

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 29 MARCH 1949

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"2. What costs of production did the Commissioner assess (a) from the figures supplied by his officer in the Beerburrum district, and (b) from those supplied by Mr. R. S. George of the Poultry Farmers' Union?"

"3. Has the Commissioner received the report and recommendations from the cost of production survey conducted by the Federal Bureau of Agricultural Economics ordered by the Commonwealth Minister for Commerce and Agriculture? If not, will he instruct the Commissioner to obtain and give consideration thereto?"

"4. Will he instruct the Prices Commissioner to have regard to the higher prices in New South Wales, in order to obviate an acute shortage in Queensland during the period of low production?"

Hon. V. C. GAIR (South Brisbane) replied—

"1. The decision in respect of the prices determined for eggs in this State is the sole responsibility of the Commissioner of Prices. In accordance with the provisions of the Profiteering Prevention Act of 1948, the Commissioner of Prices may call meetings of the Queensland Prices Board as required, but the Board's functions are purely consultative and advisory.

"2. See answer to Question 1.

"3. I am informed that the Commissioner of Prices had been in touch with the Federal Bureau of Agricultural Economics prior to the egg-price determinations. The bureau promised to forward a copy of the survey, but so far it has not been received.

"4. No. I am advised that there is no shortage of eggs in Queensland at the present time."

APPLE CASES AND EXPORTS.

Mr. MORRIS (Enoggera), for **Mr. DECKER** (Sandgate), asked the Premier—

"As the shortage of cases and shipping space was causing a loss of hundreds of pounds to Queensland apple growers—

"1. Will he inform the House what action is being taken as a result of urgent appeals for casing timber made by the Stanthorpe C.O.D. to the Timber Control and Forestry Department?"

"2. Will the Government consider making representations to the Federal Government to vary the agreement regarding migrant ships, so that they could back-load apples and other goods instead of leaving Australia with empty holds?"

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca) replied—

"1. Representations have been made for the supply of pine for the manufacture of ends for export cases, and arrangements have been made for the provision of pine logs for this purpose as soon as the weather permits logging of the required timber.

"2. Full migrant ships chartered for the purpose by the Commonwealth Government are in permanent ballast, the whole of the available space being converted for

TUESDAY, 29 MARCH, 1949.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. S. J. Brassington, Fortitude Valley) took the chair at 11 a.m.

QUESTIONS.

PRICES OF EGGS.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Secretary for Labour and Industry—

"In reference to investigations by the Prices Branch into the egg industry and the fact that the Commissioner fixed lower prices than those indicated by the information supplied by the representatives of the producers concerned, will he kindly supply the following information:—

"1. Did the Commissioner make his decision upon figures other than those supplied by the industry, and, if so, by whom were they compiled?"

passenger movement so that the maximum number of migrants consistent with safety can be carried. A vessel of this type was the 'Somersetshire,' which visited Queensland recently. The 'Somersetshire,' like her sister ship, the 'Dorsetshire,' carried 350 passengers to the exclusion of all other considerations, including cargo. These vessels have no refrigerated space, and, as the hon. member will appreciate, refrigerated space would be necessary for the carriage of apples."

DEVELOPMENT OF BLAIR ATHOL.

Mr. WANSTALL (Toowong), for **Mr. PIE** (Windsor), asked the Premier—

"In view of his reference to the apparent inability of the Electric Supply Corporation (Overseas) Ltd. to discharge its full obligations in the development of the Blair Athol coalfield as required by the company's agreement with this Government, will he state—

"1. Whether he has at any time conferred with the Queensland companies at present operating the open-cuts in regard to the acquisition of their freehold and other rights in the field?

"2. Is he aware that these Queensland companies are confident that if provided with improved rail facilities they could produce and move to the coast at least 1,000,000 tons of coal a year, using present equipment and without financial aid?

"3. Is the £100,000 scheme for the improvement of the railway haulage between Clermont and Emerald announced by the Minister for Transport (Mr. Duggan) being undertaken in the interests of the existing Blair Athol companies, in view of the inability of the Electric Supply Corporation (Overseas) Ltd. to discharge its full obligations?

"4. If he has not already done so, will he confer with representatives of the existing Blair Athol companies concerning their ability to increase the much-needed output of the field with the proposed improvement of the railway to the open-cuts?"

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca) replied—

"1. Section 7 (1) of the agreement with the Electric Supply Corporation (Overseas) Ltd. provides that 'The company will endeavour to acquire by agreement all such coal-mining leases and freehold and other property on the coalfield as are at present held by lessees of such coal-mine leases or the shares in the companies holding such coal-mining leases.' I understand negotiations have taken place between the Electric Supply Corporation (Overseas) Ltd. and the companies at present operating at Blair Athol.

"2. I have seen a statement accredited to Mr. Douglas M. Corrie, chairman of directors of Blair Athol Open Cut Collieries Ltd., which was published in the Brisbane Press on 24 March, 1949, that both the Blair Athol Coal and Timber Co. Ltd. and his company could produce a million tons

of coal a year if transport were available. I am unaware as to whether this increased production could be achieved by the companies concerned with their present equipment and without financial aid. However, I am informed that the Railway Department desired to take advantage of the comparatively slack season from January to June, 1949, to obtain additional coal from both these mines to enable locomotive stocks to be built up, but the mines have been unable to supply all the coal for which wagons were available.

"3. No. The scheme announced by my colleague the Minister for Transport for improving the capacity of the line between Blair Athol and Emerald will assist the Railway Department in the haulage not only of coal from Blair Athol but also of the products of the Queensland-British Food Corporation's project. The savings to be made in transport costs by the improvements contemplated will more than justify the expenditure, irrespective of whose commodities may be carried on the line.

"4. Action to ensure adequate coal production is a function of the newly appointed Queensland Coal Board. The Board will be pleased to meet the representatives of the companies at any time to discuss the practicability of any steps that might be taken to increase the output of either or both of the companies. The Government's interest in the production of coal at Blair Athol by the present companies is indicated by the fact that the Government, on 17 January, 1946, guaranteed a loan of £33,000, repayable in five years, on behalf of the Blair Athol Open Cut Collieries Ltd. At the request of the company, the Government agreed to the postponement of the loan repayment instalment due on 31 December, 1948, for a period of six months."

ELECTORAL ROLLS; SECRECY OF BALLOT.

Mr. EVANS (Mirani), for **Mr. LOW** (Cooroora), asked the Attorney-General,

"Will he give consideration to the question of amending the Elections Acts in the following directions:—(a) To provide for quarterly rolls so that hon. members and others concerned may be able to keep a continuous check upon enrolments; and (b) the omission of roll numbers from ballot-papers in order to remove any doubt as to the secrecy of the ballot?"

Hon. D. A. GLEDSON (Ipswich) replied—

"(a) Quarterly electoral rolls serve no useful purpose. The official roll kept by every Electoral Registrar is available for inspection by any person at the Registrar's office, and the particulars that would be contained in a quarterly roll may be obtained by this inspection. A demand for quarterly rolls does not exist. In the ten years prior to the abolition of their issue the average annual cost of publication slightly exceeded £1,000 and the returns

for sales of quarterly rolls in this period averaged only 2s. 3d. Quarterly rolls are not published by the Commonwealth Electoral Office. They are not published in any Australian State. (b) Roll numbers are not placed on ballot papers. They are numbered consecutively. When an elector is given this numbered ballot paper the number on it is placed opposite the name of the elector on the official roll. This does not destroy the secrecy of the ballot. Section 59 (2) of the Elections Acts, 1915 to 1948, reads: 'The presiding officer shall, before delivery of the ballot-paper to the elector—(a) Fold down the right-hand upper corner of the paper so as to entirely conceal the ballot-number; and (b) securely fasten the fold with gum or otherwise in such a manner that the number cannot be discovered without unfastening the fold.' Section 114 of the Criminal Code provides for imprisonment with hard labour for two years should any person interfere with secrecy at elections."

MEDICAL POST-GRADUATE COURSE.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

"Does the Queensland University conduct a post-graduate lecture scheme for doctors? If so, are the benefits of this lecture scheme available to all doctors, or are only members of the B.M.A. invited to the lectures given under the scheme?"

Hon. H. A. BRUCE (The Tableland) replied—

"Post-graduate lectures to doctors are provided by the Postgraduate Medical Education Committee, on which the University is represented. All lectures and courses arranged by this committee are available equally to members and non-members of the B.M.A. It is understood that copies of the postgraduate medical journal which will be published shortly will be forwarded without charge to every registered medical practitioner in the State."

GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE, MEDICAL ASSESSMENT TRIBUNAL.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) asked the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs—

"Is Dr. Clarke, President of the Queensland Branch of the B.M.A., the Government's nominee on the Medical Assessment Tribunal?"

Hon. A. JONES (Charters Towers) replied—

"The Medical Assessment Tribunal is constituted by a judge of the Supreme Court. Dr. B. L. W. Clarke is one of the two medical practitioners who sit as assessors with the judge for the time being constituting the tribunal. Dr. Clarke was an assessor representing the Government from 5 June, 1947, to 23 October, 1947, and since 24 June, 1948."

RESIGNATIONS, PRISON WARDERS.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) asked the Attorney-General—

"Does the Comptroller of Prisons, by bribes, promises, or concessions, secure from ex-prisoners and their female associates, false and/or perjured statements concerning prison warders and then use those statements to extort resignations from the warders under the threat that they would be dismissed and so lose any privileges with regard to superannuation refunds, &c., to which they would be entitled if they resigned but which they would lose if they were dismissed?"

Hon. D. A. GLEDSON (Ipswich) replied—

"No. The hon. member's false suggestions are highly defamatory of an honest and decent public servant. The hon. member displays further irresponsibility when he mentions refunds in respect of superannuation contributions. He should know these refunds are made, not only where an officer resigns, but also if he is dismissed from the Public Service."

PAPERS.

The following papers were laid on the table—

By-laws Nos. 504-506 under the Railways Acts, 1914 to 1946.

Order in Council under the Labour and Industry Act of 1946 (17 March).

GOVERNOR'S SALARY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

ASSENT.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier): I lay the following paper on the table for the information of hon. members:—

Copy of Order issued by the King's Most Excellent Majesty in Council declaring His Majesty's Assent to a Reserved Bill intituled "A Bill to increase the Salary of the Governor and for that purpose to amend 'The Constitution Act of 1867 Amendment Act of 1905.'"

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS BILL.

SECOND READING.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (11.13 a.m.): I move—

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

This Bill, as its title indicates, provides for the redistribution of electorates. Perhaps the Bill could more properly be called a Bill to restore to the country electoral representation that was taken from it previously, or perhaps, better still—

Mr. Brand: You could give it a better name than that.

Mr. HANLON: I will. I will give the hon. member for Isis a better name than that, because he was a member of the Moore Government. Perhaps it should be called a Bill to right a wrong against the country people of Queensland by a so-called Country Party Government. At that time this so-called Country Party Government abolished 10 electorates and thereby reduced parliamentary representation in this Chamber by 10 members. It is noteworthy that nine of the seats that were abolished were in the country and only one in the city of Brisbane. That is why I suggest that the best title of the Bill would be a Bill to right a wrong inflicted on the country people by a so-called Country Party Government.

I should like to remind the House that hon. members opposite, and hon. members on this side too, almost without exception have at some time or other said that there should be a redistribution of electoral boundaries in Queensland. Almost every member of the Opposition, leading members at all events, at some time or another have made statements in favour of a redistribution.

Mr. Hiley: To improve it, not to make it worse.

Mr. HANLON: I am stating what hon. members opposite have said, that the time had arrived when there should be a redistribution, but not in the sense that the hon. member for Logan interjects. I will give in detail what he said. When this Bill was introduced he said—

“I was not unwilling that the size of the House should be increased because I was always unwilling that the number of country representatives should be reduced I think it would be necessary to increase the size of the House. Personally I do not want to reduce the country representation by one member.”

I interjected—

“You are going to make additional representation for the city without increasing the country.”

The hon. member for Logan replied—

“That may be so.”

That was extracted from the debate on the introduction of this Bill. The hon. member admitted at the introduction of the Bill that he was quite satisfied to have an increase in the number of members of Parliament—in fact, he thought it was right to do so—but he thought, evidently, that all the increase should be in the metropolitan area. He did not want to reduce the number of electorates in the country but he certainly did not want to increase them.

That is an attitude of mind that I cannot understand. If there is anything to be said for increasing the number of members in this Parliament I think it should be as far as possible to increase the representation of the people in the country. The Country Party attitude, of course, will be shown by its attitude on this matter when its members were in power. They call themselves a Country Party but of course they are governed by city interests, as

was shown in the fact that on that occasion they reduced country representation by nine but reduced city representation by only one.

The Leader of the Opposition stated to me that if he was going to be Premier and there was to be an increase in the number of members he would give the greater part of the additional representation to the country. That is what we are doing—we are giving the greater part of the representation to the country. The Bill proposes to increase the country representation by nine and the city representation by four. Therefore, it will be doing what the Leader of the Opposition suggested should be done.

We had in 1910, with a population of 599,016, 72 members in the Legislative Assembly and 48 in the Legislative Council. Hon. members opposite opposed the abolition of the Legislative Council and the establishment of the single-chamber system of government. They have always opposed it. They opposed it bitterly. They have gone to the country on a couple of occasions having as one of the planks of their platform the reconstitution of the second Chamber but on each occasion the people have turned them down. When the Country Party was in power notwithstanding that its members were reducing country representation by nine members in this Chamber it was proposed to re-establish the Upper House which would, of course, be entirely dominated by city interests. Now they are asking for more country members of Parliament, notwithstanding the fact that when they were in power they reduced the number of country representatives by nine.

The population of the State now is 1,106,000, an increase of over 400,000 since 1910, and now we have no Legislative Council and only 62 members in the Legislative Assembly. On those figures alone the Bill is justified. In addition, the work and responsibility of members of Parliament have grown in the years since 1910. The State Government have come into much closer contact with the people than they did a few years ago. Every member of the Opposition knows that he is continually receiving calls from his electors when he is in his electorate and is continually receiving correspondence from them when he is in Brisbane referring to all sorts of things that they want him to attend to. Therefore, the population of this State since 1910 having increased by over 400,000 but the representation of the people in Parliament reduced from 120 to 62, obviously hon. members could give better service to the people if the number of electorates were increased.

The system we are adopting on this occasion, of dividing the State into zones, is one that is calculated to prevent an overwhelming influence in the capital city from at any time developing in the government of the country. By making the number of members 75 and limiting the representation of the capital city, irrespective of population, to 24, we are making sure that there will be a majority of the representatives of the people outside the capital city.

One of the cries of the Opposition was that a powerful interest was building up the vast industrial machine in the capital city so that the Labour Party could increase its representation in Parliament. What we are doing is exactly the reverse; we are providing by this Bill that the inevitable growth of the city—and hon. members opposite know, all city members at all events, that growth of the city of Brisbane, with the increase in population, is inevitable; it is a phenomenon throughout the world for industrial cities to grow rapidly—by this measure we are providing that the position will not arise where there will be an overwhelming representation in Parliament of the city of Brisbane. For instance, if you allowed the city of Brisbane to have 50 per cent. of the representation in this House you might very easily have a Government controlled entirely by city-of-Brisbane members of Parliament; and the interests served would be entirely those of the city and the interests of the country would be lost sight of. We propose to see, irrespective of population, that the people of Brisbane will have 24 representatives of this House out of a total of 75. That is what is necessary in order to safeguard the interests of the country.

