low as possible by making grants for that purpose. For instance, a grant of £10,000 was made to the Stanthorpe hospital towards the cost of a new building. The actual cost of that building to the people in the area was £24,000, less £10,000 grant made by the Government, or a net charge of £14,000. Only 40 per cent. of that amount was met by the local people.

We studied carefully the effect of all these buildings on the local authority in the area in question. In the few years we have been pursuing this policy, we have given £141,000 in grants towards the erection of new hospital buildings to lighten the burden of that capital expenditure on the local authorities, apart altogether from the thousands of pounds given in grants for the erection of maternity hospitals. I can assure hon. members that every endeavour is made to keep hospital charges within a reasonable figure. We do not desire to embarrass local authorities. On the contrary, we desire to help the hospital service to give an efficient service and at the same time keep the cost within the limits of the purses of the people in the districts affected.

I was amused to hear the story that the city people got out of paying for the upkeep of the hospitals and only the primary producers paid. I call the attention of hon. members to the fact that the great bulk of the cost of the hospital service for Brisbane and South Coast hospitals district, which extends from Landsborough and Maleny to the New South Wales border, is borne by the city of Brisbane. One property in Queen street in which a retail business is conducted has a land valuation of £91,905, and that firm contributes £241 5s. to the upkeep of the Brisbane Hospital.

Mr. MAHER: There are tens of thousands of people earning good incomes in this city who pay nothing.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: They all have to pay their rent and pay their share of the hospital precept. The city of Brisbane pays a tremendous part of the cost of the surrounding areas. Take Rockhampton, Townsville, or Toowoomba. Townsville, with a valuation of £1,000,000, carries the bulk of the

hospital expenditure for the surrounding shires. Where the city is rich, where it has high valuations, it carries a part of the cost for the poorer shires. The rich territory surrounding little struggling country towns has to bear the greatest share of the cost.

Mr. DEACON: Take Toowoomba!

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: Toowoomba is paying a fair percentage of the hospitals precept.

Mr. DEACON: The shires pay more per head.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: They may pay more per head of ratepayers.

Mr. DEACON: They do.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: That may be so. If you take the average small farmer you will find his local authority valuation is not greatly in excess of the ordinary suburban property; the value of his land may be. I have seen instances where land values have been deliberately depreciated in some shires. That is the real difficulty—the valuation in some districts compared with others—it is so easy to manipulate. That is a wrong principle. That is one of the reasons why we inserted a provision in the Local Government Act preventing shire clerks from acting as valuers, because of the inducement for them to keep the cost to their own council down or value their shires at a lower valuation so as to avoid part of the hospital precepts. We do not allow the shire clerk to act as valuer for the council. We know that difficult, and hope to overcome it in the near future. As hon. members say, there are difficulties. There are always anomalies. There is not an Act on the statute-book in relation to which one could not point out some anomaly. Obviously you cannot by rule of thumb operate a system that would deal equitably with every citizen in a State where the conditions vary and where the people are engaged in all kinds of industries; still, we are doing the best we can under the circumstances.

I wish to make passing reference to the remarkable speech of the hon. member for Oxley. Despite the fact that the Opposition, including that hon. member, have been moaning about the tax on the local authorities, he gets up to-day and says the vote is not sufficient and that the expenditure on hospitals should be increased. If the expenditure is increased for the Government it is increased for the local authority also. What I take particular exception to is the statement that nurses were underfed and that they had to get away with the fruit from the patients. That is all rubbish.

Mr. MAHER: He only said that in a jocular strain.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: This practice of saying nasty things in a jocular strain can be carried too far. These girls are entitled to a fair deal, particularly from hon. members of this Committee. They are as fine a body of girls as one would find in any part of the world.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: This applies not only to those at the Brisbane Hospital but also to the staff at every hospital I have visited. It must not be forgotten that to say a thing in a jocular way here is one thing, and to read it in cold print is another. One

cannot read the jocular manner into "Hansard." It stands there as a cold statement, and I think the hon. member for Oxley should make an explanation that he was joking. It is very unfair for him to reflect on the honesty of the nurses at the Brisbane Hospital in the way he did. He should make an explanation and an apology to these girls for what he said even if his remarks were meant as a joke.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: Some of them give it to the nurses.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: Of course, the patients would give anything they could to the girls. To say they are underfed and the only fruit they get is what is brought to the patients—I have written down what he said so that he cannot wriggle out of it and I can check up what he tries to do with his "Hansard" proof in the morning. He should in all fairness to the girls apologise for the statement.

Much criticism has been levelled at the policy of having large hospitals. Hon. members say that the Brisbane General Hospital is too big and object to the spending of money in bricks and mortar. Good service cannot be given unless it is properly housed, and the advantage of skilled medical men and nurses is of little avail unless the proper equipment is provided. Medical science is advancing by leaps and bounds, and consequently there is the need for continual expenditure in keeping the equipment up to date.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: Is there not a difference of opinion amongst experts as to whether there should be one large building or several small hospitals?

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: No. Very few people subscribe to the latter idea to-day, and it is really only prejudice. There never has been a sound reason advanced that there is any magic in a particular number of beds. Some doctors contend that 500 beds is the maximum number for one hospital. On the other hand, others vote for 300 beds, and others favour 700 beds. Nobody has told me the reason why they favour those particular numbers, but the tendency all the world over is to have large hospitals, bigger and bigger hospitals.

The best testimony that we have had as to the Brisbane Hospital comes from Professor Wilkinson, who came to Brisbane as Dean of the Faculty of Medicine in the Queensland University and head of the school of medicine established here. He saw our hospital and studied our system and told the board that Brisbane was the only part of Australia where all the facilities for the complete training of medical students existed on one site, which provided the opportunity for the establishment and building of a model medical school. Every form of disease can be dealt with there. The maternity hospital is adjacent to the General Hospital, and the Children's Hospital, medical and surgical wards, and the Hospital for Infectious Diseases are all there. Every form of medical activity is in one centre, with the Medical School adjacent. And that is the proper situation for such a school. There are some who think that a medical school should be out in the bush where the students should have plenty of room to play tiggy or red rover. The function of a university is to teach, and there is no more

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suitable place for the establishment of a medical school than in the immediate vicinity of a big hospital.

I can give hon. members some information as to other hospitals in the world. A new hospital is being erected at Lille in France. It is going to have 2,250 beds, and the area of the site upon which it will be erected is 148 acres. A school of medicine is an integral part of Lille and it provides for 800 students. That is an illustration of a modern development. That hospital is to be erected in an old-world city where land is dear, the city crowded and every available acre of the country is taken up. At the Beaujon Hospital in Paris a building is to be erected, costing £1,017,277, that will have 1,100 beds. At Los Angeles a new one is being erected at a cost of £2,500,000 and it will contain 2,244 beds. I have before me particulars of a new hospital in New York, containing 1,041 beds.

It is proposed to build a new hospital at Birmingham, and it will be a replica of the hospital plan we have in Brisbane. The ground plan shows several six-story blocks, connected by balconies, so that each block will become a part of a whole. This system makes for cheaper administration and reduces the amount of travelling to be done. This hospital is to cost £1,250,000 and the area of the site is 150 acres. This new hospital is estimated to be adequate for fifty years. It is to begin with a general hospital section of 740 beds and will probably finish up at 1,000.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: If the birthrate continues to decline at its present rate there will be no need for it.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: There is another factor operating that will have an influence on that, and I shall refer to it in a moment. The governing body of that hospital has sent out this little book describing it all, and it refers to the functions of a hospital centre in this way—

“In its broadest sense a hospital centre may be said to have four functions—(1) treatment of sick and injured—medical; (2) training of doctors and nurses—teaching; (3) investigation into the cause of disease—research; (4) constructive health building—social.”

One cannot get away from the fact that hospitals to-day involve a tremendous cost. No hospital authority is justified in providing hospitals and accommodation for the sick without making some effort to try to prevent sickness and reduce as much as possible the burden of the treatment of the sick. We should not tax ourselves to give treatment if we do not provide for preventive measures, research into the causes of diseases, and methods of preventing disease. Those are important functions and Birmingham seems to understand the position in building this additional hospital.

This will not be the only hospital in Birmingham, because there are many there now, and they are big ones, too. They propose to have a medical school attached to the University of Birmingham. The ground plan shows the university site on one side of the road and the hospital site on the other. Ground has been resumed right alongside the university so that the medical school will form part of that centre. That is the scheme we proposed here some years ago.

[Hon. E. M. Hanlon.]

The hon. member for Dalby suggested a moment ago that if the birth rate continued to decline they will possibly not need the hospitals. The British Medical Association has become aware of the possibility, and I have a report dealing with the matter. To-day the hospitals are serving more people than they ever did before, and this is a good opportunity to quote a few paragraphs dealing with these matters from the official publication of a hospitals' policy by the British Medical Association, published in London in December, 1936. The introductory notes say—

“Among the social changes of recent years none is more remarkable than that which has taken place in our hospitals. Originally charitable institutions for the general treatment of the very poor, they have become centres of highly specialised and complex service, to which four-fifths of the population look for help, and where the community as a whole claims as a right services which can only be rendered by a great organisation or its dependent branches.”

Then it goes on to say—

“There is an urgent national demand that the benefits of the fully staffed and equipped hospital shall not be denied to any class in the community, and in particular shall be available at reasonable rates for those who cannot meet the cost of private nursing homes and whose means are yet above the income level of the insured person.”

Of course, they have the insurance contributory scheme there for the wage-earner, too.

That is just what we are doing here, and that is what several hon. members opposite have objected to, and what a great many local authority men have objected to—the development of modern buildings with accommodation for the paying patient as well as the public patient. By Christmas time we hope to open a block in the Brisbane Hospital for private patients. We are providing beautifully furnished rooms, highly qualified nursing attention, the best of professional supervision all the time by the resident medical staff, and the patient can go in there and have his own doctor attending him, and we expect the fees to be somewhere about £4 a week for all services. There will be none of those extras that in some hospitals help to double the cost. To-day the ordinary middle-class man is terrified of going to private hospitals. He might go into the private hospital in the belief that it is going to cost him £6 a week for a hospital fee, but when he gets his bill he finds that that £6 a week is only a part of the cost. Every safety pin, every dose of castor oil, and everything else is charged for at high rates, and the £5 or £6 a week that he arranged to pay is only part of the hospital bill. No private hospital can provide the organisation or the equipment that is going into the Brisbane General Hospital and into every district hospital in the State, and, consequently, the people are beginning to think that the best services should not be reserved to the poor alone; it should be available to everybody in the community, and that is what our hospital system is providing for.

This publication goes on to mention the effect of recent legislation. It says—

“By reason of the Local Government Act, 1929, there will be from April, 1930,

onwards development of hospital services by local authorities. The poor law hospitals will become council hospitals, administered by these bodies. Progressive local authorities will take counsel with committees representing the governing bodies and the medical staffs of the voluntary hospitals of their areas, explore the needs of their district, and will envisage and plan complete hospital provision for the communities they represent."

They are beginning to get the correct outlook.

Then they refer to the service conditions of the medical staff. Hon. members must remember that a large number of the hospitals in England are municipal hospitals, and they are run by the local-governing bodies entirely as a municipal service. They say—

"In council hospitals the medical staffs, whether whole or part-time, have in the past been paid by salary or on a basis of remuneration for work done. In voluntary hospitals the visiting staff has, in the majority of instances, been honorary, payment being made only for certain classes of work, in particular, that done for local authorities, or under the auspices of government departments.

"It is certain that local authorities must continue in their council hospitals some system of paid medical staffs, whether whole or part-time. If the voluntary hospital system is to persist, and even more if demands for expansion are to be met, the visiting staffs must be paid on a like basis."

They emphasise the need for the co-ordination of hospital services.

They further say—

"There are in this country two types of hospital in which provision is made for the treatment and nursing of the sick, viz., council hospitals and voluntary hospitals. In the opinion of the association it is necessary to ensure (i.) that there shall be no unnecessary duplication of accommodation or wasteful competition with or between these two types of institution, and (ii.) that in the development of additional accommodation, this development may be related to existing hospital accommodation."

They have realised all the things that we have been planning here for a long time.

Then they deal with the system of hospital grouping, which we are carrying into effect in this State. On that point they say—

"The association envisages a hospital system in which all hospitals in a given area will be grouped round a central or base hospital. In the existing state of affairs the central or base hospital will generally be one of the larger voluntary hospitals. This may or may not be the locus of a medical school, but will in any case be expected to set the standard of practice in the area and be the chief centre of education and research."

It goes on to say—

"No class of case, other than infectious and certifiably insane, should be excluded from the central or base hospital. Certain categories of cases might, however, according to local circum-

stances, be allocated to other hospitals of the area, provided they were still available for teaching purposes when necessary.

"It is inevitable that some local authorities will have more than one base hospital in their area and some base hospitals will have to deal with more than one local authority (especially in the case of county council and county borough councils in the same county). In order to facilitate co-ordination the boundaries of hospital areas should, however, as far as possible, coincide with those of local government areas."

Hon. members will see how the British Medical Association in England is linking up the whole of the hospital service with local authorities. Local authorities hospitals cater entirely for certain local authority areas. The system is to have a base hospital with several dependent hospitals in the area, controlled by that authority, but with no overlapping or duplication of services. Again, they demand that both the voluntary and council hospital shall have a salaried medical staff.

Under our scheme we do not envisage only the construction of the building at the Bowen Bridge road for the service of the Brisbane people. Upon the completion of that scheme other hospitals will be constructed in the outlying parts of the metropolitan area and in other districts. At the present time the Brisbane and South Coast Hospitals Board is building a hospital at Canungra and another at Maleny. Later a hospital is to be built at Southport. Later on it is proposed to build hospitals on the south side of the river and in further outlying suburbs of the city. They will be hospitals attached to the base hospital, and there will be no unnecessary duplication of equipment. At the present time we have out patients departments at Wynnum, Sandgate, and Cribb Island, but a number of others will be set up as the scheme is developed for the convenience of the people.

We are carrying out a scheme that will provide for a complete, modern, properly equipped and scientifically controlled hospital centre at Bowen Bridge road with other incidental institutions scattered throughout the district.

Mr. NIMMO (*Oxley*) [4.19 p.m.]: Unfortunately, when the Minister was replying, I was called out of the Chamber by one of my electors on an important matter of business concerning the electorate and I did not hear all that he had to say, but as is usual with him he misconstrued my remarks and placed on them an interpretation altogether foreign to what I said. I understand he said that I had said that the only fruit the nurses got they had to steal from the patients. I do not know whether he said that, but if he did it is absolutely untrue, because I made no such statement. What I said was that the only fruit the nurses could get was fruit brought into the institution by visitors who come to see patients and that they gave the nurses part of it. It was the Minister who introduced the word "steal." It was not used by me. I did not for one moment think that nurses would steal fruit from patients. What actually happens is that the nurses get some little fruit that when visitors come to see

Mr. Nimmo.]

patients and bring them a bag of fruit, the patients are only too delighted to give a part to the nurses. Of course, they love fruit, and as pointed out the vote is so inadequate, consequent on the building of the huge edifice at Bowen Bridge road, that there can be no money to buy fruit. Certainly, a small quantity of fruit may be bought, but not nearly enough for an institution of that kind. I should like the Minister to table a statement showing the cost of fruit bought for the nurses in that institution.