It must be remembered that while the vast majority of electors are decent, honest people—good honest men and women who want to do the right thing—the vast majority are not great thinkers or great readers on political matters. They are not people who are inclined to study.

Mr. Evans: It is a good job for you they are not.

Mr. HANLON: Some of the hon. members opposite would not be here if the people thought at all. (Opposition interjections.)

There is a tendency among the people of the community to be more concerned with affairs of the immediate present than with affairs of say 10 or 20 years ahead. There is a tendency for people to be influenced entirely by affairs of the immediate present. For that reason we propose the zoning system so as to prevent any section from getting control of the State in the interests of that section and without regard to the interests of the rest of the State. The principle of restoration of the representation of the country has been applied as far as possible by recreating the ones previously taken away; as near as we possibly can we are restoring the country seats that were wiped out by the Moore Government. I think that is quite right. During the introduction of the Bill in the course of my speech I mentioned that the Labour Party had pioneered the slogan "One man, one vote," and we even went further and said that there should be "one vote, one value." In answering an interjection I did not complete a statement that I proposed to make at that time and I want to do so now. The Labour Party had all the opposition possible from the predecessors of hon. members opposite. The old Country Party and the old Conservative Party, which now have their lineal descendants here on the Opposition benches, opposed every reform.

They opposed the principle of one man, one vote, the adult franchise, and votes for women. Members of the Opposition are the representatives of the class that opposed every electoral reform that has been made in this country, and even industrial reforms (Opposition interjections), and it is electoral reform I am dealing with now.

Mr. Brand: You were a great believer in "one man, one vote" yourself.

Mr. HANLON: The hon. member for Isis even today thinks it is wrong that the men working on his farm should have the same right in the government of this country as he himself has. One can still see that belief cropping up in this Chamber time after time—that he as an employer must automatically be more competent to govern this country than the men who work for wages for him. The hon. member is still in the middle of the last century. He has never advanced with the times. The Opposition have always opposed any kind of reform. (Opposition interjections.)

The Labour Party's agitation having succeeded in winning the adult franchise and we having seen how our cry for the principle of one vote, one value was operating—that it was beginning to give complete power and authority in this great Commonwealth of ours to the industrial cities—we have had to revise that opinion. We have had to realise that it is necessary to see that the development of this country takes place in the interests of the very existence of this country. There is not the slightest doubt—I know it perfectly well—that hon. members opposite are not accustomed to taking a State-wide or nation-wide view of these things. I say quite frankly that unless this country is peopled and developed we shall not keep it. He is only a fool who would believe otherwise. We cannot hold this country with its present population and present stage of development; consequently we feel that there should be greater representation in Parliament, and a better influence on the work of Parliament from the people of the North, for example, who are still pioneering. We hear occasionally great sobs from hon. members opposite about the old pioneers—what great folk they were! According to hon. members opposite, after they are dead they are great pioneers, but they forget the living pioneers who are now developing the North and West, the Gulf country, round the mineral fields and opening up new agricultural industries, new mining industries in the tropical parts of this State. These people are not pioneers according to hon. members opposite; according to them, a person is not an old pioneer until he is dead. We propose to recognise the pioneers while they are alive.

It is necessary, therefore, for us to modify the opinion that it was essentially right to have a system under which each vote had exactly the same value. The area alone of electorates in the outback country justifies the lower quota of electors per member than operates in the city. I know perfectly well that my electorate contains approximately 13,000 or 14,000 electors and that that of the hon. member for Logan contains about

17,000 or 18,000; but I am sure that hon. member will agree with me that his electors have much more ready access to him than the electors of Carpentaria can have to their member, notwithstanding that there are only about 7,000 or 8,000 electors in that district. The electors in some parts of the great electorates, such as Warrego, Gregory, Barcoo and others, are lucky if they can get in touch with their member of Parliament once in five years. I—and my colleagues are with me—believe that these people in the outback who are doing the hard work of developing this country, far from the amenities of life that people of the South-east Division of the State have, are entitled to as much consideration from their representative in Parliament as those of hon. members opposite.

Mr. Morris: You believe that they should have a greater say in the government of the country?

Mr. HANLON: I say that the hon. member, living in comfort and luxury in the city of Brisbane, has a much better chance of keeping contact with his electors than the people of the Gregory or Warrego electorate, who are doing the worth-while work of this country, have of getting contact with their member.

Mr. Morris: That is not the question I asked.

Mr. HANLON: No, but it is the question I am answering. (Government laughter.)

Mr. Morris: You sidestepped the question.

Mr. HANLON: I know the hon. member's outlook. The hon. member can adopt the pose of strict political morality on these things, but it is only a pose. (Opposition interjections.) If a proposal was made to open up the Chamber at the other end of this House with a group of 30 or 40 city business people who would have the right to prevent the elected representatives of the people from giving effect to the people's wishes, the hon. member for Enoggera would be supporting it. We know that he believes in a second Chamber. He believes in having some body representative of the vested interests that will prevent the elected representatives of the people from giving effect to the people's wishes. (Opposition interjections.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HANLON: Having been defeated on plural voting, having been defeated on manhood suffrage only, having been unable to prevent universal suffrage, having been unable to prevent the working people from organizing to get representation in this House, hon. members opposite now adopt the pose of, "By all means let us have one vote, one value; by all means let the whole of the people of this State exercise their franchise equally." (Opposition interjections.) "But," they say, "give us the Legislative Council, which will be able to make the representation of the people innocuous and of no avail." Our attitude is entirely the reverse. We believe that the will of the people should prevail. (Opposition interjections.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Brand: You are making a very bad case.

Mr. HANLON: That is the case that every member of this Party is prepared to leave to the people to judge. We are putting it up to the people.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. HANLON: In 12 months time there will be an election and every member of this party is prepared to go to the people and say, "That is what we believe and it is up to you to decide the issue." (Opposition interjections.) I venture the opinion that at the next election we shall see exactly the same performance by the leaders of the Country Party and the Queensland People's Party in the country as we have seen in recent years. When they go to the North they will say, "The North have not got sufficient representation." When they go out to the West they will say, "These great western areas that are being opened up and pioneered by the hard-working people should have more representation in Parliament." That is what they say during an election period; when there is an opportunity of doing something to give the people better representation hon. members opposite ignore it.

This is the suggestion I am going to make to hon. members: If they complain of the inequality of the electoral quotas, there is one way in which it can be rectified. That way is for them to join with the Labour Party in pushing on for the development of these outside areas, populating them, building up industries there... (Opposition interruptions.) All that is necessary to bring the quota in the North up to the same as the quota for Brisbane is population in the North. Hon. members opposite, whose interests are all in the south-eastern corner of the State, whose interests are either in Brisbane or in the area immediately contiguous to Brisbane, are concerned only with the welfare of industries in and around the metropolitan area. They are not concerned with the development of the outback parts of the State.

I repeat that all we have to do to make the northern quota as large as the southern quota is to see that industry and development are pushed on so that the populations there will grow, because the zoning system insists that the total electorates within a zone shall be divided by that number of seats only. It does not make any provision for increasing the number of seats in the Northern Zone or the Western Zone as the population increases; it merely states that, irrespective of number, the quota shall be the total electorate in that zone divided by the number of seats. So that if hon. members wanted to show a real interest in the welfare of the State and of the Commonwealth they would join with us.

Mr. Sparkes: You did not say that in 1931.

Mr. HANLON: The hon. member can make a noise and cause interruption. I know

he does not like being told these things, and so far as he is concerned Queensland is bounded by a line the other side of Dalby. That is all the interest he has in Queensland. I am asking him now to follow the example of members of the Government Party and to look at Queensland as territory extending to Thursday Island and Torres Strait and do what we can to develop those far-out places. Let him and his colleagues show an interest in the development of the pearling industry. Experiments are being conducted to push on with the development of the islands in Torres Strait, to establish major industries at Townsville and experimental farms in the Gulf of Carpentaria to build up production. Those are parts of Queensland in which hon. members opposite never show the slightest interest. For example, there was not a sign of interest on their part in the proposals to develop the pig-raising industry in the Gulf country.

Mr. Hiley: You are not fair on that.

Mr. HANLON: I am speaking of the Leader of the Opposition and his party.

Mr. Evans: I have myself.

Mr. HANLON: When the food scheme was launched in Central Queensland, hon. members opposite set about "knocking" it as hard as they could. The Food for Britain proposal was "knocked" by hon. members of the Opposition, although it was a proposal that was calculated to increase the population of Central Queensland. When the scheme was launched they cried out that it was a means of bringing insolvency upon the farmers round Brisbane whom they represented—that it would ruin those they represented round Brisbane. What do they care about Central or North Queensland?

That has been their attitude all the time. As a Brisbane representative myself—and I think I can safely say I am speaking the mind of the majority of Brisbane people—I say that the influence of the capital city, growing ever greater and greater, upon the affairs of this State is a bad thing for the State. (Opposition interruption.) Mr. Speaker, hon. members opposite can howl, scream and shriek, but they cannot get away from facts. I say definitely that unlike hon. members opposite the bulk of the people of this country and of Brisbane are aware that the salvation of this country depends upon preventing the metropolitan area from getting control of the destinies of Queensland.

Mr. Evans: You do not mean that.

Mr. HANLON: Every metropolitan member of this party is prepared to tell that story to the people. I know that metropolitan members opposite at the next elections are going to tell the people that we have cheated in order to deprive them of adequate representation in this House. There is another way of getting over that, because all the people have to do is to return Labour members, because one Labour member is as good as half a dozen members opposite. (Opposition interruption.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HANLON: However, to be serious, I say that it is in the interests of this State to see that there is a preponderance of representation for the various parts of the country. The Leader of the Opposition will say that it will be a good thing to have a preponderance of representation in this House for the part on the North Coast, the Darling Downs, and south of Bundaberg. He would say that would be right. When it comes to giving representation to the further out places he loses interest. I say emphatically that the whole of the country must have fair consideration.

One of the amusing features in connection with the Bill has been the attack upon it by the Queensland People's Party or the Liberal Party—they use both names now, the Queensland People's Party and the Liberal Party of Australia. They must have been in close collaboration with the Commos because they adopted some of the Commo tactics.

Mr. Barnes interjected.

Mr. HANLON: The hon. member never paid anything in his life that he could get out of. He never paid for his tucker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Premier is making a very important speech and he must be allowed to do it without this unseemly interruption. The first hon. member who disobeys my call will be named.

Mr. HANLON: I was rather amused at the tactics employed by members of the Queensland People's Party. They have been close students of the art of collaboration practised by the Communist Party and they have adopted some of the tactics of that party. When the Bill was introduced, out went the cry from them that there must be a mighty protest all over the State. Out went the call for a resolution to be carried condemning the Government for giving the country greater representation in Parliament. A monster demonstration was to be held at the Albert Hall and I think the hon. member for Toowong was the leader of the band on that occasion. Of 400,000 people in Brisbane something like 180 people were rallied up to attend this monster protest meeting. About 100 people went along out of curiosity and the rest of course were the officials of the Queensland People's Party. On the whole, this great rally that was organised was a complete and utter flop. It was an endeavour to tell the people of Queensland that they were being deprived of fair and adequate representation in this Chamber by this Bill. The only people who were to suffer, if there was to be any suffering in it, the only people who were being wronged, according to the Queensland People's Party, were the people of Brisbane; yet they could not raise more than 200 people to come along in response to a protest that had been organised by the Queensland People's Party and the Liberal Party of Queensland. (Opposition interjections.)

Every branch of the Liberal Party of Queensland moved in the matter of this monster demonstration against the iniquities

of the Bill. Then they followed that up by getting the Country Party to take similar action through all their country branches. They said, "By jove, the Commos do these things by sending sheaves of telegrams to the Federal Government protesting against this and that, and we will do it too." They argued that the Federal Government encouraged these telegraphic protests so as to bring more revenue to the Commonwealth Government and so they decided to contribute to Commonwealth revenue by sending sheaves of telegrams to protest against this measure. Telegrams contained the words, "We, the graziers of Queensland, protest against this iniquitous Bill," or something to that effect, and the telegrams were signed, "Brown and Jones, graziers." It was the old story of the three tailors of Tooley Street again. From all over Queensland came telegraphic protests signed by one or two people whose signatures were alleged to represent the graziers, the wool-growers, the Country Party association and so on. Boiled down I suppose not more than a dozen people who sent the telegrams were sincere in their protests. I have never seen an organised protest become the flop utterly and completely as this one was against the Bill. (Opposition interjections.)

I shall not delay the House any longer. The Government have given very careful consideration to the measure.

Mr. Brand interjected.

Mr. HANLON: I suggest to the hon. member that he should hide his ignorance occasionally.

The Government have given very careful consideration also to the future development of this country and we can see the necessity of giving greater influence to the North and the West in this Chamber. The only way in which we can proceed to do it electorally is by providing for better representation for those parts in Parliament itself. After all, it is in this Parliament that the elected representatives of the people, elected on an adult franchise, have a right to decide the destinies of the State. We are giving those people a better representation in Parliament so that they may exercise their influence so far as they possibly can on the decisions of this Parliament that are going to affect the country from which they come.

I commend the Bill to the House and move that it be read a second time.

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) (11.46 a.m.): All hon. members of this Chamber will at least agree that the Premier is an adept in making a case out of nothing.

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. NICKLIN: But I do not think that as long as I have been in this Chamber have I ever seen the Premier floundering so much as he did this morning in putting before us the case for this measure. (Government interjections.)

There is only one way in which one can describe the measure. It is an outrageous

measure. It is the most brazen and contemptuous ever introduced into any British Parliament since the advent of democracy. It destroys the very foundations of the Parliamentary institution on which democratic government is founded. It shows a complete and cynical contempt for the people and a total disregard for everything except the welfare of the political and industrial bosses of hon. members opposite. It is a blatant attempt to make the Treasury benches safe for all time for hon. members who sit on them at the moment. (Government dissent.)

There is one thing that hon. members forget, and that is the need to study the psychology of the Australian people. The average Australian wants a fair go. He likes to see a fair go. Even those people who usually vote Labour must reconsider their attitude towards a party that is destroying their democratic rights and privileges.

It has been said, and rightly said, that power corrupts and that total power corrupts absolutely. The Labour Party cannot claim to be without sin in that respect. Unless the people revolt against this legislation, elections in this State will, for all practical purposes, be the same as in Russia, where only candidates approved by the Communist hierarchy are allowed to stand. The only difference will be that here in Queensland the Opposition candidates will be allowed to put their names on the ballot paper; with the electoral machinery loaded against them, which this Bill is designed to do, the inevitable result will be that there will be very little difference between a Russian election and an election conducted under this Bill. No person or political party should be entrusted with the absolute power that this Bill is designed to give Labour in this State.

The Premier in his introductory remarks said, "We will let the people decide on this measure." I challenge him to have an election on this issue. Go to the people on the issue whether or not they want an electoral Bill such as we have got now. Have an election on it now! Let the Premier resign and go to the country and test the country's attitude to this messing about of the electoral machinery. (Government interjections.) No, hon. members will not do that. They will hope that in a general election, when so many other issues are involved, this iniquitous measure will be forgotten in the hurly-burly of the campaign, but I venture to say that the people will not forget hon. members' blatant attempt to make themselves safe for all time. (Government interjections.)