Mr. GAIR: The Minister excused you by saying you were jocular.

Mr. NIMMO: I was not jocular.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He apologised for you.

Mr. NIMMO: There is no doubt about what the Minister said. We object to his getting up in this Chamber and allegedly repeating statements made by hon. members in a form that is totally untrue and totally unjust to the hon. member concerned. I am not apologising for my remarks. I intend to stick to the statement I made—that the nurses in the Brisbane General Hospital do not get enough fruit, and that the only fruit they get is brought in for patients and given to them by those patients.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: That is what you neglected to say.

Mr. NIMMO: The hon. gentleman frequently misconstrues statements made from this side of the Committee. The Minister has a bent for reading words into an hon. member's remarks and making insinuations. We all know that the omission or inclusion of a comma will alter the whole meaning of a sentence. The Minister was absolutely wrong in attributing to me remarks which I did not make.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) [4.22 p.m.]: As a matter of fact, the hon. member for Oxley said—

“Do you know, Mr. Gledson, that the nurses at the General Hospital in Brisbane have to depend for their fruit supply upon what the visitors bring to the patients?”

The hon. member did not say that the patients gave them fruit or anything else. Anyone listening to his remarks would deduce that visitors brought fruit to the patients and that the nurses got away with it.

Mr. NIMMO: You misconstrued it entirely.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: The hon. member said that the nurses depended for their fruit supply on the fruit brought to patients by visitors. Anyone listening to him could not help making the deduction that after the nurses retired from duty and the patient dropped off to sleep they returned and took the patient's pineapples and other fruit, conveyed it to their quarters, and regaled themselves with it in the dark. That was the statement the hon. member made.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Enoggera*) [4.24 p.m.]: I want to congratulate the Minister and his staff on their activities in the oversight of the health services of the State, particularly the work associated with the prevention of disease. The Government realise that medical science has not advanced a great deal in

the last fifty, sixty, or one hundred years, and that the only way in which those diseases affecting the human body can be successfully combated is by establishing hospitals in which medical research can be carried out in conjunction with the treatment of actual disease.

Another reason why the Government and the Minister, together with the department, have reason to be proud of the hospital development in Queensland is that steps are being taken in the nationalising of our hospital and health systems. When this work is finally brought to fruition it will confer a great benefit on the community. There is no doubt some of the medical friends of hon. members opposite fear this programme that is being put into operation because it will materially interfere with the profiteering that goes on under the guise of medical treatment. It is a well-known fact that the private hospitals of this city and other cities in Queensland have been the source of huge fortunes for the medical men who serve professionally in them. As much as 300 guineas has been charged for a serious operation. Some members of the medical profession have become rich at the expense of the unfortunate sufferers. Under a nationalised hospital scheme every person will be able to avail himself of its services and contribute according to his means.

In this connection I mention the Sister Kenny Clinic, where the method adopted by Sister Kenny for the treatment of infantile paralysis, the merit of which has not been recognised by the orthodox medical profession, is being carried out. One of the reasons for the non-recognition of the merits of Sister Kenny's treatment by the medical profession is that it would cause a reduction in the profits made by the orthopædic surgeons in this city. It will be readily recognised that the institution of the Sister Kenny Clinic for the treatment of unfortunate sufferers from infantile paralysis will have the effect of reducing the number of patients of the orthopædic surgeons. After all, a surgeon who has a clientele that brings him in an income of £2,000 or £3,000 a year is loath to lose any of them. For these reasons the medical profession generally do not look with favour on the hospital system that is being introduced by the department. After all, there is throughout the world, particularly in countries that give effect to social legislation, a tendency to nationalise the whole of the health services; and many medical men recognise that such a system would be of great benefit to the community.

Mr. NIMMO: They have it in Russia.

Mr. TAYLOR: They have it in other places besides Russia. The hon. member is suffering from a red complex. The hon. member has a blue outlook, and if he wore a red waistcoat and a white feather he would be a patriotic colour.

Australia can benefit from the experiences of the older countries in these matters. The development of medical science in the interests of the community can be considered after taking into account the experience of the older countries in the nationalisation of health. The health of the community is a vital social and economic factor, and if we can improve our hospital and health services by scientific methods we shall accomplish something for which we shall be given credit not only by the people but also by

[*Mr. Nimmo.*]

the honest medical practitioner. The people of Queensland are behind this Government in their organisation of the health and medical services of the State.

Mr. POWER (*Baroona*) [4.31 p.m.]: I congratulate the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs on the work he has done in the inauguration and carrying out of the hospital policy. Some little time ago I had the pleasure of visiting many towns in Queensland in his company. The hon. gentleman takes the word of no one as to the conditions that exist in hospitals. He finds out for himself personally, and pays great attention to minor details that are sometimes overlooked by others. Some of the hospitals we visited are still open, although they certainly are not able to give the sick the necessary treatment.

At 4.32 p.m.,

Mr. KING (*Marce*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. POWER: The hospital building at Springsure was very dilapidated, and this applies to many others in Queensland. As a result of grants from the "Golden Casket" fund made by the Minister great improvements have resulted, and some new hospitals have been constructed.

Strong objection has been raised at various times to the districting of hospitals, but when the scheme has been fully explained by the Minister to the people concerned, they readily agreed that it would be well worth giving it a trial. The system of having base hospitals with an aerial ambulance service has been inaugurated, and this scheme will be supplemented. The treatment of very serious cases from district hospitals at base hospitals will be of untold value. The Minister has done everything he possibly can for the prevention of disease, and he has taken this added precaution that those who fall victims to disease may receive proper medical treatment in a well-equipped hospital. The great majority of people have made little or no objection to the districting of hospitals.

Hon. members opposite have raised their voices in protest against the present form of hospital taxation. There are many who do not contribute anything towards the support of medical service under a voluntary system, but they are now called upon to pay their fair share. I say unhesitatingly they should be compelled to contribute to the upkeep of hospitals.

The action of the Minister in taking over the control of private hospitals from the local authorities was a wise move. It has proved worth while. I know that the late Dr. Paul, who was the medical officer attached to the Brisbane City Council, recommended that a license be not granted to a certain type of hospital. His decision was over-ruled at a meeting of the Health Committee of the council, the chairman of which has since been relegated from his position in the council to his former job in the Railway Department. He attempted to pit his knowledge against that of a medical man who knew the exact conditions operating in such hospitals. Many licenses have been granted for places that are totally unsuitable as private hospitals. I agree with the hon. member for South Brisbane that practices are carried out in some hospitals that will not bear the light of day.

There is another important reason why the control of these hospitals should be in the hands of the Government. Many of the buildings are not suitable, and some have been erected in very bad locations. Furthermore, should a fire occur, there would be no opportunity whatever of saving the lives of the patients. I remember that when I was chairman of the Health Committee of the Brisbane City Council application was made for permission to build a private hospital, and from the plans submitted it was seen that the nurses' quarters were to be placed underneath the hospital. I maintain that these women, who give such noble service, working at any time and often at night, should at least have decent quarters in which to live when off duty.

I strongly condemn the statement made by the hon. member for Oxley that many of the nurses in hospitals had to take fruit sent along for patients and convert it to their own use. I say that if the hon. member for whom the Leader of the Opposition has apologised on numerous occasions made that statement outside of this Chamber nurses would take action against him. It was unfair and cowardly for an hon. member to come here under privilege and make such a condemnation of the noble women working long hours and doing their very best for the patients in their charge. For the hon. member for Oxley, who casts such a slur on these women—

Mr. MAXWELL: He said he never made the statement.

Mr. POWER: The hon. member for Toowoong knows more about cemeteries than hospitals.

Mr. MAXWELL: He said he never made the statement.

Mr. POWER: "Hansard" will show whether he made it or not. He made it, and I heard him make it. I say that it was unfair, cowardly, and unwarranted for an hon. member to make that statement concerning nurses. I believe he will receive his due reward when he faces the people. I venture to say that he is not prepared to make such a statement against honourable women outside of this Chamber. As a matter of fact, I think it was the hon. member for Kennedy who asked if he was prepared to make the statement outside. The hon. member said he was prepared to do it. He has been apologising ever since. He did make the statement, because I heard him.

Item (Hospitals) agreed to.

FIRE BRIGADES.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) [4.39 p.m.]: I move—

"That £24,000 be granted for 'Fire Brigades.'"

This vote provides for an increase of £2,250 over last year's, and this is due to the extension of fire brigade services to other areas.

Item agreed to.

INSANITY.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*): I move—

"That £223,443 be granted for 'Insanity.'"

The vote shows an increase this year, as it has done almost every year. It is natural

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that as the population grows so must these institutions grow. There is an increase of £7,758 this year.

The insanity sub-department is now receiving a complete overhaul. The late Inspector of Insanity retired at the end of last year, and the inspector now is Dr. Coffey, the Deputy Director of Health and Medical Services. We have sent overseas a young doctor, Dr. Stafford, who is in charge of the institution at Ipswich. He is a very capable man, and performed his duties exceptionally well in his own institution.

I regard the insanity service as not being up to the standard that is desired in this country. I think that there is room for immense improvement in the service given to the public and to the patients.

Mr. MOORE: There is room for improvement in the prevention of insanity,

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: That is true, and much can be achieved in that direction by strictly policing the malpractices that are being carried out to-day by certain unscrupulous medical men. Many of the female cases are due to nervous collapse after the birth of a child or after a miscarriage during pregnancy. Insanity from that cause is often brought about by previous malpractice by qualified and unqualified practitioners. Everyone realises that at childbirth a tremendous strain is inflicted on the nervous system, and unless women have proper care and attention it is possible that they will suffer seriously from nervous reaction. We have planned to establish, in association with the Brisbane Maternity Hospital, a psychiatry hospital, a place where women whose nervous systems have been unduly shocked can be treated as patients and nursed back to sound mental health. That will be a very valuable activity of the Brisbane and South Coast Hospitals Board.

Our insanity hospitals are in need of an overhaul, because there is, to my mind, not enough investigation into the cause of patients' going into mental hospitals. I had a case some time ago where a young man went into a hospital certified as insane. His father got in touch with the department. He wanted the youth examined by a specialist, because he said that the boy had had a bad fall from a horse some years before, and he thought it was possible that the injury inflicted to the head at that time might have had something to do with his condition. The Inspector of Asylums said that nobody was better qualified to look after the boy than he was, and that he would not allow any outside officer to see the youth, and that, as the boy was insane, he could not be left at large. The father had great difficulty in getting that boy examined by a specialist. Whether anything could have been done in that case or not I do not know, but I regard it as essential that some investigation should be made into the circumstances surrounding a person's entry to a mental hospital.

When a normal person, man or woman, with a normal standard of intelligence and the usual amount of human brain-power, suddenly has a nervous collapse and becomes insane, there must be some reason for it. Sometimes the cause is obvious to the medical officer who certifies, but it is possible that injuries received at some time or other during the life of that patient may have had something to do with the mental collapse,

and I maintain that the medical history of every patient entering a mental hospital should be traced with a view to discovering whether there has been any removable cause of insanity. Many women have been temporarily insane after childbirth as a result of a bad confinement. Sometimes an operation may put everything in order and they become quite normal again. If that operation is neglected permanent injury is done to the nervous system, and then you may have a permanently insane patient on your hands. I believe that every endeavour should be made to trace the medical history of new cases to see whether improved methods of treatment may be introduced for their benefit.

Dr. Stafford was sent away to see what was being done in America, England, and on the Continent, and fortunately a conference on mental hygiene was held in Paris in July this year which Dr. Stafford attended and to which he presented his credentials as a delegate from Australia. He was thus able to come in contact with the world's leading specialists and we hope on his return to introduce a new Insanity Act. A great deal of the improvements will be based on what Dr. Stafford has been able to discover as a result of his tour abroad.

It must be remembered also that it is Dr. Stafford's duty to find out the mistakes that have been made in the other countries of the world. Other countries and other authorities make mistakes and we do not want to repeat them. In altering our system here we do not want to repeat what has been proved to be wrong or unsuitable elsewhere. As a result of his tour abroad Dr. Stafford will have the opportunity of making contact with the most modern institutions of the world and with the greatest specialists in mental hygiene. The present Insanity Act is out of date, and on his return we should be able not only to draft a new Insanity Act but also to provide better treatment for patients in our institutions.

The present institutions can be extended, too. For instance, there are people who are temporarily deranged as a result of some infirmity who should be sent to an intermediate institution for treatment, and not to a mental asylum. Then we have the most pitiable class of all, the people who have become feeble-minded on account of age. Their mental condition is not due to any sin or to any accident, but solely to the breakdown of their mental powers, consequent upon old age. They are not suitable cases for a mental hospital at all, and treatment cannot do them any good. We need special institutions to care for these people but they need not cost very much. In the greater number of cases relatives would be prepared to pay for the accommodation of old members of their families in an institution. There is nothing more distressing to a family than to have an aged relative who though bodily well is mentally feeble, and has to be continually watched.

Then there is the need for an institution for the treatment of mentally deficient persons. This year we hope to open at Dalby the first institution of this kind for men and boys. That will be the first step. We hope also to provide an institution for mentally deficient women and children. We have found that mentally deficient women take a tremendous interest in mentally deficient children. We discovered that at the

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Diamantina Hospital where a couple of mentally deficient children—idiot children, as a matter of fact—were placed under the charge of more or less mentally deficient women, but I do not suppose that any children got more careful or motherly attention than these unfortunate children did. The mentally deficient women will be able to run their own institution, do the bulk of the work and look after the mentally deficient children. Then there will be a form of training associated with these institutions and for men the rearing of poultry and pigs and similar occupations will make a better appeal to the weak-minded than any other form of training.

I visited institutions in the South where attempts have been made to train mentally deficient children in trades so that they could earn their living, but I believe it is a complete failure. The cause is not far to seek because a tradesman has to have a higher average mentality than the ordinary unskilled worker, and the problem is being tackled in the wrong way in trying to teach mentally deficient boys to make toys or something like that with tools. Mentally deficient children will take an interest in anything that is alive and therefore the rearing of poultry and pigs and similar work offers them a greater interest than the routine occupation of toy-making or anything of that kind. All these institutions will have to be co-ordinated.

When the matter was under consideration last year the Government decided that it would be better to go slow in the matter so that when the work of reorganisation in the department was embarked on we could proceed on right lines and be guided by competent men who would first investigate everything to be done. By adopting that policy we thought we should avoid the mistakes made in older countries, as well as save useless expenditure.

Mr. NIMMO (*Ozley*) [4.50 p.m.]: I was very pleased to hear the statement from the Minister that the Government proposed to open an institution for mentally deficient, who are now treated at Goodna. That is a very desirable step and one with which I agree.

I am sorry that Dr. Ellerton has retired from the position of Inspector of Asylums and Medical Superintendent of the Goodna Hospital for the Insane. I wish to pay a tribute to the wonderful work he did for this State. His work deserved a very great reward. The Government would have been well advised to have retained his services in an advisory capacity, even though he may have attained the age of sixty-five years. Dr. Ellerton was a remarkable man, and statistics will prove that the results he obtained in connection with insanity were also remarkable.

I again draw the attention of the Committee to the necessity of increased accommodation at Goodna. The Government have done very good work during the last two or three years in providing the accommodation that is so necessary, and I hope that the Minister will not adopt economies that are not in the best interests of the State or calculated to enhance its good name. The accommodation provided for nurses at the Goodna hospital is quite inadequate.

Mr. POWER: Now, be careful.

Mr. NIMMO: I am always very careful. Fifty per cent. of the nurses at the Goodna hospital are sleeping on mattresses on the floor. I am sure that the Committee will be surprised to hear this. The reason is that the accommodation for the nursing staff is not adequate. I trust that the Minister will remedy this state of affairs. I do not think it has ever occurred in any other institution. I have gone to the trouble of verifying this statement, and there can be no question about its correctness. I do not know whether the Minister is aware of the fact, but something should be done immediately to provide additional accommodation for nurses.

I should also like to see the wooden dormitory at the Goodna Mental Hospital replaced by a brick building. If my suggestions are acted upon I shall be very well satisfied.

Mr. DONNELLY (*Wynnum*) [4.55 p.m.]: It appears to me that the way we deal with insanity we are starting at the wrong end. We are endeavouring to treat certain effects and neglecting to attack their cause. It takes a bold speaker to get up and advocate the adoption of certain measures to combat this growing evil, which is affecting the whole of the people of Australia and the world. Some countries have taken such measures to combat this evil that have not met with the approval of other people. I suggest that the medical profession and members of Parliament should go into conference on the subject. Year after year Parliament meets and discusses various matters but no steps have been taken to stop the increase in insanity. If we do not take effective steps to deal with this pernicious evil we shall be failing in our duty to the State.

As I said before, it will take a bold man to get up and propose the action that should be taken. I know of many cases where a little legislation could have prevented an increase in the number of the insane. For example, a very healthy girl who worked for my wife at one time married a man who developed insanity. For several years this man has been allowed to return home periodically, and each time his insanity developed again and he has been taken to the asylum, leaving another imbecile child behind him. This is regrettable, and it should not be permitted to continue. I do not propose to advocate wholesale sterilisation, but there are inmates in Government institutions who are sometimes released and return to their families, where they increase the number of insane in the State, and these cannot be of any use to any country.

I appreciate the fact that the Minister is endeavouring to make the living conditions of these people better. I suggest to hon. members generally that they visit these institutions and see the people who have grown up as a result of the regrettable omission to introduce legislation to deal effectively with this problem. I maintain, and I say with all respect, that the whole cause of imbecility is the misdeeds of the people. We know quite well the part that venereal disease has played in increasing the number of imbeciles who are born as a result of the misdeeds of their parents. Would it not be to our everlasting credit if we did something to stop this colossal evil?

Mr. Donnelly. }

The churches will say, "We must not interfere with nature." I agree with them, nevertheless, when God put us on this earth He put us on clean, but we shall visit the consequences of misdeeds on our children unless some measures are taken to prevent it. I think the churches should join with us in trying to wipe out the cause of the increase in the number of insane. I do not suggest for a moment that any party can deal with this matter. It is a national matter. The churches, which preach the gospel of God, and we, who preach the gospel of better living, should get together and take measures that will have the effect of reducing the number of imbeciles that are born. I have gone to institutions and seen children who were born with half a hand and others who were slobbering down the face. They were getting the invalid pension. I have had parents come to me who are getting the invalid pension and want more assistance and whose children are supported by the State. The children are imbeciles and the parents are imbeciles, and the mother is bearing another child. It is an appalling state of affairs.

This should not be made a party matter. It is a national problem, and we should get together, bring in the churches, and have a conference to cope with it in such a way that no person will be hurt. We must see that the children born and bred in this country enjoy a decent standard of living instead of being a charge on the community. I am very insistent on this point. I have interviewed the Minister and drawn his attention to the case I have quoted, and he was very sympathetic, but as I now have the opportunity I bring it before the notice of members of the Committee, and I trust I shall have the support of all who are desirous of furthering the best interests of our future generation.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) [5.1 p.m.]: This is a matter that has given grave concern to the department. The Director General of Health and Medical Services and his medical officers are studying the problem, and we are endeavouring to get a medical history that will form the basis for the planning of an institution. As the hon. member has said, regard has to be paid to prevention as well as cure. These matters are being kept in mind.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN (*Dalby*) [5.2 p.m.]: I should like to have some information as to the progress that is being made with the proposal to put the Dalby Sanatorium to another purpose. I understand it is the intention of the Government to make it a home for male mental deficients.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) [5.3 p.m.]: Owing to the purpose for which the buildings were used, it is necessary that they be thoroughly fumigated and a reasonable time allowed to elapse before they are opened for the other purpose. The buildings have had to be altered and adapted. It cannot be used for the proposed purpose until we have legislative power to keep the patients there. There is at present no authority for holding them unless they are certified as being insane.

Mr. MOORE: Could it not be done by their parents?

[*Mr. Donnelly.*]

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: We have to have authority to keep them there. The parents may bring in a mentally deficient boy or man, but if we attempted to detain him by force we should be guilty of assault or wrongful imprisonment. There is no statutory authority to hold a person who is not certified as insane. It was thought it would be a simple matter to establish this institution until this aspect of the matter was opened up.

Moreover, such an institution has to be planned in such a way that it will not be abused. In the past there was a good deal of abuse of the epileptic home at Toowoomba. Those who should have been really in a mental asylum were placed in this institution because their relatives or friends had enough influence to have them admitted there, thus (to their way of thinking) keeping the stigma of insanity from the family. The value of the institution is reduced if that is done. An institution for the mentally deficient, if it is to be of any service, must ensure that only the patients of the right type are admitted, so that the general work of reclaiming the intellect can be carried out. There is the great danger that unsuitable patients will be taken in, and thus destroy the work of an institution such as this, in which persons suffering from lack of mental control can be trained to discipline themselves.

Item (Insanity) agreed to.

LAZARET.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) [5.5 p.m.] I move—

"That £8,069 be granted for 'Lazaret.'"

This vote shows an increase of £588 on last year's figure. There has been an increase in the number of patients. At the beginning of the year there were sixty-three patients in the lazaret and there are now seventy-four. During the year six died, nine were discharged, and twenty-six have been readmitted.

Leprosy is a disease that we must endeavour to clean out of this country, and I believe it can be cleaned out. There are certain spots that are the centre of infection. Those spots are where the kanakas were employed in the olden days in the sugar fields. Possibly the disease was brought into the Commonwealth by kanakas or Chinese who were then numerous in Queensland. There is a source of infection amongst the native population of Northern Australia. We have picked up quite a number of lepers in the North amongst the aboriginals. I have no hesitation in saying that there are more up there, but this is a matter that needs to be tackled on the national scale. It is too big for a State Government to handle alone, and, furthermore, it is not a bit of good endeavouring to clean up a disease that is communal, if the adjoining State has numbers of aboriginals still affected.

Mr. MAHER: Do you get any cases from South Queensland?

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: An odd one or two. We get them in places like Nambour, Rockhampton, and Mackay, where the kanakas were living. They congregated in those centres in the past, and we may get an odd

case or two from such places. The bulk of our cases come from North Queensland.

Mr. MAHER: From the white population?

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: Yes. One case was picked up in my own district last year. The man originally came from Mackay. I believe his brother was a leper, and he left Mackay when his brother was taken away. It evidently took many years for the disease to show in him. I believe this man was living in Brisbane for ten years. It is also asserted by the Director-General that odd cases of leprosy go undetected by the medical profession because, on account of its rarity, it is a disease they do not look for. It is only when it becomes obvious that the average medical practitioner recognises it as leprosy. There is no one watching carefully for the outbreak of this disease in order to prevent a further spread of it.

The position with regard to the aboriginal, however, needs attention. We suggested last year to the Federal Government that there should be co-operation between the Commonwealth and the States of Queensland and Western Australia to provide for a complete medical examination of the natives of Western Australia with a view to having all the lepers in that State transferred to some institution where they could be kept from spreading the disease. It has to be realised that this is a big job and it will entail the expenditure of a large sum of money. I believe it is worth any amount of money to eliminate the source of infection. Some years ago, when the Federal Minister of Health, then Mr. Marr, was in Brisbane, I put a proposal to him that we should establish between Western Australia, Queensland, and the Commonwealth a Northern Leper Station for aboriginals alone. We have in our present institution aboriginals and white people. We suggested that the three authorities should contribute to this station and have a complete round-up of the natives of Northern Australia where there is evidence of the disease. These aboriginals could be treated, and the centre would prove a valuable asset for research and investigation. The Commonwealth Government could undertake the research work. At the present time when we pick up a man, say a leper from the Gulf Coast, we have to hire a lugger to transport him to Cairns and then bring him to Brisbane by train. That should not be.

We estimate that it will cost in the vicinity of £80,000 to conduct this survey. To do the work successfully we must have the co-operation of the police and the services of a large body of medical men, but it can be done, and it would be worth the expense. The net result of all our representations in connection with leprosy has been a grant of £500 from the Commonwealth Government for an investigation into the problem in North Queensland. We propose to use that money, with additional funds from my own department, on a survey of an isolated area from which several native lepers have been taken. Only one tribe is living in that area at present and we hope to examine thoroughly every native there. I believe that we shall get quite a few lepers from that district when we make this investigation. This is very important work, and even though the cost is high, sooner or later all Governments, both Commonwealth and State,

will have to face their responsibilities in the matter. I venture the opinion that the £80,000 that it is proposed the three Governments should contribute would be extremely well spent in rounding up every native in the North, examining them all, and isolating those who are infected in some institution to be established in the North. It seems ridiculous to have to bring natives down to Moreton Bay and confine them in the same institution as that in which white people are isolated.

Mr. HAYES (*Nundah*) [5.12 p.m.]: I am extremely pleased to see that the vote for the Lazaret has been increased this year. In that increased amount £230 is provided for another employee in the institution. During the last recess I took the opportunity of visiting Peel Island and inspecting the institution in which those people who are suffering from what all civilised people regard as the most loathsome of all afflictions are isolated. I was very pleased indeed to find that even the worst case there—and I did see the worst case—was not suffering from that type of leprosy which is prevalent in countries such as India. The work that is being carried out by Superintendent Goldsworthy, Nurse Dwyer, and the rest of the staff at this institution is worthy of the highest praise that it is possible to give. I desire also to congratulate the Minister, the Under Secretary, and his staff for the consideration they are giving to those of our fellow creatures who are suffering from this dreaded disease. Each of the inmates has his or her own self-contained home, complete with wireless set and other conveniences enjoyed by our healthy citizens. They have a billiard table, an excellent library and facilities for all forms of sport. Neither the State nor the Federal Government deduct anything from the invalid pensions paid to these inmates. They have their own fishing boats and are given the freedom of the island.

Although the attention bestowed upon them by the nurse and other attendants is all that may be desired I feel that the institution falls short in certain respects. I have already discussed them with the Minister. It will be readily understood that frequent bathing of patients is necessary. They have their own bath tubs, but the water supply is not a very secure one. It is contained in thirty tanks, each of 1,000-gallon capacity, but when we remember that it is to serve the needs of seventy-five people and a couple of draught horses it will be realised that they must run very low during a dry time such as we are experiencing. I believe that an underground supply can be obtained. It was suggested to me by one of the people on the island that an underground supply could be obtained on a site where a dead tree had been struck by lightning. He suggested that a well should be sunk on the site and a windmill erected. Whether he was correct in his surmise or not I am unable to say, but I suggest that the matter should be investigated so that a more permanent water supply may be provided.

At 5.16 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. HAYES: The institution itself is located about 2 miles from the wharf where the "Karboora" berths, the Government motor boat that plys between Dunwich, Peel Island, and Cleveland carrying supplies

Mr. Hayes.]

to the institutions. I believe that the telephonic facilities on the island could be improved by the installation of a telephone in a shed near the wharf, and that this would provide a much-needed facility on the island. The institution was located 2 miles from the wharf in the early days because the inebriates' home was near the wharf. About twenty-five years ago the inebriates' home was transferred to Dunwich, on Stradbroke Island. There is no reason why the present Government should not carry out the improvements that I suggest. It would only be in conformity with their desire at all times to emancipate the workers and to alleviate distress in the community. Most of our social reforms have either been instituted or carried out by Labour Governments, whether in the State or in the Federal sphere.

I have ascertained from the Minister that it is his intention to build a six-bed hospital on the island so that sick and bed-ridden inmates may be under the direct care of nurses. I suggest to hon. members that they visit the institution at Peel Island so as to become thoroughly acquainted with the conditions there. They would then realise that the treatment meted out to these unfortunate people by the Government is all that could be desired. The Lazaret is well conducted, and it is only in the instances mentioned that improvements might be effected. I know that the Minister will investigate the matters I have brought forward.

I had the opportunity of having a meal served to me on Peel Island. It was the meal regularly served to the inmates. Dinner consisted of vegetable soup, the choice of two joints, and green peas, beans, pumpkins, and potatoes. The inmates are particularly well catered and cared for. Even when the people in the city experienced difficulties in buying green vegetables they were served to the inmates on Peel Island. The only chance these inmates have of being freed from their terrible affliction is by having the best of food and attention.

Chaulmoogra oil in tablet form is dispensed three times daily to the patients. It is very pleasing to note that many cures have been effected on Peel Island. One inmate was a young man who had served all but two years of his apprenticeship to a trade. After being treated for eighteen months at Peel Island he was discharged perfectly cured of this dreadful scourge. I am pleased to say that this young man returned to the job he was forced to leave and completed his period of apprenticeship to qualify for tradesmanship. Periodical examinations have disclosed that he is absolutely free of leprosy.

The treatment of leprosy is a national work, and should be a function of the national Parliament. It is to be regretted that the number of male and female whites showed an increase last year of seven. The coloured inmates increased by four. Leprosy is a question beyond party politics. It is true that the Commonwealth Government have allocated a sum of £500 spread over a three-year period for the conduct of investigations on a native aboriginal settlement in regard to epidemiology. This important work requires greater financial resources than this amount.

Aboriginals should be segregated in that part of the country where most cases of leprosy occur, namely, North Queensland,

[*Mr. Hayes.*]

in the Northern Territory, and the islands. The greater number of coloured patients on Peel Island are aboriginals. If the two races were segregated in their respective areas and there treated interesting results might follow. The Federal Government should also make a close survey of the aboriginal races. I am sure that such a survey would disclose a number of leprosy patients in the northern part of this Continent. If they are not segregated and treated there is a possibility that this dreadful disease will be conveyed to other people. I am very pleased to be able to say that the disease is being successfully combated. The Minister shows the same keen interest in this sub-department as he takes in all the multifarious sub-departments that come under his control.

On behalf of the people who are conducting that institution, and on behalf of suffering humanity there, I express gratitude for the treatment they receive. I trust my suggestions will receive careful consideration from the Minister.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) [5.26 p.m.]: The problem of a water supply at Lazaret is a serious one. The water that has been obtained so far is not of a very good quality, but another site has been chosen, and a bore will be put down at an early date, when it is hoped an adequate supply of good water will be obtained.