The Premier said that he has been getting sheaves of telegrams of protest against the Bill and he states that the Country Party organised those protests. As a party we organised no protests whatsoever. If the Premier got sheaves of telegrams, it shows exactly what the people thought of this electoral measure.

Mr. Hanlon: They were all phrased exactly alike, which shows that they all came from the one source.

Mr. NICKLIN: If the telegrams are similarly worded—(Government laughter)—there is one thing to be said about this measure. Nobody could praise it; everybody could only condemn it, and only a limited number of words could be used in condemnation of this measure.

We all know that hon. members opposite are on the Government benches in their present strength as a result of the nature of the electorates at the last election, when 22 were above or below the legal limits, and when we had stuffed rolls and ghostly rolls, with the result that hon. members opposite held 35 seats out of 62 on only 43.8 per cent. of the total formal votes. Not being satisfied with that, they have gone into the electoral machinery and devised a scheme that will enable them to still maintain that undue proportion of representation in this House with under 40 per cent. of the total votes cast at a general election. That will be the result after the passage of this legislation. (Government interjections.)

The Premier said that we had been advocating a redistribution. Of course we have. Why should we not advocate a redistribution when the present electoral machinery is in the position that we have 22 seats above or below the legal limit? Any other self-respecting Government would have had a redistribution long ago.

The honourable the Premier asked by interjection when I was speaking on the first reading how many extra members I suggested there should be in any redistribution. I told him I would tell him on the second reading; and I now will tell him how he could make a redistribution under the present electoral machinery that would be a fair and equitable one without the need to introduce this iniquitous legislation that we are considering today.

In introducing the Bill the Premier said if we had a redistribution under the present Act, with one quota, we should increase the representation of Brisbane tremendously and decrease the representatives of the country. This statement was the only important one he made when he introduced this Bill and it is the crux of the whole question. He knows as well as anybody else does that the present Act does not provide for one quota for all electorates; it provides for a quota with an allowable margin of one-fifth each way. It also instructs the commissioners, who make the distribution to take into consideration section 7, which uses the words, "the area of proposed districts which do not comprise any part of a city."

Therefore, actually the present Elections Act provides everything that the Premier suggests is so necessary to be included in the measure we have here today. It provides for a lesser strength of electorates in the far-flung areas of the State, and it does it as a result of the application of the quota system. It also instructs the commissioner, in fixing the boundaries, to take into account the areas of proposed districts which do not comprise any part of a city. Under the present Act three new country electorates could be created,

increasing the total of members from 62 to 65, without giving any extra or greater representation to the city.

Taking the 1948 rolls, those that have been used for the purpose of fixing quotas under this legislation, we find this position—

Total enrolment	..	..	653,903
Quota under present Act	..	..	10,546

This would allow, taking one-fifth either way, a minimum of 8,437 and a maximum of 12,655. Let us make a redistribution on that basis, giving the metropolitan seats the maximum allowable under the Act of 12,655, and other cities and environs an average of 10,100, which is 446 under the quota provided, and country electorates an average of 8,500, which is slightly over the minimum. What do we find? The 20 metropolitan electorates with an average of 12,655 each, would have 253,100 electors, and the actual enrolment is 253,284. That would be without giving any more representation to the city, which the Premier is stressing so much in the legislation he is introducing.

Now let me refer to the other cities, Ipswich, Bundaberg, Gympie, Maryborough, Toowoomba, Warwick, Rockhampton, Mackay, Charters Towers, Townsville, and Cairns—11 in all; the average is 10,100 and this gives 111,100 as the total electors, and the actual enrolments are 111,253.

The remaining country electorates, 34 in all, with the average as I have stated of 8,500, give a total of 289,000 electors and the actual enrolment is 289,366.

The 65 electorates that I have quoted, on the basis I have stated, would give a total of 653,200 electors, and the total enrolment for the State is 653,903.

There is a way in which there could be a new redistribution of electorates in this State under the present Act that would give three additional seats to the country districts and preserve the balance of the metropolis with the country on which the Premier has talked so much today. Why did the hon. gentleman not do that? Why did he not use the legislation that is available to him to use? Where was the necessity to introduce all these new principles that are absolutely foreign to the principles enunciated and laid down by him when in Opposition in opposing the Electoral Districts Act of 1931?

Mr. Hanlon: I opposed the reduction of country electorates in 1931.

Mr. NICKLIN: The Premier must wish his words reported in "Hansard" could be erased for ever because the arguments he used then are completely the opposite of those he uses now. When we examine this question we find the electorates could be redistributed under the present Act without any unreasonable departure from the democratic principle of one vote, one value. In fact, the greatest difference in value would be no more than 50 per cent., as against the possibility, under this Bill, of a vote in Zone No. 4 having 3.36 times the value of a vote in Zone No. 1. People may well ask: why the need for these new drastic changes in our

electoral machinery when the whole matter of the maldistribution that exists could be adjusted under the present Act without any difficulty whatever and, as I said previously, giving greater representation to the country about which the Premier makes so much of a song this morning?

There is no need for me to quote what the Premier said in 1931. He will be quoted by other hon. members on this side during the course of this debate, and he will not smile when he hears read what he said in 1931; indeed, I should not be at all surprised to see legislation introduced by him to do away with "Hansard" altogether.

Let us examine the Bill in conjunction with the 1931 Act. The 1931 Act provided for a quota of one-sixty-second of the total State enrolments, with a margin of one-fifth more or less. But there were also safeguards to cover certain kinds of electorates. For example, in every electorate that comprised wholly a city, or part of a city, such as a metropolitan area, it was provided that the minimum number of electors should be the quota. That Act recognised the very principle that the Premier made such a song about this morning when he referred to the ease of representation of a city electorate. That is recognised in our existing machinery, and there is no need to introduce any legislation to alter the present system.

For the purposes of the 1931 redistribution, the figures were—

Quota	8,029
Minimum	6,424
Maximum	9,634

I want hon. members to notice that the greatest difference between the absolute maximum and the absolute minimum electorate was 50 per cent. Under this Bill the greatest difference could be 236 per cent., so that, as I mentioned previously, we could have a position with which one vote in the western areas would be equal to 3.36 votes in Zone 1, or the metropolitan area.

We find also that it is proposed to increase the number of members in Zone 1, or the metropolitan electorates, by 20 per cent. The increase for the South-Eastern Zone, or next most populous area of the State, is only 12 per cent., while for the North it is 30 per cent., and for the West 43 per cent. The reason the Premier gives for this is that it is in the interests of decentralisation and the development of the far-flung parts of the State. All I can say is, "Decentralisation, what sins are committed in thy name!"

We find that the Premier seeks to blame the Opposition for this unfortunate lack of balance in Queensland between the metropolitan and country districts, for this maldistribution of the West and the North that the Premier says exists. We must not forget that Labour has been in power in this State for 30 long years—

Mr. Aikens: Labour is responsible for the depopulation.

Mr. NICKLIN: If these things are happening in the North and the West, as stated by the Premier, why is it that this maldistribution is taking place in the North

and the West? There is only one answer—because of the policy of the Labour Party. That policy has brought this state of affairs about and the Labour Party must accept the whole of the responsibility for the conditions that exist today in those parts. It is those conditions that have brought about a loss of population in the West and in the North. In the North the increase in population has been equal to only one-third of the natural increase that has taken place in that area, which shows that people born in that area are leaving the North and going to other parts of the State.

The Premier said that as a result of the introduction of this legislation population will be attracted to the West and the North; but surely the hon. gentleman does not suggest that members of Parliament have some magnetic personality to attract to themselves population that has gone away from the West and the North? I venture to say that what will happen is that instead of the areas getting better representation as a result of increased numbers of members of Parliament, the members elected for those areas will come to Brisbane to live so that they can better represent the people whom they are supposed to represent. It is a lot of "hooley" and nonsense to suggest that members of Parliament have such magnetic personalities as to attract population to them because they happen to represent western or northern electorates.

It is not additional representation in this House that the West and the North want. What those parts need is sympathetic consideration from the Government, consideration that will keep the people in those areas and attract additional people to them. As the result of 30 years of Labour rule the West is almost denuded of people and the North has not developed as it should have. Only one party is responsible for the state of affairs existing in the North and the West today, and it is the Labour Party with its rotten policy of centralisation. That policy has resulted in an inordinate growth in the capital city of the State and a big concentration of the people of Queensland in the south-eastern corner.

Let us look at this question of the metropolitan area overshadowing country districts, which was one of the Premier's main arguments. One has only to look at the argument to see how fallacious it is, because if the 75 hon. members proposed under this Bill are allocated equally all over the State there will be 46 hon. members representing the country and 29 the city. The country would still have a greater number of members than the metropolitan area. This talk of the metropolitan areas overshadowing the country is so much eyewash used in an endeavour to delude the people as to the real purpose behind the Bill, which, as I said previously, is to save the political hides of hon. members opposite.

Now let us look at the enrolments in the zones set out in the Bill. In Zone 1, to which it is proposed to give 24 members, the enrolment is 253,284. In Zone 2, the south-eastern area, which will have 28 members, the enrolment is 255,692, and in Zone 3,

which is to have 13 members, the enrolment is 97,366, and in Zone 4, which is to have 10 members, the enrolment is 47,561.

We find on an analysis of the enrolments for 1948 compared with 1932 that in Zone 1 there has been an increase of 63,577 or 33.5 per cent., in Zone 2 an increase of 48,981 or 23.7 per cent., in Zone 3 an increase of 17,253 or 21.5 per cent., and in Zone 4, that is, the West, a decrease of 1,402 or 2.8 per cent.

The Premier said that he had soft-pedalled on the number of additional members to be given to the metropolitan area, but let us look at that statement and see whether it is correct. Although the metropolitan area has an enrolment of 255,692 it has been given four additional members, while Zone 2, with an enrolment of 255,692, has been given only three additional members. The position should have been reversed and four additional members been given to the South-eastern Division and only three to the metropolitan area.

The Premier has shed crocodile tears over the comparison of the metropolitan area with the country and his statement, on a proper examination of the position, is not borne out by the facts. The northern part of the State, almost wholly represented by Labour since 1932, shows very little progress compared with Brisbane and the South-eastern Division, yet three additional members are to go there. Why? It is because hon. members opposite hope that the political position in that area will be maintained and that it will be to the advantage of their party. The western area, wholly represented by Labour, has lost population and it is to be rewarded for that fact by three additional members.

We must look at the reason for these disproportionate increases in representation of Zones 3 and 4. They certainly cannot be found in the speech of the Premier today but if we look at the political set-up we shall find that the increased representation in these two areas is largely designed to ensure complete domination by the A.W.U., which is very strong in these two areas, and of course consequential domination by the Labour Party. The industrial unionists of this State need to sit up and take notice of what is happening.

Mr. Aikens: And in the electorates where they can rig the plebiscites.

Mr. NICKLIN: We know that there is black-marketing in this State but I forecast that there will be another source of black-marketing added to the already long list of black-marketing in Queensland and that will be the black-marketing of A.W.U. tickets issued for purposes of the ballot.

I have finished my remarks on that aspect of the Bill and I now want to turn to the position of the various cities. The Premier made much this morning of not giving undue advantages to the city. What is the difference in the quotas between the cities of Townsville or Rockhampton, the larger cities in the country, and the city of Brisbane?

Mr. Hanlon: Did you not run a Country Party candidate for Townsville at the last elections? You must have thought it was country then.

Mr. NICKLIN: The Country Party is quite entitled to run a candidate for any electorate where it thinks fit.

Let us look at the differentiation, under this Bill, between the cities of the State. For example, compare the cities of Bundaberg, Maryborough and Gympie with Townsville, Cairns and Mackay, having particular regard to the ways in which these cities will be treated under this legislation. I will give the 1947 census figures. Bundaberg, with a population of 15,921, has a quota under this Bill of 9,536. Maryborough, with a population of 14,409, has exactly the same quota. Gympie, with a population of 8,413, will have a similar quota of 9,536. In Townsville, a city with 34,233 people, the quota is 7,852. Cairns, with a population of 16,641, has the same quota as Townsville, as also does Mackay, which has a population of 13,500. Here we have a differentiation between the various cities in the quotas allocated to them.

Ipswich has a population of 26,218, and its quota is 9,536. Rockhampton, with a population of 34,983, has a similar quota. The same quota is applied to Toowoomba, which has a population of 33,326, while Townsville, with a population of 34,233, has a quota of 7,852.

Let us turn for a comparison to Gympie, Warwick and Charters Towers, which are rural cities. We find that Gympie, with a population of 8,413, is credited with a quota of 9,536. Warwick, with a population of 7,130, also has a quota of 9,536, yet Charters Towers, with a population of 7,567, has a quota under this measure of 4,783.

When you see anomalies such as these existing in this legislation people are entitled to ask: why this differentiation between the various cities in the various centres of the State? With comparatively small quotas the larger cities could have two or more representatives and could be made to dominate the surrounding country areas. Yet the Premier said he wants the country to dominate the electoral situation. We find that the opposite exists in the scheme disclosed in this measure. Similarly, Charters Towers by itself could be practically an electorate, whereas Gympie and Warwick must have surrounding country included with them to make up their quota, the reason being that hon. members opposite hope to get a political advantage as a result.

Mr. Power: We can win on our policy; we do not want any political advantage.

Mr. NICKLIN: If hon. members opposite are so sure of that, I repeat the challenge I made earlier: let them fight an election on this thing alone. They would not do it; they do not want to commit political suicide.

If there is to be any real help to country electors, metropolitan electorates should have the maximum number of electors—there is no sound reason either for any differentiation such as exists at present, with Brisbane 8,774 and Logan 17,562—and other large cities should have a separate minimum number, sufficient to ensure only a fair representation.

This redistribution is based on the enrolments at 31 December, 1948. The purity of the rolls is important, and it is to be hoped they are much purer than those used at last State elections. It is a very important aspect in regard to this measure that we have to consider at the moment.

Mr. Power: Your figures on the rolls were proved incorrect on more occasions than one.

Mr. NICKLIN: It is interesting to note that on the last occasion we had a debate on the question of rolls the hon. member who has just interjected was Acting Attorney-General.

Mr. Power: He made a fool of you.

Mr. NICKLIN: He dodged the issue.

Mr. Power: I did not.

Mr. NICKLIN: He was going to produce all sorts of things—

Mr. Power: Read "Hansard."

Mr. NICKLIN: When it came to the time the hon. member glossed over the whole thing in the hope that everybody would forget about it. I mention that in passing. It is not a principle in this Bill although there is a clear connection between the two.

There is no doubt very serious consideration has to be given to this measure because of the effects that will be bound up with it after it becomes law. I think it is one of the most outrageous measures that have ever been introduced in any British Parliament.

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. NICKLIN: I say that because this Government—and they happen on this occasion to be a Labour Government—being so sure of election after the passage of the Bill, which is heavily loaded in their favour, will become increasingly brazen and unscrupulous in putting their confiscatory policy into operation and in using their powers of victimisation and patronage in personal matters. When we consider this angle of it we should take heed of the remark made by that great statesman Edmund Burke in the House of Commons in 1771—"The greater the power, the more dangerous the abuse." A tremendous power will be given to hon. members opposite after the passage of this Bill. The will of the people becomes their last testament; the redistribution provision in this measure will sound the death knell of the political rights of the people; the political rights of the people will count for naught after its passage. We must not forget that the object of hon. members opposite is the same as that of the Communist Party—the socialisation of the means of production, distribution, and exchange. As far as elective government is concerned, this Bill will have the same effect as the Russian system—that no opposition candidates will be tolerated in any election.