The new hospital block that is to be built will cater for the patients who are in a serious condition. Very few of them are bed-ridden, but those who are will be better off in the one block. Each patient has his own cottage and service. It will be a greater advantage to have those who are bed-ridden in a hospital ward where they will have constant nursing supervision.

Item (Lazaret) agreed to.

GOVERNMENT MEDICAL OFFICERS.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) [5.28 p.m.]: I move—

“That £2,232 be granted for ‘Government Medical Officers.’”

The number of officers and the nominal salaries remain the same. The increase is due to the lessening of the reduction under the Salaries Act. There are a number of other medical officers for whom provision is not made on the Estimates, because they receive no regular salary and are only paid when called upon to do any work.

Item agreed to.

REGISTRATION BOARDS.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*): I move—

“That £1,136 be granted for ‘Registration Boards.’”

This amount, although paid from revenue, is refunded by the various professional boards which make their contribution to the Treasury to cover the cost of administration of the office.

Mr. MAHER (*West Moreton*) [5.29 p.m.]: I should like some information from the Minister as to the nature of the work the boards carry out. There is nothing to indicate what these boards do. I notice there has been an increase in the vote.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) [5.30 p.m.]: Until a few years ago each of the professional boards—medical, dental, pharmacy, nurses, and opticians—conducted its own offices, and had its own part-time secretary. On the amending of various Acts it was decided to appoint a public servant as the registrar of professional boards. This enabled the Government, through the department, to keep contact with their work. Obviously, when Parliament granted certain powers, privileges and authorities it expected that the Government should keep an eye on such boards and that they should carry out their responsibilities in the proper way. The office is conducted by a registrar, who is a public servant, and the cost of the office is shared equally by the five boards concerned. There is no cost to the Crown at all.

Item (Registration Boards) agreed to.

POLICE.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) [5.31 p.m.]: I move—

“That £555,246 be granted for ‘Police.’”

The vote shows an increase of £25,321, the greater part of which is due to the increased pay-roll. Notwithstanding that the hon member for Oxley, by some remarkable arithmetic, proved yesterday that the police were not paid as well as they were some years ago, we find a larger sum of money is required for them.

Mr. BRAND: They have not been paid back their full salaries.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: The salaries are fixed by the Industrial Court. They are in the same position as everybody else now. They can approach that court and have their salaries fixed there.

Mr. BRAND interjected.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: The salary is not back to the 1929 standard that the hon. member destroyed, but we are very nearly back to it now. The police have now the right of approach to the Industrial Court, which was denied them by the hon. member's Government. That Government refused them the right to approach the court and reduced their salaries by legislation. That has been rectified and the police are now on the same footing as every other section of the community in respect of the Industrial Court. That court increased their salaries, as it did those of others. No special consideration is given to any section of the public service and the police and the public service are entitled to the same facilities in the fixation of their wages and conditions as are other sections of the community.

The number of policemen has been increased and, more important still, there has been a reallocation of the number of non-commissioned officers; not that the increase has been great, but it gives members of the force greater opportunities for promotion. That is a very valuable incentive.

To a great extent the force has been mechanised. In areas where motor transport is more suitable horses are being eliminated. At the main Western centres motor cars and

horses are used but in the far-out districts utility trucks are provided—an ordinary motor car chassis with a utility body. This is very convenient for carrying camping gear and equipment on long patrols. We now propose to allot a motor car to Gympie and to Bundaberg, a utility truck to Gladstone and motor cycles to Nambour, Tiaro, Landsborough, Rockhampton, and Charters Towers.

Mr. MAHER: Are you eliminating horses?

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: No, but it is unnecessary to use the horse in the heart of a town like Rockhampton. I was up there quite recently and I found that the horses were being stabled in the main business block of the city. Rockhampton, with its concrete and bitumen roads, is not a suitable place for travelling on horseback. Hon. members know it does not do the feet of the horses any good to come in contact with hard bitumen and other roads, and it is obvious that in a city horses are of little value. Those horses that were in Rockhampton are being accommodated at the suburban stations near Rockhampton, and motor cycles have been supplied to the head station to do the town patrol work. They will facilitate movement and be more efficient in the long run.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I do not think it will be safer. You have killed a few already by motor cycles.

The SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: We have not killed them. We have only had two accidents in the thousands of miles patrolled by cars. Still, as hon. members realise, the use of the horse in city areas is out of date. Our motor cycles will enable the police to cover more country, and in a more expeditious manner than if horses were used. Horses are, of course, employed in country districts just the same. One cannot eliminate the horse altogether from police work. We have country areas where we cannot think of using motor cars or cycles. The horse is being kept in those areas where he will be necessary, but in the city he is out of date. For instance, there used to be a horse depot between Brisbane and Ipswich, but that has been done away with. There is a motor patrol in Brisbane and one in Ipswich, and there is no necessity for horses between here and Ipswich. A telephone call will bring a motor to the spot in no time—in the time it would take to saddle a horse.

Taking that by and large our equipment is getting to a very respectable stage when one considers that three years ago we had no modern motor equipment. It is creditable to the Government and to the people of Queensland to see the amount of motor equipment supplied for police work. The Queensland police force had the advantage of observing the method of mechanisation pursued in other States before we went in for this kind of equipment. In this respect we have been saved the costly blunders made by the departments in other States. It is wise to see how somebody else gets on with a new toy before you indulge in it yourself, Mr. Hanson.

We have not gone in for costly types of motor conveyance, but have selected the ordinary good-class motor car, which can go as fast as anybody can drive with safety. This type is doing all the work required of it and has a better resale value when traded

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in after a few years. We have to trade in this year some of the equipment we bought three years ago. The department has its own workshop and garage, and two members of the force, who are expert mechanics, are in charge of the workshop and do all the repair work for the department. Nothing has to be sent out. These men are remarkably efficient and keep the whole of the transport system in first-class working order—I refer to motor cycles, cars, trucks, and prison vans. Upkeep expenditure is being kept down to the absolute minimum.

Mr. BRAND (*Isis*) [5.39 p.m.]: We have, fortunately, a very efficient police force and one of which we can all be proud. Every country in the world and every State in Australia takes a great deal of pride in its police force, and I think we can indeed be proud of the achievements of our force.

The Minister said that it was proposed in the coming year to allot cars and motor cycles to additional centres. I do not think that motor cycles are of much value in police work. There is no doubt, however, about the motor cars; they have proved their value since their introduction, and I am of opinion that they are preferable to motor cycles in all police districts.

THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: Motor cycles are much cheaper, and they do certain work just as effectively.

Mr. BRAND: I do not think they are as effective as the cars. In order to obtain efficiency we must have the best equipment, and the motor car certainly is far superior to the motor cycle. I prefer the motor cars because I believe they are more efficient, and we have a police force of such a high standard that only the best of equipment is good enough for it. I realise that finance has to be considered when these improvements are being introduced, but I think that the motor cars are better suited for the effective discharge of police duties.

The high standard of efficiency of the Queensland police force is illustrated by an example quoted by the Commissioner of Police in his annual report for the year ended 30th June, 1937—

“A single impression found on a cash box in a dwelling-house which has been broken and entered was identified, within five minutes after receipt, as that of a Queensland criminal. After commission of the offence here he immediately left for New South Wales, where he was arrested and sentenced to a term of imprisonment. Upon his release he returned to Queensland, and the warrant issued here on the house-breaking charge was executed. He denied the offence until finger-print evidence was tendered at the police court. He then pleaded guilty, and was subsequently sentenced to two years' imprisonment with hard labour.”

That statement is ample proof that criminals cannot get away from the Queensland police. I congratulate the Queensland Police force upon its efficiency in being able to trace criminals and bring them to book. It is very gratifying for the community to know that we have a force that is doing its work speedily and efficiently in bringing to trial those who commit offences against society. When a crime is committed, in which even criminals from all over Australia are implicated, the offenders are in almost every

instance brought to book. We in Queensland are very fortunate indeed in having a force of such a high standard of efficiency to guard the life and property of the community, and in addition to being efficient, where efficiency is essential, the force is diplomatic in its methods of maintaining peace and order in the community.

Most of my knowledge of the police and their methods of discharging their duties has been acquired in country centres. From my observations I am convinced that each member of the force applies himself to his work in a way that is recognised by the community in general as being of the highest order of efficiency. There is a general feeling amongst the public that the police are doing their job well and are deserving of our thanks.

I should like to have some information from the Minister concerning the operations of the welfare club. Its object is a very admirable one indeed. In his report the Commissioner says—

“In order to bring about greater efficiency, the welfare of the men must always receive the closest possible attention of the responsible officers of the force. During the year this has been done, and facilities for recreation were given, and will be continued and extended to all centres where there are a sufficient number of men to warrant same.”

He goes on to say—

“Social functions, which the public have generously supported, have also been held in several centres.”

This welfare club, which has its rooms at Roma street, is a place of recreation and also has the right to sell spirituous liquors. There is some criticism by some members of the public and that is that men who are associated with the club are in receipt of salaries from the police force itself. I think it is just as well that the Minister should make it clear in this Chamber whether that is so or not. I presume that it is so.

THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS: What is the complaint?

Mr. BRAND: That those who are engaged in selling liquor at the club and in selling tickets in raffles of motor cars for the benefit of the club are engaged in various branches of the department, whether in the Criminal Investigation Branch or the uniformed branch. It is said that they are drawing their pay as such and commission on the sale of tickets for the motor cars, which I understand is 2s. in the £1. It is said that they are paid by the department for this work. I understand that the club was formed with the very laudable idea of helping to create even greater efficiency amongst the police. I support the idea, and I want the Minister to clearly understand that. The members of the force contribute to the club in the same way that members would contribute to any other social club outside. No one is entitled to enter the club unless he is a member or a friend of a member. It is said that the salaries of those who carry out the work of the club are paid by the police force.

Some people contend that this money should be paid by the club itself, seeing that it is a business. I should like the Minister to give us some information on these points.

[Hon. E. M. Hanlon.]

The club has been established to provide a place of recreation and social gathering where policemen congregate in large numbers. That is an excellent idea. It enables members of the force to meet to their mutual advantage and for the benefit of the public. Therefore the policy in regard to the club should be definitely known. I suppose other hon. members have heard the things that I have heard in this connection, and like me, have not been in a position to give a reply to them. The objects of the welfare club are admirably set out in the report of the Commissioner, but it is the duty of hon. members to ascertain how the duties in this club are carried out.

I am pleased to note that last year not such a great number of men as previously were superannuated from the police force because they were certified as medically unfit by the medical board. In the previous year quite a number were discharged for that reason. This decrease indicates to me that the physical efficiency of the force has improved as compared with that of the preceding year. I am sure that we are all very pleased to have this assurance, because it is essential that the force should be physically efficient.

As a representative of a country electorate, I recognise the need to-day that a policeman shall have not only physical qualifications but also educational qualifications. I understand that examinations for recruits are set on that basis. I hope that as time elapses we shall see much benefit from this policy, and that it will produce a force of even greater efficiency than that of the one we are discussing to-day.

Mr. POWER (*Barroona*) [5.53 p.m.]: I desire to congratulate the Minister on the improvement he has effected in the equipment of the police force. I refer particularly to the introduction of patrol cars, which have rendered valuable service in the detection and prevention of crime. Immediately an offence is reported to headquarters a message is broadcast to the patrol cars, which are promptly on the scene.

Another fine innovation is the installation of traffic lights at the intersections of Queen street and in Albert square. I hope that the system will be extended to other busy centres. An intersection where traffic lights are urgently required is in the vicinity of College road and the Normanby Hotel. Traffic converges there from five highways. It is directed at peak hours by a traffic constable, but the system of traffic lights is urgently necessary at other periods. The danger is caused by traffic coming in five directions.

I also wish to draw the attention of the Commissioner to a matter that requires very urgent attention, that is, speeding at the beaches, particularly on Sundays. I was at Redcliffe last Sunday, and I noticed quite a number of persons driving motor cars and motor cycles without consideration for the safety of pedestrians. I do not blame the police for this, but I think further consideration should be given to the matter of more adequately policing the beaches on Sundays. These offenders drive down to the foreshores and drive along the beaches at an excessive speed. Bicycle riders are also a danger. They ride in and out amongst the people, and cause risk of serious accident. The riders of motor cycles are the worst offenders. Not only do they drive at

an excessive speed but they appear to be continually stopping and starting and making as much noise as possible, and show no consideration for the people who go to the seaside for a little week-end recreation.

Another phase of the traffic problem that the department should consider is one that affects the Brisbane City Council. I refer to the noise from tramcars. I was inside an office in Adelaide street, near Wharf street, recently, and I found it absolutely impossible to hear anyone on the telephone. I drew the attention of the tramways department to that nuisance. I do not know whether the Commissioner of Police has power to eliminate that noise, but I hope some consideration will be given to the matter.

I wish to refer to the system of examination, not for admission to the force, but for promotion of members of the force. I think the system in operation is a good one, because it gave young men with ambition and ability the right to sit for examination after serving a period of ten years. Under the old system a man had to wait fifteen or twenty years before he could hope for promotion, and many brilliant young men were passed over and older men were appointed to the higher positions on the grounds of seniority. Under the new system of promotion by examination many young men of ability will get the opportunity of early advancement.

I believe we should go a little further. After a man reaches forty-five or fifty years of age it is more difficult for him to settle down to study. I believe a system could be inaugurated with advantage whereby a man who passed his examination for second-class sergeant should be allowed to sit for the examination for first-class sergeant and for senior-sergeant respectively, instead of having to wait—as he has under the present system—until he has reached those ranks. Many of us realise that when a man reaches the age of forty-five, fifty, or fifty-five years it is more difficult for him to study than it was before he attained the age of forty. After that age one's powers of concentration begin to decline. Not for one moment do I suggest that life ends at forty, but at that age a man has not the same aptitude for books as in his youth.

The traffic problem of the metropolis needs serious consideration. The termination of tram cars from the Rainworth and other routes at Wharf street causes a great deal of congestion of traffic at peak hours. This could be overcome by diverting these trams to some other terminus. The police department should take up this matter with the Brisbane City Council with a view to eliminating the congestion that occurs in that locality.

The duration for parking vehicles in Queen and Adelaide streets must also be looked into. Adelaide street was widened for the purpose of allowing a greater flow of traffic, but this is retarded somewhat now by the parking of vehicles in that street. Certainly, it is necessary for vehicles to load and unload at business premises, but in some instances they are parked two abreast. There is a time limit for parking, but it is a question whether that could not be abolished and vehicles prohibited from parking in these two thoroughfares. At present the time limit is half an hour, but that is often exceeded. The constables attached to the department deal with the matter, but the

Mr. Power.]

time has now arrived when consideration must be given to the prohibition of parking in these streets at all. The traffic has increased enormously.

The institution of the police welfare club was well worth while. A very fine library in charge of Mr. Woodbury, a very capable man, is now at the disposal of members. This club is of great benefit to the force. Sports programmes are arranged at which the wives and children of policemen attend and thus share the opportunity of social intercourse and recreation. Criticism has been levelled at the liquor bar at the club. A constable after his arduous work is as entitled as any other person to some refreshment. The bar is properly controlled and under adequate supervision, and it is better that members of the force should get their drinks there than in public houses.