There are a Labour Government in the Federal sphere who have the same objective,

the same Socialistic objective as hon. members opposite, endeavouring to communise banking, the medical profession, shipping, broadcasting, the C.S.I.R., and the marketing of primary products.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in discussing nationalisation.

Mr. NICKLIN: The Federal Government are setting up their own Gestapo. The State Labour Government are communising coal and, by this legislation, the electoral machinery. This Bill supplies a full measure of grease for the skids on which Queensland will be launched into the bog of Communism. It is a totalitarian measure, pure and undefiled. On the passage of this Bill the light of democracy stands a good chance of being extinguished and the Dark Ages, about which hon. members opposite talk so much, will return. If this redistribution becomes effective, history in this State will go into reverse and the democratic rights that the people of this State treasure will be taken from them, because there will be, as hon. members opposite hope, a minority Government governing Queensland for all time. This measure obviously is one that will be opposed by hon. members on this side with all the power at their command.

Mr. HILEY (Logan) (12.27 p.m.): Mr. Speaker, only to the extent that our system permits the States to show that they are an integral part of the democratic system of Government of this country can they hope to retain the respect that will encourage their continuance. My first attack on the Government for bringing forward this proposal is that they are striking a great blow at the position of the States in our governmental system, because by killing the democratic basis of constitutional government they will kill that thing upon which the States depend for their very existence, that is, the respect of the people as a whole. Only as we continue to be really democratic can we hope to retain that respect; this measure will kill it.

The second line of attack I take is this: if we go to the United Nations Organisation we find a genuine attempt to assess what are the human rights of the people of this world. In what is termed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights the United Nations Assembly has recently codified under numerous headings what it regards as the fundamental rights of human beings without regard to colour, creed or country. On this question of the rights of the human being in regard to the suffrage, the United Nations Organisation within the last few months has said something that goes right to the root of this matter, and it is fitting that this Assembly should hear what that organisation says. In its preamble it states—

"Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law."

The Assembly then sets out what it regards as the fundamentals of the rule of law. In Article 21 it says—

“Everyone has the right to take part in the Government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.”

On that point I have no quarrel with the measure. There is no suggestion of interference with the adult suffrage. There is no suggestion other than that we shall have representative government.

The next is that everyone has the right of equal access to the Public Service of his country. Again there is nothing in the measure touching that particular declaration.

But in the third declaration there is everything in this measure to run completely contrary to the declaration. Sub-clause (3) of Article 21 says—

“The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of Government; this will be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.”

There you have a declaration by that body that many people and most nations of the world hope is sounding a fresh note in connection with the right of human beings in this sorry world of ours. There you have a declaration that amongst other things the ideal of equal suffrage is upheld. This measure, far from aiming at equal suffrage, turns its back on the ideal and goes as far from equal suffrage as it is possible to go.

Mr. Roberts: In that you are at variance with the Country Party.

Mr. HILEY: The hon. member has yet to convince me that the members of the Country Party are turning their backs on the ideal of equal suffrage. He has heard me already on the degree to which I am prepared to depart from it, and if necessary I will repeat it. I have never challenged the idea that sparseness of population and great distances should carry some premium against the crude test of absolute equality on all points.

Mr. Roberts: That is not provided for in the declaration by the United Nations body.

Mr. HILEY: The question is whether we are asked to choose between jet-black or something that is a shade or two off jet-black and something that, on the contrary, is the reverse, pure white. I say the approach of the Country Party and of my own party to this question is to put up as a beacon, a mark to guide us, equal suffrage. That is the beacon. From what beacon we veer a little to allow shades of merit for distances from the seat of government and for the sparsity of population; but to depart to the extent that this Bill envisages is to throw away completely all question of equality and to go as far from equality as it is possible to go.

Mr. Hanlon: Then your opposition is merely a question of degree?

Mr. HILEY: Exactly, but the question of degree finishes at the point where, to use the analogy of evening hours, we leave the dusk altogether and finish in the midnight gloom. We are prepared to recognise a divergence from the bright light of day by the infiltrating twilights of the evening, but the Government's proposal wants to take us right into the complete black-out of the midnight hour. That is the degree of divergence that they pretend is the mere matter of difference of degree between our approach and theirs.

The action of the Government in flying completely in the face of the declaration of human rights so recently passed by the United Nations Assembly is a fearful and frightening thing when we consider its implications.

Mr. Hanlon: That is not in operation in any State of Australia or any part of the British Empire that I know.

Mr. HILEY: All that observation shows is that the Premier is rushing to join the ranks we freely admit exist in certain other parts of Australia.

Mr. Hanlon: There is no more completely representative Government in any part of the British Empire that I know of than in Queensland. You have property franchise in every other State of Australia to start with.

Mr. HILEY: The question is whether we are to get closer to the ideal or whether we are to go further from it. There is no contest on this side of the fact that there is something radically wrong with our system of electoral distribution. It is obvious that in the time that has elapsed since redistribution took place the electorates have got hopelessly out of gear and far from the principle that was even then laid down. There was a feeling—and the Premier made reference to it—that was manifested by the requests that were coming in and the urgings that have been made for a redistribution. The redistribution that was the object of those urgings was not a worsening of the position, which this measure entails; it was hoped that we should have at least the moral courage to steer closely to the course of pure democracy rather than as the Premier says. (Government laughter.) Yes, he can laugh, but he becomes, if this measure is carried, St. Edward for ever onwards, canonised by the Labour Party because for ever and a day the Labour Party can prevail in this State, although it controls only one-third of the total votes of the people. That is a tragedy. In an age when this country, in common with other countries, is striving resolutely to fight the forces of dictatorship and seeking to uphold democratic practices for those nations of the world that are being oppressed or attacked by various forms of dictatorship, for this State to step away from the ideal of democracy and head towards a system that promotes minority government and makes it certain—and that is what this system permits—is a tragedy. If the facts were told around the United Nations table it would be asked: what sort of a Government and what outlook have those people in Queensland got?

A further attack I make—and the basis is crudely obvious—is that this measure is designed for one reason only: to ensure the eternal return of Labour in this State. It is not accident that these zones were created almost invariably with the smallest qualification in those areas where Labour is the strongest. The suggestion of the high idealism of better representation for the country as the guiding force is frankly an insult to our intelligence.

Now, Mr. Speaker, take some of the arguments advanced by the Premier in support of the measure. He said that we must not let the city dominate. The House at present consists of 62 members, of which less than a third is metropolis representation. How any theory can assert that the present Constitution allows the metropolis to dominate Parliament surpasses mathematical understanding. So far as the proportions are concerned, I have no quarrel. There is no suggestion of anything like a 50-50 basis to entitle people to feel that the city could dominate the State. I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, where the real domination is. It is in the occupancy of the highest offices in the Government. There are 11 Cabinet Ministers, a Speaker and a Chairman of Committees and of these 13 metropolitan representatives occupy six positions. When virtually 50 per cent. of the high offices of the party are held by metropolitan members and one-third of the strength of the Government Party—

Mr. Hanlon interjected.

Mr. HILEY: How can the Government say that the danger of city domination lies in the present constitution of the House? In fact there is city domination but that domination exists in the Labour Party rooms and it influences its selection of Cabinet Ministers and leaves me to observe this: there is not one genuine western member in the Cabinet.

Mr. Hanlon: Until recently I was the only metropolitan member in the Cabinet.

Mr. HILEY: The pendulum has swung very violently the other way and the Premier might argue that this Bill should be hallowed by its geographical qualifications, but in practice the Government have shown that the metropolitan domination is in the Labour Party rooms and not in the constitution of this House.

Mr. Aikens: That is not the basis of domination and you know it.

The Premier had something to say about electoral reform and he pretended, as he is so fond of pretending, that he was the only person in this House who was interested in reform.

Mr. Hanlon: I did not. I said that the whole of my party was.

Mr. HILEY: Then I would substitute that the whole of his party was the only party interested in reform, but I make this observation that the greatest advance in electoral reforms that has been made over the years in Great Britain took place when there was no Labour Party in existence, and

the very thing that the electoral reformists of those days set out to destroy was the very thing that is going to pop its head up in this Bill. These electoral reformists attacked all electoral privilege, whether the privilege arose from occupation, whether it arose from tradition, or whether it arose from class. Over the last century the tendency has been to destroy the pocket borough and to provide for a lessening and progressive widening of privileged seats, such as university seats and the like. The tendency of electoral reformists over the last century has been a nearer and nearer approach to the ideal of equality of suffrage.

Mr. Power: Nobody wants your job.

Mr. HILEY: I do not think that my job should influence a consideration of the high principles involved.

In his so-called reforms the Premier has turned his back, not only on the whole course and trend of electoral reforms, but he has turned his back completely upon the principle that has always actuated him. What he calls electoral reforms are not electoral reforms at all, but are attempts to destroy the very basic principles of democracy. He is saying to his own supporters, to the trade unionists, the process worker in Brisbane, the coal-miner in Ipswich, or the meat worker at Gladstone, "You, my friend, have a lesser value than the unionist shearing sheep on the Barcoo." It is something that he might very well think over, because it is contrary to the democratic principles practised by unionists themselves.

Here is another point of objection that I have. We have at the present time to meet the fire from Communists and other minority movements. The Premier has been loud-mouthed, and rightly so, in asserting that the salvation of the trade-union movement is the restoration of the principle of democracy in the trade-union movement itself. Quite right, Mr. Premier. But what example is he showing to those forces that are seeking to restore the principle of democracy in the trade-union movement by saying to one unionist, shearing sheep on the Diamantina, "You have double or two and a half times the worth of your fellow-unionist nearer the coast"? That is a clear indication of what he is saying. In these times of grave industrial trouble, the trade-union movement is being heavily assailed by minority movements like the Communist Party, and this is no time in the history of the Labour movement for a democratic Government to give such a shocking example of the practice of democratic principles.

Wherever the Communists have gained ground it has largely been because of the presence of minority movements. When Czecho-Slovakia was engulfed behind the Iron Curtain the Communist movement, by abusing the trade-union movement, was able to enslave what had hitherto been a free country. Wherever you go, free countries quickly disappear behind the Iron Curtain where minority movements have been able to make headway. This Bill clearly makes minority government not only possible but

also certain. For that reason the people should realise that in providing for minority government they are creating the background that will enable Communists to take and use power and thus make the Bill a contributing factor in the advance of Communism in this State. That in itself should be sufficient to deter anyone from making it easier for Communists to carry on their foul work in this fair land of ours.

At one stage in his address the Premier said that so far as this Bill was concerned he would let the people judge. Nothing would suit me better. In other words, if the Government would live up to the spirit of their boast and take a referendum of the people on an equal-suffrage basis on the merits of this measure, I should be well content to abide by the result. Instead, what happens? This Bill will be carried and the next election will be fought on its ruins. One man's vote in one place will be worth three times that of a man in another place. How can the people judge on these rules?

The position is analogous to two teams playing cricket, one with a short boundary and one with no boundary at all. Unless these things are fought on a rule or system that operate equally and fairly, how can the people judge and how can we have any reliance on the results?

One argument advanced by the Premier was the need to develop the West and North. On that note there is no disagreement from any side of this House. It is on the score of purpose that the difference arises, because there has been a mounting feeling on this side of the House, within the Premier's own party, and elsewhere, that too long this State has been too indifferent to the development of the West and North. Whatever blame attaches to the lack of development of the West and North, it rests principally on the shoulders of the Government, who have for such a long period been entrusted in this State with the reins of democracy.

While everyone in this House is glad to see some recent evidence that at last the development of the North and West is claiming greater attention within the Government Party than for many years past, it is sheer hypocrisy for this Government, above all Governments, to come to this House and say that the development of the North and West is the real reason for this Bill. As a matter of fact, this Government have very astutely set it up to offset the effects of their own failure. If one wanted an analogy it would be the analogy of a man who, out of a job, sets fire to a city warehouse and then rushes to the fire station for employment as a fireman. (Laughter.) In other words he creates the mischief and then applies for a job to correct it. If any analogy was wanted for the lack of the development of the North and West, that is a truer one.

My belief is that our electoral representation system has drifted too far from the ideal to be tolerable. As the Premier pointed out, there have been electorates where the number of electors on the roll are only 40 or 50 per cent. of the enrolment in many others. Faced with that situation, I believe

the Government had between them a clear way for reform of our electoral representation. What do the Government do? I might be pardoned for turning to a biblical analogy. The citizens of the day waited on Rheoboam, one of the sons of Solomon, to complain about the weight of taxation—apparently they had the same troubles in those days as we do in these; the government surely are the lineal descendants of the then rulers; they can proudly trace their ancestry back to those days. When the deputation waited on the King of Israel to complain about the weight of taxation what did he say? He said, of his father King Solomon, "My father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." In other words, he said he would out-Herod Herod. That is a precise analogy to what is happening here about the electoral position. Already we have this Government holding office with a lesser number of votes cast at the ballot box than were obtained by both the Country Party and ourselves. That is undeniable.

Mr. Hanlon: But neither of your parties got a majority of votes.

Mr. HILEY: We did not get a majority, because of our independence, but I do assert, and no-one can deny it, that the Country Party and ourselves gained between us more votes than the Government.

Mr. Hanlon: Both of you did not get 50 per cent. of the votes cast.

Mr. HILEY: But both of us between us got nearly more than 50 per cent. of the votes cast though than your party did. He secured 40 per cent. and we got 45.

By all means let us correct the evils of the present system. Everyone is in agreement on that, but to set out to make it worse, as this Bill does, is, I say, to parallel the scriptural story in which the people complained of injustices and said they were beaten with whips, the cynical king said, "I will not beat you with whips, I will beat you with scorpions." The Labour Government today say, "We know things are bad; we will alter them; we will make them worse; we will make it more favourable for ourselves." That is the plain indication of this measure.

In the course of drawing several red herrings across the trail, with that facility for which he is so famous and almost appreciated in this House, the hon. gentleman made reference to the attitude of the Opposition towards an Upper House. Let me say this: as far as Upper House restoration is concerned, I will have none of it. If, Mr. Speaker, the party of which I am a member changed its present attitude, which does not favour an Upper House, and sought to restore it, I should feel so strongly about it that I would leave the party and resign. Let there be an end of this casting up of nonsense of the past. I have said that at party conventions, and I believe I am right in saying that my friends the Country Party have precisely the same view.

Mr. Power: No, they have not.

Mr. HILEY: They will answer. I believe I am right in saying that the restoration of the Upper House is not a practical point of Country Party policy today. As far as my party is concerned, let there be an end of this nonsense, and of throwing the desire for an Upper House back in our teeth. I do not believe in it; I would have nothing to do with it, neither would any member of my party.

Mr. Burrows: How would you get on if the Country Party wanted to restore the Upper House?

Mr. HILEY: It would have to do it on its own. The Labour Party would like to drive a wedge between the two parties; it will find that we have singleness of view on that matter.

Mr. Aikens: The Labour Party has an Upper House in Dunstan House.

Mr. HILEY: The interjector misunderstands the position.

(Hon. members interjecting.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Mann): Order! There is too much interruption. I should like hon. members to allow the hon. member to make his speech without interruption.

Mr. HILEY: It is clear that the world is passing through a stage where there has been a series of attempts at the establishment of a dictatorship by a multitude of means. Over the last 10 or 15 years, in form after form and name after name, you have seen various forms of dictatorship with this much in common: in every case the will of the majority of the people was either not ascertained, or ignored or browbeaten; and in some cases dictatorship even took the form of dictatorship by armed might, where the dictator surrounded himself with a hedge of bayonets and held office by the power of the sword; in other cases, without the emphasis being on the side of the armed forces, you have dictatorship with secret police and the concentration camp.

Mr. Power: And the 1912 scabs too.

Mr. HILEY: My friend of ancient history is at it again. That type of dictatorship too was very prevalent. In recent world history a newer type of dictatorship is being announced today, and announced by the Labour Party of Queensland, that is, the type of dictatorship which will still dictate through the ballot box. It does not matter what the will of the people is, what the majority of the people think, the districts will be so arranged, the electorates so managed and conducted, that the minority of the people can flout the wishes of the majority. I say that in itself is a form of dictatorship—a dictatorship through the ballot box, a dictatorship by suffrage, if you like. Mr. Speaker, that is a sad thing to contemplate at any time.

The real reason for the passage of this measure was the fact that in the 1947 elections the Country Party and ourselves did get a greater number of votes than the Government. Obviously, the Government fear that in the light of that experience, unless something is done to alter the basis of the rules under which elections are conducted, they run a serious danger of defeat. That is the real explanation for this measure. And what will be the result? Not only will the Labour Party be on the Government benches for ever—

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. HILEY: That is clear. Not only is it openly applauded by back-benchers in the House but freely boasted of by them outside the House. There is no hypocrisy about them. They do not talk of the idealism of the needs of the West and the North, they say, "We are here for ever, thanks to St. Edward." (Laughter.)

Mr. Speaker, there will still be an Opposition in Queensland, but what will be the position of the Opposition? Shrunk in numbers compared to their following in the community, impotent in power, and at all times denied any real hope of aspiring to office. Can any person pretend, can the Premier pretend, that such a set of circumstances can by any test of the word claim to be democratic?

Hon. J. LARCOMBE (Rockhampton—Treasurer) (12.57 p.m.): What an appalling picture of the Opposition prospects has been painted by the hon. member for Logan—an appallingly pessimistic picture of doom? What a defeatist attitude for any party to adopt—to suggest that there is no hope, that they are doomed to opposition for the remainder of their parliamentary lives! I cannot believe that reasonable intelligent members of the Opposition would really adopt an attitude of that kind.

When the Premier was speaking, one observed the animated interjections of members of the Opposition, but as one with political history, experience, and knowledge at my command I venture this prediction: at the next State elections the Opposition will claim credit for this Bill. (Opposition laughter.) That is what they have done through our political history. They have fought strenuously every measure of progress and reform submitted by this party and Government, but a few years later have claimed credit for it. I believe that history will repeat itself as regards this measure.

The speech of the Leader of the Opposition was extravagant and extraordinary. It was ponderous and platitudinous. The hon. gentleman did not confine himself to logical opposition to the measure but abused the Government. He knows quite well that a bad case abideth no handling.

Mr. Brand: That is why you are up now.

Mr. LARCOMBE: No. The hon. gentleman knows quite well that from the viewpoint of political parliamentary and logical soundness the measure is incontrovertible and

unavailable. The hon. gentleman challenged the Government to go to the country on this measure and said he was certain the Government would be defeated. That is in contrast with that said by the hon. member for Logan. But I would ask the Leader of the Opposition this question: why does he not welcome the measure? He wants to defeat the Government. He and his party have been trying to do that since 1915. For over 34 years they endeavoured to defeat the Government and each time, with one exception, they failed.

I should like to quote from the speech of the hon. member for Logan to emphasise and confirm what I said about the party opposite as to their opposing bitterly at one stage of political history reforms advanced by Labour and later claiming credit for supporting them.

The hon. member for Logan said he would not sit in a Cabinet that decided to re-establish the Legislative Council. Years ago I sat in this Parliament and I heard the attacks of hon. members opposite upon the Labour Government because they put forward a Bill to abolish the Legislative Council. We were accused and abused in the wildest possible terms, yet today, a quarter of a century afterwards, the Leader of the Queensland People's Party says, "Yes, it is sound in constitutionally and in the parliamentary sense. I would not remain in any Government who attempted to re-establish the Council." That is a very remarkable attitude. Here we find Labour assailed by the Opposition at one stage of their history, and later the Opposition supporting the reform.

The speech by the hon. member for Logan was remarkable too. He threw up his hands and said, "The Opposition will always be in opposition; Labour will always win, because of this measure." His speech reminded me of Dante's *Inferno*, of Milton's "Paradise Lost" and the characters in those two poems, writhing in misery and hopelessness.

Mr. Evans: You remind me of a man with a brick in his glass.

Mr. LARCOMBE: That may be so but the hon. member often uses one himself.

The attitude of the Leader of the Queensland People's Party is one of despair and hopelessness, of melancholy and dismal outlook, an attitude that one would not expect from the leader of a party in this Parliament.

On the other hand, the Leader of the Country Party, the Leader of the Opposition, did adopt a different attitude. He threw out a quixotic challenge. He said, "The Opposition challenge the Government to go to the country on this measure and we feel sure that if they do they will be defeated." The Leader of the Opposition was certainly full of beans. He took some comfort from Alexander Pope's line "Hope springs eternal in the human breast." No doubt the Leader of the Opposition is still hopeful, and in politics that is how it should be. Later I shall attempt to show that his fears are unfounded and unwarranted so far as concerns the coming election, particularly with relation to

this Bill. If Labour remains in power it will be for reasons other than the passage of this Bill.

Mr. Sparkes: You can persuade yourself to believe anything.

Mr. LARCOMBE: It is not a question of self-hypnotism at all; it is only an understanding of the position as I see it in relation to this Bill. The Government are prepared to make this one of the major issues at the next election and accept the challenge by the Leader of the Opposition. Then we shall see whether his prophecy is correct; if the people defeat Labour at the next election, as he forecast, then this Bill cannot be the undemocratic measure he says it is.

If Labour can be defeated, all the arguments of the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Queensland People's Party go by the board. The Opposition cannot have it both ways. They cannot assert that this Bill is undemocratic and say that the first time it is submitted to the people as an issue Labour will be defeated and the Opposition will win.

The Leader of the Opposition said that electoral representation changes were not needed, but that sympathetic consideration for the country generally was needed. On that ground also I submit that our case is strong, and that the attack of the Leader of the Opposition was unwarranted.

In passing, let me briefly mention some of the major reforms for which Labour has been responsible, reforms that have helped to develop this country, particularly Central Queensland and Northern Queensland. Take, for instance, the Rockhampton-Cairns railway; Labour spent at a cost of £4,000,000 on it. Labour in the building of that railway connected the central and northern parts of the State. Go to the Upper Burnett, where £2,500,000 was spent by Labour upon railways for that area. There is also Labour's generous land-settlement scheme; then the Mt. Isa railway was another development scheme started by a Labour Government.

Mr. Decker: An Address in Reply speech.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I remind the hon. member for Sandgate that I will be the judge of that. I want to add, also, that the question of development has relation to the matter under discussion. As previous speakers discussed the question along those lines, I propose to allow the Treasurer to do so, within reason.

Mr. LARCOMBE: I will not abuse the right I have. I am merely mentioning these many reforms in passing. I was saying that the Mt. Isa railway and the Mt. Isa development scheme transformed a big proportion of Northern Queensland. The Government smashed the great pastoral monopoly of Queensland and made land available to graziers and their sons. The protective cane-prices legislation has been the salvation of the sugar industry; the primary producers' organisation legislation revolutionised primary producers in Queensland and gave

them a protection they had been without. Labour Government made available also substantial sums to investors in North Queensland to enable business production to be developed and so assisted private enterprise in that way.

Mr. Evans: And State enterprises too.

Mr. LARCOMBE: And therefore I say on that ground the arguments put forward by the Leader of the Opposition are unsound and we have justified our existence. The interjection by the hon. member for Mirani about State enterprise reminds me of a State enterprise in the State Government Insurance Office, an insurance office that has shown profits of over £3,000,000.

What once cost £1 to insure now costs 5s. only to insure in fire insurance.

Mr. Sparkes: A monopoly.

Mr. LARCOMBE: The State Government Insurance Office is more than 50 per cent. competitive, and, as I said, has shown profits amounting to more than £3,000,000.

The Leader of the Opposition in his speech referred to the population of the central part of the State and of the North. Let me remind him that his comparison was inadequate and incomplete. If he would go back to 1914 he would find that there has been a great increase in population, particularly in North Queensland—Cairns, Townsville, Tully, Mackay and other parts. It is all very fine to make a short comparison embracing the years of the war, a war that tremendously affected country population, but if the Leader of the Opposition went back to 1914 he would find that there has been a substantial increase in the population of North Queensland. The Far North of this State was neglected by anti-Labour Administration.

Mr. Aikens: I thought you were going to give us some figures that would defeat your own argument.

Mr. LARCOMBE: The figures are contained in my Address in Reply speech in "Hansard" and the hon. member can find them there. My electorate is deeply interested in the Bill, which is a very good reason why I should speak on the second reading. The title of the Bill might appropriately be Electoral Representation Decentralisation Bill. It is in consonance with the Government's general decentralisation policy, agriculturally, educationally and otherwise. What is the use of taking further steps in the implementation of decentralisation for the purpose of building up industry in country districts if we do not have decentralisation of electoral representation as well? There is no better safeguard of country interests and no better guarantee of country development than the Bill itself. Proper political and electoral representation such as that proposed in the measure has been needed for some time. The Bill gives the power that will enable the people in the outlying parts of the State to make their representations to the Government more effectively.

The principles of the Bill are sound and satisfactory. One of the principles is to

increase the number of members of Parliament to 75. Back in 1887 the number of members of Parliament was fixed at 72, or three fewer than that proposed by the measure. As a matter of fact, in 1887 the number of Parliamentarians in the Queensland Parliament, including the members of the Legislative Council, was 98, or 23 more than the number set out in the Bill. In 1886-87 the Consolidated Revenue of the State was £2,808,000 but in 1947-48 it was £26,800,000. In 1886-1887 the population of the State was 343,000, and in 1947-48 it was 1,107,000. There have been vast changes in that period and great progress has been made. However, the increase in the number of members of Parliament has not kept pace with the general progress made during that period. The chief principles of the Bill are sound, and I submit will be approved by the House.

I come now to the principle of zoning, and I submit again that that principle is logically unchallengeable. It is recognised in effect in our electoral representation today.

Mr. Evans: It depends on who does the zoning.

Mr. LARCOMBE: I shall reply to that observation in a few moments. A redistribution took place in 1931, and I shall refer to that shortly too.

Mr. Evans: So long as it is done by an independent tribunal.

Mr. LARCOMBE: I shall deal with that also. The further the electorates are from the seat of government, the greater the difficulties for the electors concerned. It is difficult for those electors to make their representations in an adequate way and in a way in which representations may be made by the electors in metropolitan and nearby seats. I believe, therefore, that from that viewpoint the principle of representation based on zoning is sound. The electors in the outlying parts of Queensland are entitled to consideration and they are getting it in this measure.

Mr. Sparkes: But you have tied the hands of the Commission by the adoption of zoning. Why not give them a free hand to deal with the whole of the State?

Mr. LARCOMBE: I shall reply to that also in due course.

The attitude of the Leader of the Opposition, the Country Party and the Opposition generally towards the Bill is rather puzzling, because it seeks to give better consideration and better protection to the outlying parts of the State, and that is something that hon. members opposite say they stand for. It gives better protection to Central and Northern Queensland. Here is a Bill that contains that kind of reform and yet they are opposed to it. The members of the Queensland People's Party are opposed to it too, but as a metropolitan party with a metropolitan outlook they see some danger to the strength of a metropolitan party in the Bill. However, they must look further

than the metropolis, they must view the State as a whole. Although the Bill may have the effect of checking the growing representation of the metropolitan area, it is justified and should become law.

The Leader of the Queensland People's Party addressed a meeting in Brisbane last week. He tried to stir up a little jealousy and ill-feeling between country electors and city electors by drawing a comparison between the voting strength of the electors in the country and metropolitan areas. We do not want those invidious comparisons. We want co-operation and good will. It is inadvisable to a degree to try to pit country electorates against city electorates, as was attempted by the Leader of the Queensland People's Party.

The Leader of the Opposition contributed an article last week to the "Telegraph" in what is known as the "As I see it" column, in which he said—

"The Electoral Districts Bill now before Parliament boils down to nothing less than a deliberate degradation of democracy and a prostitution of politics."

That is a cheap false jibe, just false abuse. It would be better if he recalled the political jobbery of the anti-Labour Government between 1929 and 1932, and the trickery of the Moore Government.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. LARCOMBE: His criticism was an attempt to divert and side-track attention to the monstrous Bill made law by the anti-Labour Party in 1931. The Leader of the Opposition protested too much. He worked himself up into a state of righteous indignation. He reminded me of the following lines of Robert Burns:—

"O ye wha are sae guid yoursel',
Sae pious and sae holy
Ye've nought to do but mark and tell
You ne'ibours' fauts and folly."

All the political Opposition seek to do is to find out the faults of the Government. They recite our political sins by the chapter, but they will not go into retrospectivity and look at their own Government's sins in 1929-32. Robert Burns used those words in regard to religious hypocrisy and I used them in regard to political hypocrisy.

The Leader of the Opposition in that article resorted to a racing simile or metaphor or analogy. Let me do the same. Let me say the Labour Opposition carried a tremendous handicap in 1932 because of the odious redistribution they made because of the cutting out of seats and because of the faking of the franchise. As a result Labour was over-weighted in 1932 but Labour carried that over-weight in Bernborough style. It ran in Bernborough fashion and won in Bernborough style, too. You see that Labour, although over-weighted, flashed through at the last moment from the opposition, and won in paralysing fashion. That paralysed the Opposition politically and has kept them paralysed ever since.

Government Members: Hear, hear!
(Opposition interjections.)

Mr. LARCOMBE: That was a miraculous run. Labour then had a victory that was memorable in the history of the State, notwithstanding this heavy handicapping.

Let me proceed to analyse some of the objections to the Bill and examine the nature of some of the criticism. Hon. members opposite say that too many members of Parliament are provided for in this Bill. I disagree with that viewpoint. The number is 75. The area of Queensland is 670,500 square miles. That is an enormous area, as hon. members know. We have three great divisions. Our population is not merely on the coastline as in other States, it widens out and spreads out throughout the State. We have a spread of many hundreds of miles from Brisbane. Quilpie is 621 miles from Brisbane; from Rockhampton to Longreach is 427 and from Townsville to Winton 368. From Cairns inland too there is much settlement. Our population is not a fringe on the coast but is spread throughout the State. Those who travelled over the State know of its enormous proportions and how the population has increased, as I have mentioned, since the Legislative Assembly's numbers were fixed at 72.

Mr. Sparkes: The population has not increased in those western areas.

Mr. LARCOMBE: The hon. member knows it has. I gave one comparison and I shall give another. In 1921 the number of Parliamentarians in both Houses was 128, and if this Bill becomes law the number will be 75 or 53 fewer than the number of members 28 years ago. In the face of that, how can hon. members opposite say that too many members are provided for in this Bill? We are providing for 53 fewer than 28 years ago. Surely that is a crushing reply to the suggestion that the proposed increase in the number of members is too great. The activities of the State are great; production is great, and population is growing, and the increase suggested by the Bill is not too great for Queensland.