It is well that in admission to the force not only brains are considered. A certain number of horsemen are required to serve in parts of the State.

In the reorganisation of the force the Commissioner has made provision whereby men are not kept in the outback parts of the State for a great number of years. Previously it was a practice that because a policeman was a very good man for a certain station he was allowed to remain there for an indefinite period. That has been altered, and now, after serving a number of years at one station, a member is entitled to a transfer to one of the towns or cities. This gives his wife and children the opportunities to which they are entitled.

A valuable unit attached to the department is the motor garage at the Petrie Terrace Depot. As a result of the foresight of the Commissioner in having two competent "A" grade mechanics in charge of the repair work for police motor cars a good deal of money has been saved. The Government are running that unit rather than letting the work out to private enterprise. We know that the work will be done properly, as it is absolutely necessary that every attention should be paid to the smallest detail, because police cars have to stand up to very heavy work and anything that was overlooked might result in a very serious accident. Batteries of police cars that have been running at night time are recharged in this workshop.

Another innovation introduced this year was the campaign to make State school children traffic-minded. With that object in view certain officers of the department have delivered lectures to school children. I had the pleasure of attending one of them at the Petrie Terrace school. To quicken the interest taken by the kiddies in these lectures I gave two medals for essays upon the lectures delivered. I was amazed to see the fine efforts handed in by the children to their headmaster. The winning compositions have been published in the "Police Journal," and they show that the children who won the medals must have paid great attention to the remarks of Sub-Inspector Perrin.

There is greater co-operation to-day between members of the general public and officers of the force. For quite a number of years a policeman was regarded as an arch-enemy by the majority of our citizens, but to-day the majority regard him as their friend. It is a good thing that this co-operation has been brought about, and I pay a tribute to the Commissioner for the way

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in which he has selected his men and counselled them to win the confidence of the people.

Without unduly working the parish pump, I want to make reference to one other matter that concerns my electorate. Some time ago I made an inspection of the Petrie Terrace barracks, and I say quite candidly that I hope the Government will give serious consideration, as soon as money is available, to the construction of a new barracks.

The PREMIER: A beginning will be made this year.

Mr. POWER: I thank the Premier for his intimation. I was going to elaborate on the subject, but in view of his assurance it is unnecessary.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN (*Dalby*) [7.9 p.m.]: I notice that members of the police force are busily engaged at the present time collecting names for the electoral rolls. It is a little early, seeing that a State election does not take place until May next.

The PREMIER: How do you know?

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I wanted to get some indication from the Premier. I heard that in the event of a Labour Party win at the coming Federal elections the Premier was to spring the State elections on the country much sooner than expected. He asks me how I know. Well, a little bird told me something.

The PREMIER: You had better wring that little bird's neck.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I was told that the Premier would take advantage of the result of the Federal contest, but in the event of victory going against the Labour Party in Queensland and their losing three Senate seats and so on, he might bring on the elections after May.

The PREMIER: That election has no bearing on my time at all. I can assure the hon. member of that.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: We have heard that before. I have heard Premiers say they had no intention of bringing on elections sooner or later, but all of a sudden they seemed to make up their minds and the fact that their statements were in cold print did not affect the issue. They still did what they thought would be of advantage to their party.

The PREMIER: We will not do what your party did—remain in power long enough to qualify for a life pass.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: Whatever we did, we were justified in doing it. We acted in accordance with the law. I should like to know definitely whether it is the Premier's intention to spring the elections on us a little earlier.

The PREMIER: What do you think?

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I think that if the hon. gentleman finds that his party has had a sweeping victory in the Federal elections he will bring on the elections early in order to take advantage of the favourable atmosphere. The hon. gentleman knows what Mr. Dunstan did in Victoria and what many other Premiers have done in other parts of the Commonwealth. As a general rule they like to take advantage of the atmosphere, if it is favourable.

The PREMIER: You can be sure that you will get due notice.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I do not know so much about that. A few hon. members on the Government side are shivering in their shoes. They are more frightened of the next elections than I am. One never knows what will happen at the next election, but whatever the result may be, we have to grin and bear it.

We all recognise that the Queensland police force is a fine body of men. I do not go out of my way to smoothe to any section of the community simply because I may get some advantage by doing so. I treat them all entirely on their merits. I recognise that the Queensland police force is composed of fine men, who are endeavouring to do their duty in accordance with the oaths they have taken. My complaint is that I do not think it is fair for the Government to humiliate the police by not allowing them to do their duty. When this Parliament passes a Bill, and it becomes an Act, it is the duty of the police to prosecute if the law is broken. It is their duty to see that our laws are obeyed by all sections of the community. All sections must be treated alike. There should not be any favouritism. If the Government do not wish certain laws to be rigidly enforced, and if they do not want the police to prosecute anyone who breaks those laws, would it not be much better for the Government to pass an amending Act conforming to their wishes instead of telling the police to shut their eyes at any breaches of that law? The Minister can shake his head, but we have had evidence in the Industrial Court, in our Criminal Courts, and in other directions that the police are not allowed to carry out their duties in a certain respect. Only the other day a minister of religion said that if a policeman did his duty in a certain respect he would be transferred to Thargomindah or elsewhere out in the bush. I ask the Premier: Does he not think it better to be able to go into certain places if we so desire, and know that we are not breaking the law? Presumably the Government think that there is no harm in doing these things, but the people have to break the law to do them. The police know that the laws are being broken.

Mr. RIORDAN: How do you know?

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: The hon. member knows, everybody knows. It is silly to ask, "How do you know?" We all know that these laws are broken. I suppose 100 per cent. of the members of Parliament break the law themselves in that respect.

Mr. MAXWELL: No.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: The hon. member for Toowong says he does not agree. I guarantee that he has broken the law in that respect just as I have and the rest of the community.

Mr. MAXWELL: I do not go to pubs.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: The hon. member has misunderstood me. Is it not better in the interests of the morality of the police that the law should be obeyed? Is it a good thing that they should be told in some way or another that they must not do certain things, that they must allow the law to be broken in certain directions? There must be some instructions, otherwise the breach of the law would not be universally ignored. It takes place all over the State. The Government should not place the

police in such a humiliating position. We want to respect the police and we want to feel that they are always there to do their duty. Unfortunately, the law is disobeyed in certain respects throughout the State. In one case the reason given by a representative in court for breaking the law was, "I admit we broke the law, but the other people have also broken the law." The Judge said that two wrongs did not make a right. That was the excuse that was given—that others had broken the law, too. How can we expect the people to respect the law if one section can break it and another cannot? I think hon. members will agree that we should not allow the law to be broken indiscriminately.

Mr. TAYLOR: You must have been to Sunday school lately.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I was at church last Sunday, but that does not make any difference in this regard. I am prepared to take the political responsibility for what I say. I am prepared to take responsibility for any action that I may take on any Bill that the Government may introduce. I have always been prepared to do that. In the interests of the police we should amend a law that is not observed, and in the interests of the people, too, so that they may be as law-abiding as possible.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: What law?

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: The hon. member knows very well what law I mean. The people do not want to break the law, but it is broken every day.

I desire to congratulate the police on installing the traffic lights in Queen street, not that I am particularly interested in Queen street. It is a wonderful innovation, but, of course, they came from the good old State Victoria, where they were first tried out. I hope that the traffic lights will be installed in other streets, particularly Adelaide street.

As a part-time resident of Brisbane I should like to draw attention to the fact that after the Brisbane City Council has spent tens of thousands of pounds in widening Adelaide street, the extra width is being used solely for the parking of motor cars, and pedestrians do not get any benefit. One hon. member said that they were not permitted to park for more than half an hour, but I think the cars remain there all day. They may not be allowed to park for more than half an hour in Queen street, but I do not think there is any genuine attempt to move them on. I do not think that there should be any parking allowed at all round the busy block comprising part of Queen street, Edward street, Adelaide street, and Albert street.

I do not think they allow it in certain streets in Sydney and Melbourne. This is a capital city and it should not be allowed irrespective of whether we offend some store-keeper or shopkeeper who says, "It interferes with my business if you do not allow cars to park in front of my shop, because the customers go elsewhere." The block bounded by Queen street, George street, Albert street, and Edward street has become the shopping centre of this city. It is essential that we should take a stand in this matter, no matter whether it pleases.

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individuals, and we should not allow parking in those streets.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: If we went back to the horse, would you advocate hitching rails?

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: In certain places, but not in the main streets. The Government should take a definite stand in this matter, in conjunction with the council. I think something should be done quickly, and if my suggestion was carried out the people—even those who now object—would appreciate its advantages.

Mr. DUGGAN (*Toowoomba*) [7.25 p.m.]: I desire to take advantage of this vote to draw attention to a matter that is exercising the minds of a considerable section of the people in the electorate of Toowoomba and the adjoining electorates. I refer to the system of parking in vogue in Toowoomba, which is thought by the people of that city to be against the best interests of the city. In the reports of the Commissioner of Police for this and last year he draws attention to the fact that the police are called upon to discharge fifty-four subsidiary duties, although, of course, they are not called upon to discharge them at one time.

Traffic control is one of ever-increasing importance. In 1934 the Commissioner of Police decided to establish a subsection of the police force to deal with this problem. Some indication of the growth of traffic in Queensland can be gained from the fact that on 30th June, 1930, 80,403 motor vehicles were registered, and at 30th June this year the number had increased to 113,432, of which 37,255 were in the metropolitan traffic district. The Commissioner of Police shows in his reports to Parliament that he has been impressed with the need of overcoming the problems of traffic control. I propose to quote from his report for the purpose of building up a case in support of the contention of the Toowoomba citizens that there should be a reversion to a system of angle parking in that city.

In his report the Commissioner says that the purpose of traffic by-laws is to control and regulate such traffic by rules and regulations for the purpose of promoting traffic circulation and public safety. Valuable work in this direction has been performed from time to time. Certain conditions and certain regulations have been laid down that have facilitated the circulation of traffic and increased the safety of the public. The establishment of one-way traffic, the abolition of right-hand turns, a limitation of time in the parking of vehicles, and automatic traffic signals are some of the measures that have been put into operation to control and regulate traffic. Despite these regulations traffic problems present an ever-increasing responsibility to the Police Department. In his report for 1936 the Commissioner of Police says—

“It would appear that the time is not far distant when uniform traffic laws will be required for the whole of the State, modified, of course, to suit conditions existing at certain outside centres.”

So impressed was the Commissioner with the need for these remarks that a similar statement appears in his report this year, namely, that such regulations should be

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modified to suit the convenience of outside centres. Toowoomba has been exempted from the benefits of this recommendation—inasmuch as the police in Toowoomba refused to accede to the wishes of the people there for a system of angle parking.

In reply to a deputation that waited on the Commissioner some months ago he said that in determining a system of traffic regulation in any city the following factors should be taken into consideration—

- (a) Free circulation;
- (b) Safety;
- (c) Economics.

He said, furthermore, that the primary use of the roadway is for the passage of the public and the parking of vehicles causes a diminution of road space provided for this purpose, and in the main and busy thoroughfares is quite a serious obstruction to the free flow of traffic.

I contend that those factors, while they are important, are not of decisive importance in Toowoomba. Toowoomba has a population of 27,000, and is the centre of one of the most important districts in the State and is dependent almost entirely on the attraction of trade in order that the community may progress and the city may expand. Toowoomba contains no secondary industries of any major importance. It is a city in the centre of a very rich district, depending upon the trade attracted to it from the outlying centres. Therefore, if the system of parking is found to be inconvenient by the purchasing public, the police department should take cognisance of the demand of the people in that centre and endeavour to meet their wishes.

There are approximately 7,000 licensed cars in Toowoomba. The streets are wide and there are no trams, consequently the same problems are not common to Toowoomba and the metropolitan area.

It is claimed that by the angle system of parking accommodation for 250 additional cars can be provided in the main streets, and that is a very important factor from a business point of view. At one time there was a lack of unanimity amongst the Toowoomba people as to the best system of parking, but now they are 100 per cent.—both the trading community and the people generally—in favour of a reversion to the angle system of parking.

Clearly there is no analogy between Toowoomba and Brisbane in this respect. The Commissioner in his report recognises the fact, for he says—

“The large number of motor vehicles in the metropolitan area together with fixed trams and the narrowness of the street present an ever-increasing problem.”

Therefore, some flexibility in traffic law is needed to meet the changing traffic conditions.

This vote gives me an opportunity of voicing this request on behalf of the citizens of Toowoomba, and I hope that the Commissioner of Police will take some notice of it, as I can assure him that, as a member of Parliament, I have no desire to be regarded as parochial in bringing under notice in this Committee matters of primary concern to the Toowoomba district.

It might be claimed that these regulations should apply to Toowoomba for the sake of uniformity. Good work has been done by this Government in amending the State Transport Act and taking power to introduce regulations for the control of traffic. Eighteen towns throughout the State have been declared traffic districts, but no uniformity has been enforced under those regulations in all these districts, and it is wrong and untrue to suggest that Toowoomba is not peculiarly suited for angle parking. The streets in Warwick are much narrower than those in Toowoomba, but the angle system of parking prevails there as it does at Southport, and certain other towns in the State in which it is a matter of mutual arrangement between police and the citizens.

I hope the Commissioner will view this not as a matter introduced by myself from the narrow parochial point of view, but on behalf of the 27,000 citizens of Toowoomba who are unanimous in their desire for a reversion to the system I have indicated. On his next visit to Toowoomba he will receive a deputation, which I hope will be introduced by the hon. member for East Toowoomba and myself, and I trust that he will give consideration to the claims it will advance and will do everything possible to accede to its request.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Maackay*) [7.35 p.m.]: Before replying to the speeches and criticism of hon. members on this vote, I must say that I appreciate the general commendation from hon. members on both sides of the Committee of the police force of Queensland. Our police force is a body of men of whom we can be justly proud and who compare favourably with similar police forces in any other part of the Commonwealth.

The hon. member for Isis raised the question of the police welfare club. This is an institution that the Government have encouraged. We believe it to be desirable that the police force should have a club of this kind and arrange and maintain their own forms of diversion. The suggestion has been made that the charges involved by the operation of that club are on consolidated revenue, but that is not so. One constable is detailed for certain duties there. That is the only charge to the Government.

I remind the hon. member, if he complains, that no new principle is involved here, because the police as an organised body cannot be regarded as in the same category as other employees. Take, for example, the military and naval forces. They have canteens of their own, run by soldiers or sailors, as the case may be. If there is any large detachment of men there is usually a sergeant in control of the canteen. Speaking from memory, the sergeants used to take it for a month each in turn, and it was regarded as a privilege to get a month in charge of a canteen. It was a Crown charge. The basis of the maintenance of a canteen is to allow men to have a legitimate diversion during their leisure hours and be able to obtain refreshment under disciplinary control without the necessity of going to a place of public resort. That is the whole basis of this club.

I also remind the hon. member that the profits of this club are spent entirely upon police welfare. The club employs a librarian and, I understand, another employee on the

premises, who are a charge against its own fund, not a charge against the Crown at all. I have not had the pleasure of seeing it, but I have been informed the library the club is building up is excellent in character, and the opportunity to use the books is eagerly availed of, particularly by the younger constables. This library enables members of the force to study law, court procedure, and all things generally affecting the duty of a policeman. This is a thing to be encouraged in every possible way. Nobody who knows anything about this club can legitimately criticise any of its operations.