Let me make a comparison between the number of Parliamentarians in the main States of the Commonwealth. In Victoria there are 99 members in both Houses, South Australia 59, Western Australia 50, New South Wales 150; so Queensland, with one exception, has fewer than all the mainland States, and when the Bill becomes law will have fewer than all the mainland States, with one exception. That statement disposes of the suggestion that the Bill is providing for too many members.

In place of logical argument the Opposition have substituted the suggestion of ulterior motive and unwarranted action on the part of the Government. That is characteristic of hon. members opposite. When we introduce this Bill they say "Political dictatorship," when we introduce the Abattoirs Bill, they say, "Socialisation;" and when we introduce a scheme to develop food production in North Queensland they scream "Nationalisation." That is bogymongering, and making statements that terminate in accents terrible.

The Opposition fears in respect of this Bill are ungrounded and unfounded. Hon. members opposite think that the Government are constantly hatching all kinds of schemes to bring about the destruction of the Opposition. Nothing could be further from the truth. But the Opposition have done it. It is not necessary for the Government to do what they say they are going to do. The speeches of hon. members opposite, particularly in regard to their unwarranted fears, remind me of the words from Shakespeare:—

“O hateful error Melancholy’s child!

Why dost thou show to the apt thoughts of men

Things that are not?”

Out of the melancholy thoughts of members opposite they see things that are not. They see danger; they feel fear; they believe the Government are secretly and unscrupulously hatching schemes to bring about their destruction. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The hon. member for West Moreton is very pessimistic, so much so that he is going to seek fields and pastures new; he is going to run for the Senate—stand or run, more run than stand. (Government laughter.) He will find that there are difficulties in the Federal sphere as in the State sphere. It is a bad omen for his party to be running from State politics and endeavouring to win in the Senate.

Mr. Sparkes: What is wrong with it?

Mr. LARCOMBE: There is nothing particularly wrong in it, but I think it is a bad omen for his party.

Mr. Sparkes: You realise that he is going in.

Mr. LARCOMBE: I cover that position. I say that he will find there are great difficulties in the Federal sphere. In the words of Robert Burns:—

“The best laid schemes of mice and men
gang aft agley but lea’e us nought but
grief an’ pain
For promis’d joy.”

The hon. member will find that: he will find that the best-laid schemes of mice and men gang aft agley. He will find Labour will sweep the Senate.

The hon. member for West Moreton spoke of the Bill as establishing a political dictatorship. Nothing could be further from the truth. There cannot be a political dictatorship in Queensland because Labour has established political democracy. (Opposition dissent.) Labour has broadened the franchise, abolished the conservative Upper House, which had power to veto the work of the people’s representatives. Today, whichever party is in power has the fullest freedom to put into operation its political policy; therefore, there can be no political dictatorship in this State. It is a matter for the people to determine. They have the broadest political franchise, a franchise without restriction. If Labour Governments are sound and progressive they will be able to continue in power; if they are reactionary they will be defeated. It is not a

matter of the boundaries made, or the alterations made in the franchise, if the people determine upon a change it will be effected. The impact of public opinion will sweep Governments in or out in Queensland, irrespective of their political colour, if the people desire to do so.

Mr. Power: The Moore Government found that out.

Mr. LARCOMBE: Yes. It was demonstrated in 1915 and 1932. No Bill passed by this Government will prevent the people of Queensland from exercising their power and their right at the elections to defeat any Government that they wish to defeat. The Leader of the Opposition admitted that: he said, “We will win at the next election.” Therefore the Bill is not undemocratic, even according to the Leader of the Opposition.

I might add that the Labour Government do not need any artificial support to perpetuate their existence. They have a sound policy, an excellent record, and progressive administration, and in reply to the Leader of the Opposition I ask him to ponder for a moment over the political wins of the Labour Party which are unparalleled and unexampled in the history of Australia and in fact of the world. Labour won in 1915, 1918, 1920, 1923, 1926, 1932, 1935, 1938, 1941, 1944, and 1947, and is still going strong, like a well-known brand of whisky—still going strong in the political confidence of the people of this State. Hundreds of thousands of electors could not be wrong on all these occasions. Those were the victories won by Labour and they are unparalleled and unexampled in the history of Queensland. No wonder the hon. member for West Moreton is seeking the sanctuary of the Senate.

The scheme of the Moore Government in 1931 I will discuss in reply to interjections from the hon. members for Mirani and Aubigny. The Moore Government scheme was the most craftily planned scheme ever devised and introduced into one Parliament to prolong the life of the Government and defeat the Opposition. They brought down three odious Acts, particularly odious Acts, that dealing with electoral boundaries, that mutilating the Electoral Districts Act, and that reducing the number of members of Parliament. This was the greatest political fraud ever perpetrated in any Australian Parliament. As the effect of that lastmentioned atrocious Bill nearly all the parliamentary seats abolished were then held by the then Opposition, the Labour Party. For the information of hon. members the Labour seats eliminated were—

Mount Morgan, Labour representative, country.

Balonne, Labour representative, country.

Burke, Labour representative, country.

Chillagoe, Labour representative, country.

Leichhardt, Labour representative, country.

Mitchell, Labour representative, country.

Queenton, Labour representative.

Paddington, Labour representative, metropolitan.

Was not that an outrageous measure? By gerrymandering the Moore Government eliminated ten seats, of which eight were held by Labour, and notwithstanding this, hon. members opposite talk about political jobbery and gerrymandering. Could any Act have been more premeditated and more unscrupulous than the redistribution measure of 1931?

The party that was responsible for such an Act has, in my opinion, no moral right to object to any redistribution measure that may be introduced into this House. It has forfeited that right. I boil with indignation when I think of that Act and the attempt that was made to keep Labour in opposition for all time. I remind hon. members opposite of the following burning words by Burns—

“O Pope had I thy satire’s darts,
To gie’ the rascals their deserts,
I’d rip their rotten, hollow hearts
An’ tell aloud
Their jugglin’ hocus-pocus acts
To cheat the crowd.”

Those are the vital burning words addressed by Robert Burns to religious hypocrites and I apply them this afternoon to these political hypocrites, to this so-called Country Party that not only robbed Labour but robbed the country in 1931. The members of that party had a sacred trust to protect the country, yet all the eliminated seats but one were country seats. How can hon. members opposite justify that? If they are so concerned about ethics and political morality how are they able to sit there and support a party that was responsible for that outrageous redistribution Act of 1931 which eliminated Labour members in the way it did and which eliminated country representation?

Hon. members opposite talk about minority rule. They should know something about minority rule because when they were in power minority rule was very common in the Queensland Parliament. I remind them that they countenanced minority rule as far back as 1912, before Labour came into power. The Denham Government were then in office, and they went to the country on a false issue, with this result—

	Votes.	Seats.
Denham Government Party	110,817	46
Labour Party	99,034	26
Independent	6,181	—

So we find that right back in 1912 the anti-Labour party, the Denham party, obtained just a little more than the combined votes of Labour and Independent candidates and got 46 seats, or a majority of 20 over Labour’s 26.

Mr. Kerr: That was entirely wrong, though.

Mr. LARCOMBE: I sat here at the time, and I know that those men whom the present Opposition supported and who were on the Government side, smiled and laughed. They countenanced it. They thought it was the highest conception of party tactics to be able to do that and have a majority of 20 in the way I have mentioned, notwithstanding that the parties were almost balanced. Today

hon. members opposite are profuse in their complaints about the alleged possibility of minority rule in the State.

Some hon. members opposite remind me of a certain section of “sports” who play football, cricket and other games but who are always complaining that the boundary is too wide, the ball is too big, or the referee is unfair, and who say that if they were only given their own ground, their own ball, and their own referee they might be able to win occasionally. Of course, that is only a section of the people in sport and we have a section in politics, and I suggest to those who have criticised Labour and accused it of introducing minority-rule legislation, that they indulge in a little introspection, a little self-examination, and see whether they have not supported the very political crime with which they charge the Labour Government. Let them find out if the fault is not sometimes with them. As Shakespeare said, “The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars; but in ourselves.” Let those hon. members of the Opposition who criticise the Labour Party and the Labour Government for this alleged introduction of minority rule, consider those words and profit from them.

In conclusion, let me say that Labour has won in the past despite the odious redistribution scheme of hon. members opposite, despite their own shocking Electoral Districts Act, despite their own nefarious cutting out of seats.

The Bill is sound in principle. It is just in incidence. It is, as the title states, “A Bill to make better provision for the representation of the people of Queensland”; and I am confident that it will be welcomed by the great majority of the electors of the State.

Despite all those artificial aids to defeat Labour, Labour has been able to continue in the way I have mentioned and, like Tennyson’s brook, will continue. The Bill is sound in principle, just in incidence and as it suggests, it is a Bill to make provision for better representation of the people. I am confident the people of Queensland generally will welcome the measure.

Mr. SPARKES (Aubigny) (2.51 p.m.): After listening to the speeches by the Premier and the Treasurer one would find it hard to get greater condemnation of the Government than that contained in those speeches. They have condemned themselves right and left. Let us see what they said.

The hon. gentleman who just resumed his seat complained most bitterly of the representation in the country. It has taken him 30 years to find this out. He quoted the area of Queensland but is the area of this State any different today from what it was 30 years ago? He quoted distances. Are they any different today? Yes, Mr. Speaker, there is a difference. In those days it was difficult to travel but today we have the modern motor-car, the aeroplane and, of course, we still have the train. Look at the improvements that have taken place in our mode of travel. Yet the hon. gentleman quotes that as a reason. It has taken 30 years for those

hon. members opposite to realise that these people require representation. What a remarkable thing! One would have thought that this would have dawned upon them during the years—that people were living in those western areas that you know so well, Mr. Speaker.

The Treasurer also went on to make claims for what his Government have done and amongst other things he said, "We have broken up the big pastoral companies"—wiped them out. Let him tell that to the hon. members for Barcoo, Warrego and Carpentaria. Yes, they have wiped them out to a certain extent but what else have they done? There are less stock in those areas, fewer workers and fewer people. The practical men to whom I have referred are today saying that the Government will have to do something. The Treasurer claims that this is something he has done—he has reduced the earning increment of this State and yet he claims that it is a great achievement by his Government.

Mr. Power interjected.

Mr. SPARKES: Never mind about the Sparkes award. I have no trouble in getting men. I have no trouble in getting men who are prepared to work, and I say "men" advisedly to the hon. member who interjects. I say that I have no difficulty in turning that sort of man off my place; he would not live there 24 hours.

The Premier nearly wept tears of blood for those far-distant areas. He was sorry for those far-distant areas—they must have more representation—and in the same breath he said that one Labour man was as good as any other three to represent them. Those far-distant areas are all represented by Labour men and yet he has to double the number to get representation.

Mr. Hanlon interjected.

Mr. SPARKES: I will take the hon. gentleman on his interjection. I think he said something about Cinderella.

Mr. Hanlon: No. I said that some of the big electorates would require six members to give them adequate representation.

Mr. SPARKES: I should not be surprised if they were given 16 members later on. I shall give the Premier a little quotation that I think he should read before he makes any more speeches. It is a quotation from one of his own speeches which speaks about votes for gum trees. Let me now refer to a statement he made in the course of his speech that the hon. member for Aubigny could not see any farther afield than Dalby. Let me remind him of something that happened in 1935, on 20 March, 1935, to be exact. (Government interjections.) The Premier tries to interject, but he will have to listen to it. I do not mind his interjecting, I never do. On 20 March, 1935, he sat there calmly and took away an electoral seat, a seat in the very area about which he is now so solicitous. I refer to the Murilla electorate—wiped it clean out. He says now, "I do not want to take anything away from the

country," but he took that seat away and that was in the part of the State which includes Taroom and other distant places.

Mr. HANLON: I rise to a point of order. I had nothing to do with the redistribution of seats in 1935. I object to the hon. member's suggesting that I took away any seat. There was a redistribution commission appointed in 1935 on the Moore Government's Act.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Aubigny knows that the Premier was not personally responsible for the redistribution of seats in 1935. He was not even Premier at the time. I ask the hon. member to accept the assurance of the Premier.

Mr. SPARKES: I accept the assurance that he was not Premier of the State then but he was a very important member of the Government of the day. He endorsed what had been done. I can give him the number of the "Government Gazette," dated 20 March, 1935. This was done just before an election, mark you.

Members of the Government Party had a very close shave at the last elections, despite the buoyancy of the revenue over the previous three years. Some of the members of the Government Party just scraped home. Some of them by a paltry 40 votes. In spite of all their boosting they just reached the Treasury benches and so they have decided to make things better politically now than they were in 1935. What did they do in 1935? They wiped out a seat in an area about which they are so concerned today, an area embracing Taroom and other western towns.

Mr. Hanlon: We did not.

Mr. SPARKES: You did.

Mr. Hanlon: We did not alter the law.

Mr. SPARKES: They wiped out this seat and where do you think they put it? Listening to the Premier today one would think they had put it in those distant areas to help the poor graziers, whom they would have us believe they love so much. But no, they put the seat right in the heart of Brisbane, they created the Baroona electorate, they set up sweet-smelling flowers in Baroona. They took the seat away from the country. They find that the old political horse is growing slow, that Bernborough is getting old and is difficult in his movements and that he is becoming somewhat like Otairi, that he is not a good galloper. So they decide that they must make sure that they will retain the Government benches in 1950.

Let us look at the position clearly. I do not subscribe to the view that they cannot be beaten.

The people will defeat them. I challenge the Government to take a referendum of the people on it. I will put my shirt and boots on their being defeated on a referendum on the question. I will put my all on it, and I will guarantee that the people will tell the Government where to get off. Let them go to the people in that way. The Premier said,

“Oh, yes”—you know, Mr. Speaker, it was really amusing for me to watch the Premier sob—“They get too much.”

You can imagine that hon. gentleman going home and saying, “I put it over those country fellows today.” That is all right. Just let us look at the proposed redistribution. We find that Brisbane is not faring so badly under it. It gets four more seats. That is the area the Premier weeps about. We know where the most people are aggregated. It would be appropriate for me to resurrect that little book, “Hansard,” and see what hon. members opposite had to say about the proposed redistribution in 1931. On page 886 of “Hansard” of 1931 the Hon. W. Forgan Smith, a very able statesman, as the Premier will agree, is reported as having said—

“What is wrong with that? My reply to that is that every citizen should be regarded as being equal under the law; and where we group 6,424 people and give them as much authority in Parliament as another group of 9,634, we violate that principle.”

What does the Premier say to that?

“I have no objection to a slight margin being allowed as between city electorates and electorates that are in the pioneering stage; but, so far as it is humanly possible under any statute, we should continue the principle of one vote, one value.”

Mr. Wanstall: That is our principle, too.

Mr. SPARKES: What do we find today? In those days there was very little difference, but today in the western areas about 3,000 voters can form an electorate. In other words, Charleville can be created an electorate. If Cunnamulla was included it might exceed the quota. When that is done, the hon. member for Warrego will never get to Birdsville or towns in that part of the State.

Mr. O'Shea: No doubt about it. You won't shift me, either.

Mr. SPARKES: The Hon. W. Forgan Smith, at page 559 of the same “Hansard,” is reported thus—

“The reason why the people have always overcome dictatorships and unrepresentative forms of government is that tyranny is begotten as a result of power being invested in the hands of a few people.”

This Bill will concentrate power in the hands of the A.W.U. and the Q.C.E., who are the inner junta of Labour. We know that only too well.