In regard to police art unions, I understand that policemen sell tickets in their spare time. I have never seen policemen hawking tickets. The hon. member suggested that a commission was paid, but surely he knows that it is the usual practice to have an odd ticket in each book of art union tickets. It is the practice of men selling tickets in support of an institution they are interested in to pay in money for all tickets, and I am quite satisfied this is being done with regard to the Queensland police force's art unions. Whether it is so or not it is a matter for themselves to decide, and we have no right to be continually interfering in the business of a body of men who are well capable of controlling their own affairs.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Baroona raised the question of traffic control. This is a problem in Brisbane to-day, as it is in other cities of the world. It is a problem that is largely due to the use of motor cars, because a very large number of persons—a high percentage of our population—use motor cars to go to and between their homes and places of business; and others have to use cars in the course of their business. The problem of parking has become acute in busy centres. If a row of cars is parked on each side of the street the width of the street for ordinary traffic is reduced by the combined width of the two rows. In many cities that I have seen, private enterprise has established very fine parking stations. In some places you drive in, your car is placed in a lift and taken up several storeys into the air. I regard that as being a fair and legitimate enterprise. It is very interesting to know that hon. members opposite always suggest that the costly things should be a charge upon the State and the profitable things should go to private enterprise. But there are good parking stations in Brisbane and elsewhere, and I suggest that no car driver would grudge paying a reasonable fee in order to feel satisfied that his car will be looked after and kept in a place of safety.

Mr. MAHER: It cost me 2s. the other day.

The PREMIER: I have never been faced with the necessity of doing that.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN interjected

The PREMIER: Sometimes, but I generally pay 1s. In Melbourne, where they have very wide streets, in many centres the municipalities charge a fee. There are many spaces marked off where motor cars may be parked for half a day or a day, and they employ collectors to issue tickets whose duty it is to see that no unauthorised person moves, takes away, or disturbs those cars. I presume that the Melbourne City Council obtains a fair amount of revenue in that

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way. The streets of Brisbane, unfortunately, are not wide enough to permit of that extended parking. That problem is due to the narrowing of already narrow streets by the present system of parking. This is a problem that will have to be overcome, and it will necessitate the erection of buildings wherein a number of cars can be parked, several storeys in the air, as in other countries.

I think that the best and most reliable system of traffic control is that of the coloured lights. I have held that opinion ever since I first made a study of the problem. It takes a little time for the public to be educated in the method, but once it comes into general use it means complete safety to pedestrians and greater safety to motorists. Even in the small villages of England the green, yellow, and red lights are in general use. As a matter of fact, if one knows the regulations about right and left-hand turns and one-way traffic it is easier, by means of those lights, to drive a car in crowded London than it is to drive one in Sydney, because the driver knows that if he goes by the light he is perfectly safe in going right ahead.

With regard to the Toowoomba problem, I suggest that the hon. member for East Toowoomba and the hon. member for Toowoomba take up that matter with the Commissioner of Police on his forthcoming visit. He will be found to be quite sympathetic on that matter, but it is a question of public safety and the space available. I quite agree that parking on an angle is better for the general public. Under that system cars can be moved away quicker than under the system of having to pass another car and then back in. It is frequently very difficult to drive a car out under such circumstances. The system of angular parking tends to make for greater mobility. The cars are simply backed out, a turn taken, and they are then on the main highway for their destination.

The hon. member for Dalby was somewhat facetious, but he was quite refreshing, and I like to hear him in that mood. If he is perturbed in mind I desire to assure him that there is no intention on the part of the Government to rush on the State elections after the Federal elections. Whatever the results of the Federal election on 23rd October next, it will in no way affect the Government's plans concerning the State elections. It has been said by a much wiser man than I that faith is so strong that it can even move mountains, and my faith in the people of this country is unbounded. I have no fear of facing the intelligent electors of the country on any occasion, so that there is no need for us to be perturbed about these things. I agree with the hon. member, however, that the people have the right to give their decision, and it should be accepted with as much grace as possible. Above all, let us see to it that we neither gloat over a victory nor whine in a defeat. The public should decide these things, and we accept their decision without any heartburning or repining. I repeat that I have every reason to believe that the people of Queensland recognise the value of good and faithful service.

The hon. member referred to the humiliation of the police. Personally, I never like to humiliate anyone. I have never tried to hurt anyone's feelings in my life. It has never been necessary for me as Premier to

issue any instructions of any kind to the police. In reply to a question in this Chamber the other day I said that the police knew their duty, that they knew the law under which they had to operate, and that if they had any doubt at all they could seek advice from the Crown Law Office. They require no instructions of any kind from the Government of the day as to whether they should enforce the law. In any event, I have never issued any instructions to the police. The hon. member was referring more particularly to breaches of the liquor laws.

Everyone realises that some laws are broken, but that is no reason why all laws should be abolished. We have a very valuable Criminal Code drafted by the late Sir Samuel Griffith and the late Mr. Justice Woolcock, but because the Criminal Code is frequently broken that is no reason why it should be altered. The police have not had any instruction from the Government in the direction indicated. However, I should like to call the attention of the hon. member to the prosecutions during the last year of the Moore Government. There were only twenty-four, but last year there were 337. So that it is quite obvious that during the period of the Labour Government more activity has been displayed in this direction than when the hon. member was a member of a Government.

The problems associated with the liquor laws are difficult in any country. There are some persons who believe in complete prohibition. There are others who believe in various forms of regulation. They take the view that mankind may be improved in general habits by Acts of Parliament, their argument being that man will be better if it is made less easy to do wrong. There is a very wide divergence of opinion in the community about these things. I take the view that the liquor laws are as well carried out in Queensland as in any other State in the Commonwealth. There is at least this advantage, that any breaches of the law that may take place are generally committed by seasoned drinkers, and young people are not learning those habits.

There has been a vast change in the habits of the people in Queensland over the last twenty or thirty years. You very seldom see a canecutter or a shearer knocking down a cheque in the way we knew many years ago. That is due to a number of circumstances. It is partly the result of better education and a better understanding of the relative importance of things and partly to a generally better standard of living. People nowadays have more amenities than many years ago. There are places of entertainment to go to that did not exist then. Altogether, in a civilised community there is a tendency to refrain from indulging in habits that were very common in days that are past.

My own view on these matters is that it is far better to teach the young people that it is better not to do things, than say to them, "You must not do it." There is an element of philosophy in that view that I commend to hon. members. If you prove to a person that it is wrong to do a certain thing, you get a better reception than if you tell him, "You must not do it." In a book recently published, consisting of essays dealing with problems of the day, Havelock Ellis has a very fine chapter

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dealing with the use of narcotics in a civilised community. He points out that where people are told that they must not do this or they must not do that, there is a psychological reaction against that attempt at control.

Be that as it may, whatever view one may hold of these problems, it is a fact that there has been in recent years a very vast improvement in the habits of the people of this country. In a democracy the law is based always on the consent of the people. A law that is outside the sanction of a large majority of the people is more liable to be broken than a law that has the sanction of that majority.

It takes time to train the community in a proper observance of the laws to which the hon. member referred, and it is very difficult to enforce it. That has been recognised for many years. I can remember the late Mr. George Appel, as Home Secretary, introducing the Liquor Act of 1912 and pointing out that there were many clauses in that Act under which no one would be safe—if effect was given to them. For instance, if one called at a hotel after hours to see someone living there, he could be regarded as being illegally on the premises and be subjected to close questioning by a policeman. So that, of course, all law must be administered intelligently. If the law was carried out rigidly and merely on the basis of the letter of the law, forms of tyranny would spring up.

For example, take the police force. A policeman in certain circumstances may be justified and is empowered to use such force as may be necessary to arrest a recalcitrant person. He is armed for that purpose, but he is not given an open license to go round and whack anybody on the head who is going about his lawful vocation. So it is in regard to law generally; intelligence must always be exercised. Take, for example, traffic laws in any city. Where, in this Parliament, is there a motorist, a man who knows how to drive a car, who can say he has never broken a traffic law? Just imagine a man trying to travel on low gear at four miles an hour at the busy time on to the Victoria Bridge when the policeman waves you on! I can imagine what a certain red-headed sergeant, who for many years did that work very well at that place, would have said under such circumstances. Generally speaking, as mankind improves, and the benefit of organised society is recognised, we have a more law-abiding people than in the past. And the people of Queensland generally are law-abiding.

I do not think there is any other matter that has been raised on the vote that calls for reply. I repeat on behalf of the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs and on my own behalf that I appreciate the valuable work done by the Commissioner and all ranks of the police in this State.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*) [7.57 p.m.]: I have found the Commissioner's report very interesting. He has dealt with a large number of subjects, particularly the organisation of the force, the training of its members, the system of lectures, and the library, where they can get books to aid them in studying the law that they need to use in their occupation.

I agree with the hon. member for Toowoomba on the question of angle parking in

that city. That system would accommodate far more cars, and be infinitely more convenient to the people, and I think there would be far less risk of accident than there is to-day. The angle parking that was in operation at one time in Toowoomba was far more convenient, and I do not see any good reason for the alteration.

I should like to get a little information as to the standing of men who call themselves car attendants in the streets of Brisbane. Are they registered by the police, or by whom are they controlled? Whenever you go to the city at night and get out of your car and leave it in the street for five minutes you find somebody minding it when you come back who expects to be paid 1s. for his work.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: There is no obligation to pay.

Mr. MOORE: I know there is no obligation to pay, but, after all, one does not like to appear mean, and I want to know who authorises them? Has anyone the right to go out and put a white coat on and call himself a car attendant? Do they have a training for the position, or do the police register a certain number, and it is necessary for them to have any qualifications as to character? Do the police make investigations before they are allowed to carry on the occupation? At times I think they are very useful.

The PREMIER: All the men are now registered by the traffic office.

Mr. WELLINGTON: Some will mind it if they get a tray bit. (Laughter.)

Mr. MOORE: I want information on car-minders because several people have asked me if they are authorised and who authorises them and whether any investigation is made into their character.

The PREMIER: They have a badge.

Mr. MOORE: I was not sure of the author of those badges. The Premier passed very lightly over the question of breaches of the Liquor Laws. The following is an extract from a report of a hearing in the Industrial Court:—

“Mr. Skehan contended that in regard to legal trading hours the breweries had taken direct action. They shut the front door and opened the back,” he said, “and we are doing the same.”

“Mr. Ferry: But two wrongs don't make a right.

“Mr. Skehan: The breweries opened their hotels until 11 o'clock at night, and the police dare not go in. I have often asked a policeman to go into a hotel with me, but they will not do it. I say there is no reason given in the applicants affidavit why the award should be cancelled.”

Later, Mr. Skehan said—

“They are as much concerned about keeping the law as anyone else. The men are determined on a showdown in respect of the hotels controlled by these people and to stop trading until 11 p.m. Outside the Brisbane area they are open on Sundays, too. There is one law for the breweries and one for the grocer.”

In his endeavours to tilt at the late Government the Premier did not bother to look up the actual figures in the police report. He merely took one quotation from

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page 10, and he said that in the last year of the Moore Government there were twenty-four prosecutions, and in the last year of the administration of this Government the number was 337. That is quite incorrect. The hon. gentleman took only the prosecutions against licensed victuallers in 1931-32, and all prosecutions in 1936-37. If he refers to the table he will find that the convictions are—

Licensed victuallers	34
Agent of licensed victualler ...	8
Private persons	200
Illicit sales	78
Total	320

Adopting this same method for calculating the number of prosecutions in the last year of the Moore Government it will be found that the number was 436. This merely shows that the problem is not new and it becomes necessary to go back to see what has been going on over a number of years, and you will find that the present Government were far less active than previous ones. I find that the number of prosecutions are as follows:—

	Licencees.	Other than Licencees.	Total.
1924-25 ...	117	1,109	1,226
1925-26 ...	115	1,103	1,218
1926-27 ...	90	867	957
1927-28 ...	86	891	977
1928-29 ...	66	858	924
1929-30 ...	66	916	982
1930-31 ...	29	638	667
1931-32 ...	23	396	419
1932-33 ...	9	237	246
1933-34 ...	50	315	365
1934-35 ...	71	206	277
1935-36 ...	40	161	201
1936-37 ...	34	200	234

The Premier said that in the administration of the liquor or any other law it is a question of having the bulk of the people with you, that they have to be agreeable to the law and if not, it should be amended. He also said that it takes a long time for the people to become used to a thing. Well, this has been going on for a long time and it seems to me that it is wrong when we find a definite statement made in the Industrial Court by responsible men, that indicates that either the police are being demoralised and are not taking the necessary action to cope with the breaches or that the law should be altered. It appears to me wrong to be continually getting—

The PREMIER: What do you suggest?

Mr. MOORE: Either the Act should be amended and the hours of trading extended to a definite time, so that after that no further business will be done, or the present laws should be strictly enforced. This difficulty occurred in the case of shop betting. If we stick to the present hours then we shall have to have a sufficient number of police to see that the law is obeyed. I do not like to see a law being openly flouted, and the present position really amounts to that. It is not only this law that is being flouted, but we know that other laws will be flouted with impunity.

The PREMIER: That is true. If one law is not carried out all laws are likely to be regarded with contempt.

Mr. MOORE: We found the position was the same, more or less, with regard to shop

[Mr. Moore.

betting. There was an open flouting of the law, and it was more or less brought into contempt. The Premier recognises the desirability, even the necessity, for definite action. Definite action should be taken if the people are against a limitation of hours. It would be better to have the present law amended because it would be better for the people to see that the law is obeyed and see policemen carry out their duties than have continual evasion.

This is not a new subject. We have heard of resolutions passed by various organisations connected with the liquor trade. We have had the spectacle of the Liquor Trades Union sending circulars around to members of Parliament objecting to the overtime being worked in hotels after trading hours. Definite statements have been made to the public about the matter, and, as quoted, authoritative statements have been made in the courts, and when it reaches that stage it is about time we made up our minds to see that the law is kept or alter the law and see that it is obeyed. It would be better to have an extension of hours beyond 8 o'clock than have a continual breaking of the law. The principle is wrong.

Fairly successful efforts have been made to enforce the law on several occasions. It is evident that in 1924-25 and in 1925-26 stringent attempts were made, because of the number of prosecutions at that time.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Do you support hotels opening until 11 p.m.?

Mr. MOORE: I support any movement to allow the people to have what is necessary. I do not like hotels being open until eleven at night, but I prefer them to remain open till eleven than to see the law continually disobeyed. I would rather see the front door of a hotel open than see people going in by the side door. I recognise that the closing of hotels at eight o'clock is a very good thing for a large number of people. I should like to see the present hours strictly adhered to. As a matter of fact, it is after eight o'clock that most of our trouble occurs. At present the law is winked at, and people can walk into hotels quite openly. I quoted an instance in this Chamber some time ago showing how prominent this matter was becoming. I gave an instance in which a certain hotel advertised on the screen at a leading theatre, "Come and have a spot during the interval. Only the best brands of liquor kept."

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: It was in the afternoon.

Mr. MOORE: No; it was not in the afternoon. It was in the evening, and the interval was at 9.30 p.m. An advertisement came on the screen inviting people to have a spot during interval. That shows there is open contempt for the law, and I think it is a bad principle in any country. As I said, I would rather have an extension of hours than have the position continue as it is at present. The police dare not interfere. As the Premier said to-night—I agree with him—we have an efficient body of police in Queensland. The State can be proud of them and they are carrying out their duties well in all parts of the State, many of them under difficulty, but as regards trading of hotels they are hamstrung. We do not want to make their tasks more difficult than necessary, and we should not place them in an invidious position.

That is the attitude I take up. I would rather have the law kept under proper supervision than go on in the way we are doing at present. The doors are shut at a certain hour, but the police are evidently powerless to act in cases of breaches. That, at any rate, seems to be the position in which they are placed to-day. It is demoralising to them, and it is demoralising to the community. For those reasons I much prefer an alteration. I recognise the difficulty. I have noticed how the people evaded the law in other parts of Australia, but they did not infringe nearly to the same extent. I remember what they did in Victoria where the hotels are compelled to close at 6 o'clock. There the people got round it to a certain extent by obtaining keys and pretending they had rooms in the hotel.

Mr. JESSON: Did you do that?

Mr. MOORE: I did not do it, because I was staying in the hotel. It was not necessary for me to do that, but people got keys in order to have the excuse, if they happened to be caught and questioned, that they were staying in the hotel, and that these were the keys to their rooms. Unfortunately, I think that it has got beyond that in this State.

The problem exists not only in Brisbane, but throughout Queensland. I remember one morning when I was up North in the train some years ago. I was not feeling very well when I got to Townsville, so I asked the station-master if there was any chance of getting some brandy. He said, "I think if you go over to the hotel at the corner and knock three times on the side door someone will come down and get it for you." When I got over there there was such a row in the bar—there were about fifty people drinking—that I did not think it necessary to knock on the door.

The PREMIER: That was when you were in power?

Mr. MOORE: No. But it makes no difference who was in power. When I was in power there was a great shortage of national wealth in Queensland as well as in the rest of Australia, and people did not have the same amount of money to spend on drink then as they had previously, and as they had later. The Premier will see that in 1932-33 there were only nine prosecutions against licensed victuallers, as against thirty-four in 1936-37.

There are other factors that enter into the question besides laxity in the administration of the law. I am dealing with the question as a whole, and I think that from the points of view of the law-abiding citizen and of respect for the law it is much better either to have the law enforced rigidly and to appoint enough policemen to do it, or else amend the Act and enable the drinking to be done legally, as it is in the daytime. From that point of view I should welcome any alteration in the present position.

As far as gambling is concerned, the Commissioner in his annual report says—

"It is reasonably certain that organised gambling, which existed particularly in North Queensland, has been eliminated.

"Off-the-course betting, which had been a serious problem for many years, has been brought definitely under control since the enactment of 'The Racecourses

Amendment Act of 1936.' It has not been totally eliminated, as this is not possible until such time as law-breakers are denied the use of the telephone.

"During the year 547 prosecutions under the Gambling and Anti-gambling Laws have been instituted throughout the State. The total fines and costs amounted to £4,333 16s., and a total sum of £49 5s. 1d. taken possession of was forfeited to the Crown."

It was made an offence for the proprietor of a hotel to allow gambling in his hotel, and he therefore took good care that it did not go on in his establishment. Drinking after hours could be controlled just as gambling could be controlled if a definite attempt were made by the Government to eliminate it. The practice is just as illegal as gambling, and I think that the Government would be quite justified in either amending the Act or making a definite drive to see that the law is properly observed.

The cases before the court for drunkenness in 1936-37 numbered 9,800 males and 656 females, or a total of 10,456, whilst in 1932 5,499 males and 621 females were prosecuted, or a total for that year of 6,120 cases. There is a difference there of 4,336 in the number of prosecutions for drunkenness. I am not concerned about drunkenness at the moment, as that is merely an offshoot from the main question. I am not worried about the soaker, who goes into a hotel and gets drunk. I am worried about the younger generation who may be tempted away from milk bars to go into hotels if they are allowed to trade for long hours. If there is any laxity in the administration of the law with regard to hotels these young folk may be tempted to go there for a drink, not because they want the drink but because perhaps it looks better and creates a better impression amongst their fellows if they are seen going through the side door of a hotel instead of into a milk bar. The question is: What is best to be done in the interests of the community? I do not think that the best thing is to leave matters as they stand to-day, especially when definite statements are made from time to time to the effect that the law is openly flouted. It would be infinitely better to have the law properly enforced; and it can be done. The Government have done it in connection with gambling. Therefore, they should decide either to amend the law or to enforce it strictly.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay) [8.17 p.m.]: I was rather amused with the self-righteous attitude of the hon. member for Aubigny on this question. One would think that prosecution for breaches of the Liquor Act was a new thing, and that during his period of office it did not exist. I take this opportunity of reminding the hon. gentleman that the liquor laws are better observed now than they were when he was in power. The hon. gentleman, in the exercise of his authority as Premier, has withdrawn prosecutions.

Mr. MOORE: No, I did not.

The PREMIER: Has given instructions to the Commissioner of Police—

Mr. MOORE: I beg your pardon!

The PREMIER: On 30th October, 1929, to withdraw a prosecution at Helidon.

Mr. MOORE: No—you will pardon me!

Hon. W. Forgan Smith.]

The PREMIER: It is on the file.

Mr. MOORE: If you will read the letter you will see—

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman made representations—

Mr. MOORE: Yes, I did.

The PREMIER: To the Commissioner of Police.

Mr. MOORE: Yes.

The PREMIER: For a case listed for prosecution—

Mr. MOORE: Yes.

The PREMIER: At Helidon on 30th October, 1929, and as a result of his representations that prosecution was withdrawn.

Mr. MOORE: You read the letter.

The PREMIER: I have read it.

Mr. MOORE: Do not say that I gave instructions, because I did not.

The PREMIER: There is no need for the hon. member for Aubigny to bask in the radiance of his own righteousness, either in regard to these things or to anything else.

The present position cannot be allowed to continue indefinitely. (Hear, hear!) I take the view that the matter is one for sound investigation at the present time, and it is being investigated. My experience in different parts of the world is that rigid control does not always give the result that its sponsors desire. In either France or Italy spirituous liquors, wines, or beer can be obtained at almost any hour of the day or night. In England during the Coronation festivities bars were opened almost all night, but there were very few prosecutions for drunkenness. In some parts of England the closing hour is 11 o'clock at night and in other parts midnight. Usually the hotels are opened in the morning, and remain open until 2 o'clock p.m., when they close down until 5 o'clock p.m., and in the centre of London are open again from 5 o'clock p.m. until midnight. On Sundays they are open from noon to 2 p.m., and again from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., and in some districts 11 p.m. I saw less evidence of excessive drinking in England than I did in other countries where the liquor laws were applied more rigidly. That may be due to the different temperaments of the different races.

Mr. MOORE: It may be due, too, to what they drink. That makes a difference.

The PREMIER: There is no variation in what the people drink in the places I am referring to.

Mr. MAHER: Some of the Latin races prefer light wines.

The PREMIER: That does not apply to any particular race. For example, the Englishman is often regarded as a very big beer drinker. As a matter of fact, if you take up the statistics you will find that the drinking of ardent spirits in England is just as widespread as in any other country. If you look at the statistics in Australia you will also find that there has been a falling off in the consumption of whisky, but not in the consumption of gin.

Mr. MOORE: That is because the cost of whisky is rather heavy.

The PREMIER: There has been an increase in the consumption of gin. The habits of the people in any country are very much the same. The temperaments of the

various races may have some bearing on the subject, but in those countries I refer to, particularly France and Italy, there was virtually freedom to drink at any time. There did not appear to be any breaches of the peace or any scandal of any kind in consequence.

Of course, the sponsors of early closing claim that thereby the young person is prevented from learning the habit of drinking late at night. They have their case, and that case has to be investigated. I am prepared to hear argument on those matters at any time. The conclusion is to be drawn that because the law has fixed the trading hours for hotels at from 8 o'clock in the morning until 8 o'clock in the evening, it is like the law of the Medes and Persians—permanent and unalterable. If it is in the public interest either to reduce those hours, or lengthen them, or give a different spread of hours, then it should be the subject of investigation.

Again, there is a certain amount of drinking in hotel lounges that is frequently regarded as illegal drinking, whereas it is perfectly legal.

Mr. MAHER: After 8 o'clock at night?

The PREMIER: Yes. If the hon. gentleman is living at a hotel he can entertain the hon. member for Dalby after 8 o'clock at night if he wishes.

Mr. MAHER: But if I am not living there?

The PREMIER: If the hon. gentleman is living at the hotel, he can entertain his guests, because that is his home. He is then assumed to be in the same position as a person in his own home who has the right to produce a decanter. If he is living in a hotel and the hon. member for Dalby calls on him after 8 o'clock at night he is perfectly justified under the law in shouting for him. In fact, he would be justified in entertaining him to his heart's desire.

Mr. MOORE: He would not be justified in shouting in return. (Laughter.)

The PREMIER: Does the hon. gentleman suggest that he never does? I do not suggest for a moment that the hon. member for Dalby is a man of that kind. (Renewed laughter.)

It is lawful for a man living in a hotel to entertain his guests. That is a fact that is not generally known. That applies to all lounges in all hotels in Queensland, and in many other States also.

This is a matter to which hon. members should apply their minds. If Parliament expresses a desire for an alteration, then I am quite prepared to hear argument on the matter.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*) [8.25 p.m.]: In common with other hon. members I offer my congratulations to our very fine police force.

Having a severe cold I did not intend to speak on this vote, but I feel that I should be wanting in my duty if I did not reply to some of the statements that have been made by hon. members. In the first place I desire to congratulate the police for the efficient manner in which they have administered the new traffic system of red, yellow, and green lights, but I wish to draw the attention of the Commissioner, through the Minister, to the congestion of traffic that takes place in various parts of the city at

[Hon. W. Forgan Smith.]

various periods, particularly in the early hours of the morning. At about a quarter to 8 the other morning I counted seventy-three people who were waiting to cross the street at the corners of Edward and Queen streets. The same congestion takes place at other crossings in the city. I realise the difficulty confronting the police, and I compliment them on the patience they have shown in administering the new traffic law. I can assure you, Mr. Hanson, that dictionary on the table does not contain some of the expressions used by people when the new traffic law came into operation and they were called back when they were half way across the street. I had an amusing experience. I proceeded to cross the road, quite forgetting the traffic lights, and I walked into the arms of the Commissioner of Police. He will tell you what I said. I wish to draw the attention of the Commissioner to the fact that when the green light appears—

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Why pick the green light?

Mr. MAXWELL: Because it is the sign to cross. When that light appears people rush across the roadway, and at the same time I have seen motor cars coming round the corner quickly. It is a wonder to me that a serious accident has not occurred as a result of this dangerous practice.

We are to be congratulated on having such a fine body of men as the police force to protect us, both while we are asleep and while we are awake. I cannot believe the statement that was made by Mr. Skehan in the Industrial Court. He should be called upon to substantiate his statement. A man occupying his position has no right to make a statement to the effect that these men have received instructions not to do certain things. We all know it would be a silly thing to give that instruction. We know you may look with your blind eye, but to go round and tell the men they are not to do anything and allow an "open slather" is another matter. No man should make such a statement unless he can bring proof of it. I do not think it is possible for such a thing to happen, and I do not think that any Minister would be silly enough to do it.

This evening we had a dissertation from the Premier, who took up the cudgels on behalf of the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs and told us of the conditions existing in other lands. He drew attention to the absolute necessity for people to obey the law. I must say I felt disappointment at some of his remarks. He led me to believe that if the people would not obey the law there was only one thing to do: to amend the law in such a way that they would be able to do what they wanted to do.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay): I rise to a point of order. I did not say what the hon. member attributes to me. It was an hon. member on his own side of the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Toowong must accept the denial of the hon. gentleman.

Mr. MAXWELL: I always do. I am not a fool. I can always read between the lines. The suggestion was that the hon. gentleman was open to reason—"Put for-

ward your suggestion and if Parliament approves I will give effect to it."

The PREMIER: I said I was prepared to hear argument.

Mr. MAXWELL: Yes, I know. (Laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MAXWELL: If the law is being broken and if the position is such as we have heard from the Premier and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, why are those persons that have broken the law not prosecuted? The baker who sells a loaf of bread on a Sunday is prosecuted and in some instances fined £2.

Mr. KANE: Some of the hotels are.

Mr. MAXWELL: Very few of them. The position is that if because of the speeches made to-night by hon. members on both sides of the Committee the liquor trade gets to work and demands an alteration of the hours of hotel trading because the people want it—a section of the people may want it—what is to prevent other sections of the trading community from breaking the law in respect of the hours of trading? Would they not be justified in doing so?

Undoubtedly it opens up an avenue beset with difficulty. The law stands and offenders against it must be prosecuted. Certainly there are laws on the statute-book with which we may not agree, but we must obey them. It does not follow that because we do not agree with them we should defy them. Hotels should not be allowed to sell liquor outside the prescribed trading hours. I stress the point that this Committee should give very serious consideration to the question before in any way suggesting an extension of hotel trading hours.

I know that it has been said that Brisbane is a very sober city. I know that on holidays and other times I have not seen so much drunkenness about, night time or day time, as there used to be. There seems to be an element of sobriety about the place. Women can walk down the streets now quite safely, with no thought of being insulted. Extend your hotel hours, Mr. Hanson, and decent men will be made indecent by filling themselves up with liquor, and they will undoubtedly forget that they are men. I hope that the Premier will not encourage the submission of any request from any section of the community to alter the present law. This law has been in force for a number of years. I know, as others know—there is no secret about it—that no law ever was passed that some people did not find fault with. Was there ever a liquor law passed when men did not say, "This is a nice how-do-you-do—a man can't go and get shickered." It is necessary for the protection of our people to have the law obeyed, and, as the Premier has said, particularly is it important to have temptation removed from the rising generation. There is temptation, there is no doubt about it. I sincerely hope that the Premier will not give encouragement to a section of the community to come forward with a request to have the present law extended.

The PREMIER: I was only replying to a statement made by the hon. member for Aubigny.

Mr. MAXWELL: That is only an excuse. The Premier does not always fall in with

Mr. Maxwell.]

suggestions made by the Opposition. This is something that the Premier agrees with or else he would not have said what he did. I hope wiser counsels will prevail. I say if this movement is started the Government will have a merry time. The Premier will pull down the whole edifice if he starts to introduce a later closing hour for hotels in this city.

Mr. JESSON (*Kennedy*) [8.38 p.m.] The hon. member for Toowong started off on the lights and finished up in the soft-drink shop. He did not listen to speeches made by the Premier and other members of his party in this Chamber. What is there to stop a man from having a glass of beer at any time? Why force him to have a drink of milk, ginger beer, or a cup of tea or coffee? We say this is a democratic country. In countries of the world controlled by Fascists men can have their choice. As the Premier aptly said, people are not drinking to the extent they used to, nor are they as foolish with their money as they were. There is no reason, if the Deputy Leader of the Opposition spoke truly of the advertisement he saw, why a man should not come out of the picture show and have his pot of shandy, just the same as any other man is entitled to come out and have his milk-shake or ginger beer.