Let me proceed. The Premier, speaking on the same redistribution measure, said—

“I agree that it is necessary for the commission to have a certain amount of latitude—”

The commissioner appointed under this Bill will have no latitude in redistributing the electorates. Nobody can accuse me of voting Labour, yet if I were put on the commission to redistribute the electorates for the western areas I, under the terms of the commission, would not be able to create a seat that the Opposition would have a reasonable chance

of winning, or the same chance as the Government. The Government in this Bill have tied the hands and feet of the commissioners. In effect they have said to them, “Make this seat safe; do your damndest.”

If the hon. gentleman wanted to give the commissioners a free hand, why didn't he say, “Go on and make 13 more seats?” They could say that they could leave it to an independent tribunal, such as an electoral tribunal consisting of the Surveyor-General and the Principal Electoral Officer. Nobody could say that they were Tories or what their policy was. They could say, “Go ahead and make 13 more seats.” Not on your sweet life! That would be taking a great risk. They say, “We are taking no risks.” Where they have seven seats they are going to increase the number by 50 per cent. Then they come to another place where they virtually hold every seat with the exception of Mirani and they have increased it again.

When you come to where the people are—and nobody loves the West or the Western people more than I do—when you come to where the vast majority of the country people live and where there are now 25 seats, they say, “Go ahead and put in another three seats there.” They think they have to do something to save face, so they do that and are then able to refer to it. Where there are seven seats they increase them by three, and where there are 25 they increase them by three. Is that within reason at all?

The Premier goes on to say:

“I do not agree that there should be legislative instructions”—

That is the point.

“—for the seats in some districts to be small and for those in others to be large.” Who said that? The Premier of this State.

Mr. Hanlon: What? I did not catch it?

Mr. SPARKES: You heard what I said but you did not like what I said.

Mr. Hanlon: I am sorry; I was reading.

Mr. SPARKES: You heard it and did not like it. For the hon. gentleman's benefit I will repeat it.

“I do not agree that there should be legislative instructions for the seats in some districts to be small and for those in others to be large.”

He did not agree with that in 1931.

Mr. Hanlon: What page is that?

Mr. SPARKES: I will give you the page with the greatest of pleasure—page 730.

Mr. Mann: He does not agree with that now.

Mr. SPARKES: Mr. Speaker, he put in the best part of an hour this morning. The hon. gentleman should have listened. He wanted to give representation where there were 3,000 people as against where there were 9,000 people.

Mr. Mann: That is because they are scattered over a large area.

Mr. SPARKES: Listen to this—

“The best purpose was served when the Commission was given instructions to take a definite quota.”

No zones then!

Mr. Hanlon: They never thought of that.

Mr. SPARKES: One must congratulate him on his ingenious mind for putting up a positive way of keeping the seats warm on that side of the House.

He goes on—

“Which they could vary after a consideration of various factors, as, for example, accessibility of the area and the community of interests of the people. Discretion should be entirely in the hands of the Commission.”

Mr. Hanlon: That Bill was a single quota.

Mr. SPARKES: Would you say that the discretion under this Bill is entirely in the hands of the Commission?

Mr. Hanlon: Within the zones, yes.

Mr. SPARKES: Within the zones? That is the point. It is something like tying one of my hands behind my back and standing over me with a big stick, saying, “Open your mouth or I will knock your head off.” There is no alternative.

Mr. Hanlon: There is nothing wrong with the speech I made in 1931. It was put in pamphlet form and published.

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. gentleman landed on his head.

It continues—

“Discretion should be entirely in the hands of the Commission and no legislative instructions should be given that people resident in certain parts of the State should have less representation than other people living in other parts.”

We had the Premier this morning standing up and twisting. No-one can tell me that that was not a complete somersault; if that was not a complete somersault, then I have never seen one.

Mr. Hanlon: I will bet you a pound that you are not game enough to read that speech right through.

Mr. SPARKES: Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I am not allowed to bet.

Mr. Hanlon: Read the speech through.

Mr. SPARKES: I can read it through but it will only be worse for you. You could give a vote to the gum trees—and there are more gum trees out there than ever—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member should address the Chair and confine his remarks to the principles of the Bill.

Mr. SPARKES: If I continued to read the speech of the Premier it would make the hon. gentleman more uneasy. I think I have quoted sufficient to show that he is not only an actor but an acrobat in this Chamber.

For that reason it would be advisable for hon. members on the Government benches to look at “Hansard” and see the different views held then and today.

Now to go a step further. This redistribution will not make for any more representation in the far distant areas but will give another representative to the towns in those areas. I am not as conversant with the North as with the West. I know the far-western lands and the exact position there. That is what will occur and I challenge the Premier to disprove it. He cannot get away from it. I will stand to be corrected by the hon. member for Warrego but if my memory serves me rightly Charleville is a town of 4,000 people. As that hon. member has not seen fit to correct me, apparently I am somewhere near the mark. Under this Bill the quota is so low that Charleville can be an electorate.

Mr. Hanlon: No, only 4,000 people—babies under 12 months do not vote. You cannot even count.

Mr. SPARKES: I will admit that I cannot count the people in Charleville.

Mr. Hanlon: You said Charleville will be made an electorate.

Mr. SPARKES: I said there were about 4,000 people in Charleville.

Mr. Hanlon: Babies under 12 months do not vote.

Mr. SPARKES: All right. There are 2,400 in Cunnamulla. Will the two be put together to make an electorate?

A Government Member: They will not.

Mr. SPARKES: I bow to the hon. member's interjection. Probably he has seen the map and knows it will not be made an electorate but it could make an electorate if it was so desired. The hon. member probably has seen the map.

Mr. Hanlon: Do you not understand the number of electors will count, not the number of people?

Mr. SPARKES: There are sufficient people in Cunnamulla and Charleville, with the little intervening country, to make an electorate.

Mr. Hanlon: The intervening space is 130 miles.

Mr. SPARKES: It could take in the little bit of country along the railway line and connect the two towns and make that an electorate.

Mr. Hanlon: A little bit of intervening country when it is 130 miles long!

Mr. SPARKES: You must have the intervening country, but you would still have Birdsville and those other places out to the West, and the position would be no different.

Mr. O'Shea interjected.

Mr. SPARKES: You have only got to have 3,000-odd to come under this Bill. We find that although this Government have been

in power for 30-odd years, despite all their claims for what they have done in the West and the North, there are fewer people in the West today than there were 20 years ago. Is not that an indictment on the Government?

Mr. O'Shea: But there are more people in Charleville and Cunnamulla than there were 20 years ago.

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. member must get into the town.

He lives in town and he has become town-minded. He does not live in his electorate. Only today I heard one of his constituents say, "We never see you." They have to come to Brisbane to see him. He would hardly know his way from Charleville to Cunnamulla if he got off the railway line. There are fewer people in the West. What is the reason for that?

Mr. Roberts: Because you are always discouraging it and crying it down.

Mr. SPARKES: Now we have got the Queen Street view of the West.

Mr. Roberts: I do not knock the West down, as you do.

Mr. SPARKES: Is it likely that I should knock the West down when I have interests in the West, when the West and the people who live there are my living?

Mr. Jesson: You live out in the suburbs.

Mr. SPARKES: It is well out of the suburbs, and the hon. member is one of those who would endeavour to persuade others on the Government side to squeeze out the pastoralists. He has no realisation of what the pastoralist is doing for the western country. It is a big man's country, and to be developed it must be developed by men with brains. The Treasurer congratulated the Labour Government for breaking up these companies, but in most cases they broke the hearts of many small men. They did not develop the country; they broke the hearts of small men and the country suffered by losing stock and the result is that there are fewer workers in the area.

Mr. Nicklin: Fewer people.

Mr. SPARKES: I say fewer workers because they are all workers out there.

It must strike you, Mr. Speaker, as being remarkable when you think that only a few days ago in this very Chamber I was on my feet appealing for an extra member to be appointed to the Queensland Meat Industry Board for North Queensland and the Premier said, "You may know something about cattle-raising, I will admit, but you know nothing about business matters. It is too expensive." Now, when it is a matter of keeping their seats warm and being sure of them expense does not count. They have given three more seats to the North.

Mr. Kerr: What is the reason?

Mr. SPARKES: It is very plain. If they had one member on the board it would be just a matter of courtesy to the North, but

when you have three more seats in Parliament the Government make sure that those three seats will be occupied by Labour supporters.

Mr. O'Shea: Are you getting windy about the country people?

Mr. SPARKES: I do not hold the view expressed by the Treasurer at all, and I am confident that this Government will be defeated. They will defeat themselves by this dirty Bill they are putting through the House today. It will defeat them and bring about their destruction. The Australian is a fair-minded man, and, on the whole, if the Australian finds someone is putting something over him or that someone is victimised, he will act accordingly. We see that in this House with respect to the hon. member for Bundaberg. I have been told time and time again that because the hon. member is victimised the people send him back. Bundaberg was a strong Labour seat. The people say, "It is not a fair-and-square go; we will not stand for it." Western people particularly are of a sporting nature and they will say, "We will put them out." I am quite convinced this Bill will be the undoing of the Labour Party.

Mr. Power: If you thought so you would be supporting it.

Mr. SPARKES: What a remarkable interjection! In other words, the hon. member is saying, "If you thought your seat was depending on it, like mine, you would be supporting it."

Mr. Power: I did not say that at all.

Mr. SPARKES: The Government have reckoned without their friends, the Communists. The Commo will come into all these areas. The Deputy Premier has woken up at last. First of all, there was first past the post. Now the Government think, "We are in the minority and we look like being in trouble. Another party has been created, and it is taking some of our seats and we shall have to think out something." They thought of the ingenious way of first past the post. They found that did not work. Look at Bundaberg; there the hon. member was the first past the post. In the northern electorates and probably in the western electorates the Commo will come to light. That is the sort of legislation that creates the Commo; it is the legislation he thrives on. The Commo will come to light and we might find that Labour is not first past the post, as it desired. Of course, hon. members opposite might alter the Act.

I repeat that if the Government were sincere and wanted another 13 members of Parliament they should submit the matter to the people and have a referendum on it. The Deputy Premier can smile because he knows what the result would be. He would run his boots off his feet to get his money on that they would be defeated. I would bet my boots on it that they would be defeated. The Deputy Premier knows it too well. The Treasurer said, "We will fight the election on it." Something tantamount to this: the Premier and I will go down on the lawn; he

will tie my hands and legs and gag me, and then say, "Come on and fight; we will test your ability to fight me; now come on." That is the situation. The Government are gagging the people and are not giving the Commission the opportunity of saying where the seats will be. They tie them down with the zones—

Mr. Hanlon: You say that I will gag you. You are not going to fight me?

Mr. SPARKES: The Premier would take every precaution to see that I did not have a dog's chance. That is what he wants to do. Hon. members opposite are in power on a minority vote of the people. We represent the people because we got more votes than hon. members opposite. (Government laughter.) After the next elections hon. members opposite will be sitting in Opposition but even if by a fluke they are returned to power again they will still be in office on a smaller vote of the people than they got at the last election. They are prepared to take that risk, of course.

I am surprised that the Premier should introduce a Bill like this after his trip overseas. It is generally conceded that when a man goes abroad the experience he gains widens his vision but I am inclined to think that since the Premier returned his views have become narrower than ever. I have been told, Mr. Speaker, by responsible members of the Government—and you can check up on this—that the Bill is introduced so as to get more A.W.U. men into the House because they are not as communistic as others.

Mr. Clark: What is wrong with them?

Mr. SPARKES: I have never said that there is anything wrong with the A.W.U. I merely say that I was told that that is the reason why the Bill is introduced. I am sure that it will be opposed very strongly by hon. members on this side as it is opposed by the people of Queensland today.

Mr. BURROWS (Port Curtis) (3.27 p.m.): I think the Bill can be correctly described as the democrats' dream although hon. members opposite would prefer to see it as the aristocrats' nightmare. I sincerely hope that the Bill will go down in history as something that constitutes the real keystone of our Constitution. It recognises the first principles of democracy and it acknowledges the rights of minority. That is particularly emphasised when we come to realise the fact that the minority, whom this Bill seeks to protect, are very useful citizens in the community, people to whom we turn for our primary production, and after all Queensland is mainly a primary-producing State. It can be quite understood that its introduction would disturb hon. members opposite, for obvious reasons. Since I have been in this Chamber I have never seen one progressive or democratic measure introduced that has not met with most violent opposition from hon. members opposite, and the more democratic and more progressive the measure the greater is their opposition to it.

No doubt the Opposition have been irritated by the fact that they suffer from an acute sense of frustration and an unsatisfied lust for power. That has prompted them right throughout in their actions here, without any consideration that would come ordinarily from hon. members.

Boiled down, the Bill practically eliminates the possibility of what is known as a Queen Street Parliament. It is for this reason that the Opposition are inspired to oppose the Bill so bitterly. What have we in the Opposition who are opposing it? We have the so-called Queensland People's Party. They regard the people in the bush and the country as a lot of Dads and Daves. In their opinion these people should be milking cows, growing wheat and wool. They are shocked to think that such people as these should take an intelligent interest in the Government of the country or should have the right of representation in the country.

As I said before, Queensland is definitely a primary-producing State. Where is this wealth produced? How much of it is produced within 459½ square miles of Brisbane? Let us turn to the Year Book and see the value of Queensland's production. The latest figures show that the primary-production wealth of Queensland was valued at £71,300,000 and the manufacturing wealth in the same period at only £30,000,000. On those figures primary-production wealth is approximately two and one-thirds greater than the manufacturing wealth. Let us assume that the manufacturing wealth was produced within this area of 459½ square miles. What does the Bill say? Let us look at the figures regarding political representation. The ratio is approximately in accordance with the productive wealth of the country. In other words the people who produced the £71,000,000 of wealth are to be given 51 representatives in this Chamber whilst those who produced £30,000,000 or less than one-half are to be given 24 representatives.

Mr. Kerr: Representation on a wealth basis.

Mr. BURROWS: On a citizenship basis. The metropolitan area will have one representative to every 19 square miles and the country one to approximately 14,000 square miles. What is wrong with the Bill from a city point of view? It has one representative to every nineteen square miles whereas the people in the West, Far North, or in the country have one to every 14,000 square miles. Would any fair-minded city dweller then contend that this Bill is not more than fair? To those unfair-minded city dwellers like hon. members opposite who are willing to put self before State I want to say that there is no law in Queensland to compel a man to live in Brisbane. If he thinks he has a better chance in the country let him come to the country.

If the hon. member for Windsor thinks that the country people are going to get better representation in this House let him shift his factory to my electorate and he can oppose me. I will challenge him. (Opposition interjections.)

We hear hon. members opposite talking of incentives; apparently they are great believers in incentives. If they do not think this Bill an incentive to the people who live in the country they are not very consistent in their advocacy about incentives. We must remember that throughout the Bill only gives one man one vote.

Many platitudes were spoken and absurd arguments were used by hon. members opposite that were prompted largely by the thought of self-preservation. I will not deny that the Bill, will, more than likely, after its operation place a curb on something that has arisen in political parties over the last few years, commonly known as parasitical political groups. The workings of these groups are well known. They think that by concentrating on a small number of electorates and spending an enormous amount of money they can obtain good results. They concentrate on about ten seats and they think that if they can win the greater number of them and thereby obtain the balance of power, they can dictate the policy of the Government. As I said previously, I do see in this Bill something that might put a severe curb on the activities of such pressure groups.