So much for that matter. I really did not rise to deal with it. I wanted to support the remarks from this side of the Chamber about what happened under the Moore regime. I can speak of the gambling racket that was carried on in Northern Queensland until a few years ago. There were racketeers and gangsters carrying on organised gambling throughout the sugar districts—round Cairns and Mossman. Organised games were being conducted that took money away from a man who had no earthly chance in the world of winning anything. It is only during the last few years, under the administration of this Government, that organised gambling has been completely stamped out. Under the Moore regime I have seen men going to these gambling dens and losing the whole of their wages. I have been foolish enough to play myself.

Hon. members opposite spoke about the front door of a hotel being shut and the back door being open. In these gambling dens it was not a question of three knocks before you got in. The doors were wide open during the years from 1929 to 1932 and continued to be so until this Government set to work and stamped the evil out.

Mr. BRAND: No.

Mr. JESSON: If the hon. member can find any organised gambling in any place from Mackay north where a man can go in and throw his money on the table, I am prepared to give £5 to any charitable institution in the State. I know that pressure has been brought to bear on certain persons in an endeavour to get organised gambling started again, but up to date all efforts have been unsuccessful. I am very pleased that the Government have stamped out this practice, and for that alone both the Commissioner of Police and the Government have justified themselves in the eyes of the mothers and wives of a great many workers in the North.

Item (Police) agreed to.

[*Mr. Maxwell.*]

POLICE INVESTMENT BOARD.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*): I move—

“That £65,600 be granted for ‘Police Investment Board.’”

Item agreed to.

PRISONS.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*): I move—

“That £32,812 be granted for ‘Prisons.’”

Item agreed to.

STATE CHILDREN.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*): I move—

“That £196,671 be granted for ‘State Children.’”

Mr. HAYES (*Nundah*) [8.44 p.m.]: I understood the hon. member for Oxley to say that the various homes about Brisbane and throughout Queensland have not received any increase in their grants since this Government came into office in 1932. I am certain that the hon. member could not have read the report of the Director of State Children, or he would not have made that statement.

In 1935, when speaking on this vote, I referred to the wonderful work that is being done in the Tuffnell Home, Nundah, by the Church of England, and in St. Vincent's Orphanage, Nudgee. Both those institutions are in the Nundah electorate.

When the Moore Government were in power they had little sympathy for the State children, just as they had little regard for the people that they industrially outlawed and denied the right to go to the Industrial Court. Can hon. members imagine anything more cruel than their disregard of the comforts of little ones who had lost their bread-winners? When the present Government were returned to power in 1932 one of their first acts was to restore the 1s. a week that had been taken by the Moore Government. The weekly rates of payment to-day are—

With foster mothers (from two to twelve years of age)—9s. 6d. a week.

With foster mothers (from twelve to fourteen years of age)—10s. a week.

Although the increase was paid to foster mothers in charge of the children nothing had been done to extend it to such homes as were conducted by the Church of England, the Salvation Army, and the Roman Catholic Church. My appeal was that the same help should be given to these homes who were carrying out such wonderful work. If the hon. member for Oxley had read the report of the Director of State Children Department he would have seen that the increased rate is now paid to the following institutions:—

St. George Orphanage, Rockhampton (Church of England).

Salvation Army Home at Toowong, Yeronga, Indooroopilly, Riverview, and Rockhampton.

Meteor Park, Rockhampton, St. Vincent's Home, Nudgee, Holy Cross Retreat, Wooloowin (Roman Catholic).

The hon. member for Oxley is not present, otherwise he would hear my emphatic

denial of his untruthful charge in this Chamber. It is a great pity that an hon. member is prepared to rise in his place and make such ridiculous assertions. He had the same opportunity as any other hon. member to read the report of the Director of State Children. I can only conclude that his action was prompted by way of political propaganda and in the belief that he could get away with his statement.

I give great credit to the foster mothers and to these institutions for the splendid work that they are doing in the interests of State children. I have had an opportunity of visiting the institutions on many occasions and even when part of the Nundah electorate was in the Sandgate electorate and represented by the Hon. H. E. Sizer, I made it my business to acquaint myself then with the work that they were doing.

The report of the Director of State Children discloses that the health of the inmates of St. Vincent's Home, Nudgee, has been good, and that the medical and dental officers have attended regularly. The report also states—

“The progress at school is very satisfactory, and the District Inspector was able to report most favourably on the work of all grades. The two boys who sat for the scholarship secured credit passes, and are now in residence at St. Joseph's College, Nudgee.”

Labour's administration sees to it that State children have all the help and protection that can be given to them to fit them for their after life.

I also find in reading the report of the Director that scholastic success has attended another State child inmate of one of these homes, and that this pupil is at present attending the Teachers' Training College. We also find, in looking back through the years, that State children have made their mark in history, and have succeeded in rising to the highest positions in the land. Some of them have even reached the top of some of our leading professions. It is the driving force of Labour that is so helpful to these young children. It is this spirit that characterises the great Australian Labour movement. It always has as its ideal the uplift of man, and does not stand for that pressing down that obtained during the unfortunate three years of the Moore Government. I was astounded on hearing the remarks of the hon. member for Oxley, and it was because of them that I found it necessary to make this reply. The hon. member can rest assured that he will not be allowed to make such charges without their being refuted.

The receiving home at Wooloowin is somewhat handicapped through lack of space. I was very pleased to find recently that 17 acres of Crown land in the Chermiside area had been set aside for the building of a receiving home for State children. I hope that this building will be proceeded with very shortly. The surrounding lands are very sparsely populated, and I am of the opinion that this large area can be used to advantage.

It is hardly necessary for me to pay tribute to the great services this department, under the leadership of the Minister, is rendering to the community. I believe in giving him the credit that is due to him.

He is without peer as an administrator. The work carried out by him since his elevation to the Cabinet, combined with the wonderful extensions in our social service system, is praiseworthy in the extreme. No one can gainsay the fact that the State's social service work has kept pace with its progress, and its administration has been for the benefit of the people and in the interests of the State.

I am not in favour of having the inebriates housed at Dunwich, which is for old people. I think arrangements might be made for creating a suitable place for these people where plenty of land is available.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must confine himself to the vote before the Committee.

Mr. HAYES: The initial work is in hand on this land at Chermiside, and I trust the Diamantina Receiving Home will be removed there very shortly, and I hope that a home will also be established on that site for subnormal children.

Mr. WELLINGTON (*Charters Towers*) [8.57 p.m.]: There are a number of State children in Charters Towers, and on occasions when I have interviewed the Director of State Children I have been received with courtesy and my requests have received every consideration. I take this opportunity of thanking him.

Item (State Children) agreed to.

STEAMER "OTTER."

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*) [8.58 p.m.]: I move—

“That £4,193 be granted for ‘Steamer “Otter.””

Item agreed to.

LICENSING COMMISSION.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*): I move—

“That £3,717 be granted for ‘Licensing Commission.’”

Mr. BRAND (*Isis*) [8.59 p.m.]: The Licensing Commission is a very important body. I have noticed that since it has been in existence many of the hotels in Queensland have been considerably improved. One of the purposes for which the commission was created was to improve the accommodation at hotels for the convenience of the travelling public. That was highly desirable, particularly as there is a considerable tourist traffic throughout Queensland during the winter months. One of the disabilities in the tourist traffic has been the hotel services, and if the commission has so reorganised the hotel accommodation of Queensland that it now conforms to the requirements of this trade it will have done good work. It is only the best type of hotel that should be permitted in future. Much can be done.

The Licensing Commission has certain powers to cancel licenses and offer them for sale by tender. The North Star Hotel at Gayndah was destroyed by fire, and the licensee, Mr. Wake, who had still five years of his lease to run, received the paltry sum of £50 for it. He had acquired a ten years' lease, for which he paid £1,000; £100 a year and the annual license fee of £35, which would indicate that this license

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was worth more than £50. The licensee complains that he has received a very raw deal from the Licensing Commission. He was not the owner of the hotel, which was an old building. It is true there was not a great deal of trade, but an annual license fee of £35 indicates that the license was worth at least a reasonable sum.

Mr. DONNELLY: It was useless unless the building was reconstructed.

Mr. BRAND: Exactly. The owner of the hotel received £200, the man who paid £1,000 for the lease of ten years and who still had five years of that lease to run, received only £50. When submitted to tender by the commission this license brought £2,025.

Mr. DONNELLY: You don't know where that license went to?

Mr. BRAND: Of course we know. The license went to Cracow. Mr. Wake was one of those unfortunate men who placed the whole of his trust in a Labour Government. He said he was satisfied to leave it to a Labour Government to give him a fair spin.

The PREMIER: You know that under the law the Licensing Commission have the sole discretion of determining the amount of compensation.

Mr. BRAND: I know that the commission had jurisdiction in the matter, but the Government passed the law, which included the regulations governing purchases and sales of licenses, and then handed the matter over to the commission to put into operation. Unfortunately, this man placed trust in a Labour Government, believing that they would give him fair treatment. He did not come to Brisbane when the appeal took place to place his case personally before the commission. He stated his position in writing, as many licensees do. This is not the only case. It would appear on the surface, at any rate, that the sum of £50 for a license that had five years to run and was worth a fee of £35 a year, was not an adequate sum.

The PREMIER: You are putting up a special plea for the licensee.

Mr. BRAND: It is no use making a plea. The matter is over and done with, but this man claims that the Licensing Commission did not give him fair treatment.

The PREMIER: What do you think?

Mr. BRAND: I do not think he got fair treatment. There are many other persons who claim that they have not got sufficient compensation for their licenses. That is proved by the fact that not many hotel-keepers want the commission to take over their licenses. They have been chary about it since the first, second, or third surrenders were made. This man claimed there was a ramp, and he did not get a fair deal.

The PREMIER: What?

Mr. BRAND: By a letter in the Press—

The PREMIER: By whom?

Mr. BRAND: By the commission.

The PREMIER: Is that your charge?

Mr. BRAND: That there was a ramp placed across him.

The PREMIER: Do you make that charge?

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Mr. BRAND: I am not making any charge. I definitely tell the hon. gentleman that this man, Wake, in a letter to the "Courier-Mail" on 10th December, sets out his claim against the commission. The commission stated that there was no appearance of Mr. Wake, although he was served with a notice.

Mr. W. J. COPLEY: What does the word "ramp" mean to you?

Mr. BRAND: This man has written a letter to the commission, in which he makes charges against it. This is the letter—

"Re North Star Hotel, Gayndah. I am duly in receipt of your communication dated 20th instant, and note that you state that the question of the compensation offered for the surrender of the above license cannot be re-opened. So far as I am concerned personally, the matter has never been finalised, as I have not agreed to accept the meagre amount of compensation suggested by your board, i.e., £50. I have been out of employment now practically since May last, and I do not intend to submit to further insults at this date, when I am entitled to at least half of the surrender value of my lease, to say nothing of my loss of time, etc. I have always paid my way, and would ask your board to do the same as men—as it was my cash invested in the remaining portion of the lease that made the proposition worth disposing of—thereby bringing to you a percentage of profits that no ordinary trader would be allowed to make without committing an offence. If the 'Courier-Mail' cannot make an exposure of this ramp, then 'Truth' and other papers are ready and willing to do so, in the interest of the public in general, as I do not intend to become a pauper through the gross injustice of your committee.

"Yours faithfully,

"W. J. WAKE."

He claims that he has been unfairly dealt with. I do not think any hon. member of this Committee can claim that the amount of £50 for the surrender of a license is a fair thing to a man who has paid £500 for it, particularly when one considers that that license, when sold, brought £2,025. The commission should deal more liberally with those men whose licenses attract a bigger price than they are paid for them. A license having five years to run and costing £35 a year must be worth more than £50.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay) [9.11 p.m.]: The case cited by the hon. member for Isis is one where the building was destroyed by fire and the man who owned those buildings did not desire to rebuild them. He decided to throw in his license to the Licensing Commission. That, in itself, is prima facie evidence from the owner's point of view that he attached no great value to the license. To use a term of the Leader of the Opposition, that is the irresistible inference to be drawn from the facts. The hon. member for Isis now complains that the licensee, who had a ten-years' license, with five years to run, was not adequately compensated. He admits that the licensee had the right to appear before the Licensing Commission and did not do so. The licensee was awarded a sum of money which his special pleader now claims was

inadequate. The money has been accepted and has been paid.

Under the law the Licensing Commission is charged with the authority to assess compensation. Under the law it matters not where the new license is granted. £1,000 may be paid in compensation for a license, and a new one may be given in another part of the country that might fetch only £100. In any event, the Act does not give an equity or a claim on the value of the license when transferred to another place. That aspect of the matter was debated fully when the Bill went through the House.

The basis of the Act is that there shall be a given number of licenses in Queensland. That is the maximum, but the commission may, for good reason shown, cancel one license and grant a new license elsewhere. The license is the property of the Crown. Under the new Act that license has to be put up for public tender, and rightly so. When a license is cancelled because the owner of the buildings and premises refuses to build again, could it be regarded as equitable if a new license is granted in a new area with a larger population and therefore a larger turnover to the new licensee, that compensation should be based on the value of the license in the new area? That would be an absurd argument, because that individual would then be paid what is known economically as unearned increment.

It would be against the principle of the law. I know nothing personally about the case, but I know the law that is administered by the Licensing Commission and that the method of assessing the value is set out in the Act. The commission is the sole judge of the value of the license that it brings to an end. Anyone who has a claim against the commission naturally thinks that it is a just one. It is very easy to persuade ourselves that what is to our advantage is to the national advantage. What grounds have we for assuming that the ex-parte statement of the position by the hon. member for Isis is the correct one? Parliament would not countenance an injustice, but the case that he has stated is based on an ex-parte statement. The hon. member presumes to suggest that a ramp has been worked. Does he accuse the Licensing Commission of having been guilty of a ramp?

Mr. BRAND: No.

The PREMIER: The hon. member was using the exact words and therefore he countenanced the case by the very fact that he read those words in this Chamber. It was an indication that he believed that a ramp had been worked, or else he was seeking to implant in the public mind the idea that there had been such a ramp. His action can justify no other inference. Are decisions under the Liquor Act to be left in the hands of a special advocate on the floor of this Chamber? This is not the place to assess the value of any chattel or whatever it may be called, but we get the loose and irresponsible suggestion that some ramp has been worked. If the hon. member has any evidence let him place it before the tribunal appointed by Parliament to weigh that evidence and deal with it accordingly. The speech of the hon. member, to say the least of it, is a remarkable example of special pleading in Parliament. An hon. member puts forward a case based entirely on ex-parte statements.

Item (Licensing Commission) agreed to.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported progress and asked leave to sit again.

Resumption of Committee made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1936-37.

Mr. SPEAKER announced the receipt from His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor of a message transmitting the Supplementary Estimates for the year 1936-37.

Estimates ordered to be printed and referred to Committee of Supply.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*): I move—

“That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Tuesday next.”

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at 9.21 p.m.