One of these groups held a meeting the other night, I understand, in the Albert Hall. The previous speaker mentioned it. I have here a pamphlet advertising the meeting. By an accident, the words on this pamphlet were almost correct, although it was issued by the Queensland People's Party. We must be fair and I will say that it was almost correct. It is headed "People be damned." Well, the compositor may have been in a hurry to get home and he may have omitted a word. I respectfully suggest that he did. He should have put "Country People be Damned." Had he done that he would have truly expressed the opinion and the attitude of members of that misnamed "People's Party." These words are obviously used for effect, and they are only poor efforts at sensation-mongering.

Let us follow the progress of this meeting. The paper from which I quote would certainly be biased in favour of the group that held the meeting, and certainly prejudiced against anything savouring of a fair deal for the country; and it says 300 people attended the meeting. So we would be safe in assuming that there must have been nearly 100 there.

The Press report tells us what the hon. member for Toowong said. He must have said something about the awful country people, whom this Government have had the courage to give the right of representation in this Parliament. It printed a picture of him that reminded me of a Pekinese dog barking at a bulldog. The group leader, the hon. member for Logan, has a mathematical mind, and was featured by the paper demonstrating his contempt for the country people, as saying that one shearer or one cane-cutter in the North was equal to one urger from Brisbane plus so many commission agents in Queen Street. By this mythical inflation he proved that he was right and everybody else was wrong. The report

does not state how the meeting concluded, but if the party ran true to form I am sure the audience would have had to march past the hon. member for Windsor saluting him and repeating the party's watchword or warcry, which I understand is, "Death before Democracy."

The Bill is simple in composition and those who oppose it are either simple or dishonest to the State. I appeal to hon. members opposite to rise to the occasion and this time to put State before self and give the country people that to which they are rightly entitled and for which this Bill is primarily drafted, that is, better representation in this Parliament.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (3.42 p.m.): Mr. Deputy Speaker, by the grace of God and the unconscious humour of the Parliamentary Draftsman, this Bill is entitled, "The Electoral Districts Bill," but after hearing the Premier and reading the Bill I think it should be described as "The Electoral Three-card Trick." There is absolutely nothing to justify the principles contained in the Bill. It is so shocking and outrages our sense of decency and justice to such an extent that it borders on fraud and corruption. Nevertheless, it will not save the Government because no electoral redistribution, no matter how cunningly or corruptly conceived, can save it from a people the confidence of whom the Government have lost. The Government have lost the confidence of the great majority of the people of Queensland because they have betrayed that confidence time and time again, particularly the confidence of the northern and western people which has been so consistently reposed in the Government since 1915. Since 1915 the country people and northern people have sent Labour after Labour member down to this Parliament, but what did we see? We see the country and northern districts of Queensland today in a state of neglect and decay, populations have been almost desolated because of the centralised policy of this alleged Labour Government.

What is the exact reason for the introduction of this Bill? If the Labour Government could rely upon the support of the working class, the farmers, the useful people and the small business people, on whose support they have relied for the last 33 years, there would be no need to gerrymander the electoral boundaries. They would go forth to the people of Queensland in the same confident spirit with which they went forth on previous elections. They would go forth confident in the belief that they would be returned to the Treasury benches. But what has happened to the Labour Party during the passage of the years? Where is the Labour Party that we were once proud to recognise and belong to?

At one time, in 1915 and for some years subsequently, the Labour Party was a party to which any working man was proud and glad to belong. But go through the A.L.P. branches in Queensland today—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Mann): Order! I hope the hon. member will connect his remarks with the matter before the House.

Mr. AIKENS: I certainly intend to.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will not be in order in making long speeches on the merits and demerits of the Labour Party. We are discussing the second reading of this Bill and I ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to that matter.

Mr. AIKENS: I am submitting that the members of the Labour Party have introduced this Bill because they have fallen between two stools. They have introduced this Bill because, like the dog in the story that we used to read in our school books, when, walking across a bridge over a stream, and carrying a bone in its mouth, it saw the reflection of the bone in the water, it dropped the bone in order to snatch at the reflection, and finally lost both. The Labour Party at one time represented the dinky-die working-class element of this community. It represented the workers, the farmers, the small business men and the useful people. But as the years went on the Labour Party decided to forsake its policy, to forsake its platform, to forsake its principle and forsake the people who elected its members to this Parliament and to the Treasury benches. So, as the years progressed, and as the members of the Labour Party became more safely ensconced in their Parliamentary seats, they took to reaching out to and toadying for the votes of the real opponents and age-long enemies of the working class. They began to attempt to ingratiate themselves with the exploiters of Labour.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is getting away from the principles contained in the measure.

Mr. AIKENS: I only hope that while I remain in this Parliament I shall get the same fair spin as was given to the Premier when he was speaking. He could stand up here and indulge in any slander—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I want to say to the hon. member for Mundingburra that if he continues with those remarks I will ask him to resume his seat. That is a reflection on the Chair and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. AIKENS: I withdraw it and I am not going to give you an opportunity to make me resume my seat. I will say what I want to say, and because I have the vocabulary I shall be able to say it in such a way that you will not be able to stop me.

This Bill has been introduced with one definite object in view. That object is a phrenetic desire to save the Labour Party from the destruction that inevitably faces it at the polls next election. It has forsaken the people who used to put it into power. It made a futile grab at the opponents of Labour in the hope that it would get their support or regiment their support, and, as I said before, it has fallen between two stools. It has lost the support of the dinky-die Labour man, it never got the support it pandered to, it never got the support of the age-long enemies of Labour, so, bereft of any decent support, the Labour Party now

is adopting the questionable tactics contained in this measure in an endeavour to retain control of the Treasury benches.

Mr. Barnes: That is true.

Mr. AIKENS: Everyone knows it is true. As far as I am personally concerned, if I were to look at the principle of this Bill from a purely selfish point of view I should have to say that I was particularly pleased with the shocking provisions contained in it, because the Bill provides for an extra three seats in what is termed the northern coastal zone. It provides for another three seats in what is called the western zone, and my party, the North Queensland Labour Party, will win at least six of the seats in the northern coastal zone and be knocking at the door in two or three seats in the western zone, and no-one knows that better than the Premier who has a damp shirt tail as a result of our activities in northern Queensland.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must use Parliamentary terms. Any further offence in that direction will bring disciplinary action upon him.

Mr. AIKENS: Let us tell the true story of the introduction of this Bill. As a matter of fact, the electorates are already arranged, in the rough. The managers of the Labour Party—the high-ups in the Labour Party and not necessarily the high-ups of the Parliamentary Labour Party—and the real rulers of the Labour Party have already set out the 75 electorates in the rough, in accordance with a scheme of redistribution. They are merely waiting for the polling results of the forthcoming Brisbane local authority elections to be held on 30 April and the results in the country on 28 May to put the finishing touches to the new 75 seats and all the commissioners will be required to do will be to draw their fees and salaries and sign on the dotted line.

Mr. Sparkes: That is all they can do.

Mr. AIKENS: That is so. The finishing touches will be put to it after they see the polling results of the coming local-authority elections.

Mr. Barnes interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: The hon. member for Bundaberg should give himself a greater need of praise than that.

They have spent the last two years studying it up. The party managers have attempted to work out a scheme whereby the Labour Party can remain in control of the State. First of all, they cut up the State on the present numerical basis into 62 electorates. There was argument amongst members of the party with regard to that. The next idea was to cut the State into 66 electorates but they found they could not make a safe "go" of it with 66 electorates. Later, in the spirit of desperation, they decided on 72 seats and so cut the State into 72 electorates, but still they were not absolutely certain that they had much more than a bolter's chance of being returned to power. On the Premier's return they submitted a draft plan of 72 seats but the Premier, who

is astute and politically cunning, said, "No, we will stick in another three to make sure." So now they have 75 electorates, only waiting for the finishing touches to be put on.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: I know. I get my oil from more reliable sources than the back-benchers, who are the last to know. They usually get their information from me. All the Commission will be required to do is to sign on the dotted line.

If the Government were genuine in their desire to give the people more representation, why did they not redistribute the electorates of Queensland on the basis of 62? Why did they not wipe out some of the existing 20 in the metropolitan area? They could have given the extra electorates to the country. Why did they not give 15 electorates to the metropolitan area and the other 47 to the country areas of the State? If they were sincere in giving the country areas of the State a **higher measure** of electoral representation than they had, why did they not do it on the basis of 62 electorates? They did not do it simply because they could not be sure that 62 seats would return a majority of Labour candidates.

Here is the shocking point: the Premier gets up with a lot of his native blarney and tries to tell us he is giving the extra seats to the country in order that the country electorates will predominate in this House. Anybody who cares to examine this map with one eye closed will see that when the seats are redistributed Brisbane and the area within a radius of 150 miles will still have more than a majority of the seats in this House. What is all this blarney about this Bill providing for country representation predominating?

The Premier went on to say that this was the first step in the creation of a new State. He said he hoped to live to see the day, if not in his own time then in his children's time or his grandchildren's time or his great-great-grandchildren's time—I forget what he actually said—, when new States would be established in Northern and Central Queensland. He said also that as the result of the establishment of these new States population in these areas would increase, industries would spring up and the whole of North and Central Queensland would become a bustling hive of industry.

I challenge the Premier now to stand up in this House and tell the House and the people of Queensland what a new-State Government for North Queensland could do for North Queensland that the present State Government could not do if they were dinkum. If the present State Government were dinkum in the development of North Queensland, if they were genuinely desirous of bringing back the population that has been taken away from those deserted and neglected areas of the North, the Premier could do it tomorrow with a stroke of the pen. If the Premier and his Government want to see industry established in North Queensland and Central Queensland, then there is no need to go in for the establishment of new States in

Northern and Central Queensland. They could do all this if they were dinkum and genuine; but they have never been dinkum and they have never been genuine in their desire to restore to North Queensland the population that it has lost and they have never been genuine in seeing that great secondary industries were established in North Queensland side by side with its great primary industries. All that stands between North Queensland and the justice that should be meted out to it and the industrial expansion and development that should belong to it is the centralised policy of the Government, which has been responsible for the neglect, the decay, and the desertion of North Queensland in favour of building up this great population cancer known as Brisbane.

Let me get to the real principles of the Bill. The Leader of the Queensland People's Party drew an analogy today with regard to the Premier's approach to the Bill. Let me draw another analogy with regard to the Premier's attitude towards the depopulated areas in Northern and Western Queensland. Let me assume that the Premier has two sons, one that he calls Brisbane and the other that he calls North Queensland. Let me assume also that because of his policy he lavishes all his favours on his son called Brisbane, that he feeds his son called Brisbane, clothes him and educates him until he grows up a fine, healthy, robust boy, filling out the suit the Premier has bought for him. Let me assume also that because of his neglect of his boy called North Queensland and because of his policy of malnutrition of him, the lad becomes thin, weedy, emaciated, attenuated, a little skinny lad. The Premier as a father will say, "I can see, my boy, young North Queensland, you are not as hale and hearty and as lusty and strong and fat as your brother Brisbane. I suppose those awful members of the Opposition and that terrible Tom Aikens will suggest that if I were to do the right thing I should start to remedy the wrongs that I have inflicted on you over the years, that I should start to look after you well, start to feed you so as to make you fat and strong so that you will fill the suit I bought for you, which hangs on you like a suit on a scarecrow and fits you where it touches. But I am not going to take any notice of their stupid arguments. What I am going to do for you, my bright little son, North Queensland, is to buy you a smaller suit and as you grow thinner and more miserable and more emaciated and more attenuated and more haggard I am going to buy you smaller and smaller suits to fit your ever-shrinking frame."

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: That is an exact analogy.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must connect his remarks with the Bill. The hon. member will be given an opportunity to illustrate his point but he must not devote the whole of his speech to matters not directly related to the Bill.

Mr. AIKENS: I know, Mr. Speaker, that my remarks must be like the bite of an asp to the Premier. I am drawing an analogy. I am pointing out that it is because of Government policy that North Queensland has been neglected and has become depopulated. Consequently the electorates there are not able to fulfil the present electoral quota. That is the analogy I am making. Instead of doing the right thing by North Queensland electorates and establishing industries there to attract population, to enable them to fulfil their electoral quota, the Premier says, "I am not going to establish industries to attract population that will enable you to fill your electoral quota, rather am I going to adopt the other alternative of cutting down your electoral quota, and as the electorates grow smaller and smaller because of the neglect and apathy of the Government I will cut the quota down still smaller and smaller, the thinner and more haggard you grow."

What is the solution of the problem? If the Premier complains of the neglect and depopulation of various northern and western areas and says that as a result they are not able to fulfil their electoral quotas, does he think the Bill offers a solution of the problem? No. The real solution is for the Government to give to Northern and Western Queensland the very things we have requested and demanded so long, the very things that will attract population to fulfil our electoral quotas. Give us our share of the great secondary industries, our northern universities and various other things we have asked for, and it will not be very long before we are able to fulfil the present electoral quotas.

Frankly, I think the Premier believes that every resident of North Queensland is a fool, a dope and a dill, but I can assure him he is not. For years many of them were dopes and dills because many of them went along like dumb, driven cattle to the section booths and voted blindly for Labour candidates. But there are many of these people of Northern and Western Queensland who are beginning to see and think clearly. Now the Premier believes that he can say to the people of Northern Queensland, "You are not financially able to run a new State. The people of Southern Queensland have to provide"—I think he said very grandiosely—"a million or two millions a year to enable you to pay for your public works and so on," but he did not tell the other side of the story. He did not tell of the ever-growing stream of golden wealth that has poured from the North and West into Brisbane for 50 or 100 years to make Brisbane what it is today. He did not tell them of the golden stream of wealth pouring through to Brisbane from our wool, sugar, meat, timber, fruit, minerals and other resources. That wealth is pouring down from the North in abundance and has made Brisbane what it is today. He did not tell them of these things. He did not tell the people of Queensland that Brisbane could not exist as a city, much less as a capital city, were it not for the wealth of primary production pouring into Brisbane from the rest of Queensland. He got down in his narrow way and told us the amount of public-works

money being spent in Northern Queensland. He has done so ever since the people of Northern Queensland have complained of the neglect of it by the Labour Party.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I should like to hear something from the hon. member about the Bill.

Mr. Hanlon: It would be a change.

Mr. AIKENS: At least—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I will clarify the position. I have given to every hon. member today the right of replying to any point raised by the Premier or any other speaker; but in giving that latitude, which is fair, I do not want it to be taken as latitude that will enable an hon. member to make the whole of his speech on matters not actually contained in the Bill. Therefore, I ask the hon. member to connect his remarks with the Bill.

Mr. AIKENS: I said on one occasion that I can fight under any rules, the Marquess of Queensberry's or Rafferty's. It is O.K. with me.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: I am prepared to debate this Bill on the ruling Mr. Speaker has put forward. Incidentally, after the introduction of this Bill I believe the notorious and well-remembered Mr. Rafferty will take a second place, because after the Premier's explanation of this Bill Mr. Rafferty will be the first to admit that when it comes to the dog-and-goanna rules he is merely a babe in the woods compared with the Premier.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Did I understand the hon. member to suggest by way of innuendo that there was one rule for the Premier today and one rule for the hon. member for Mundingburra. Is that your suggestion?

Mr. AIKENS: No. I was referring to the Rafferty rules indulged in by the Premier in introducing the Bill. It was the best example I know. It out-Rafferties Rafferty.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will have to withdraw that remark. If he was making reference to any other member as using Rafferty rules it is a reflection on the Chair.

Mr. AIKENS: I will withdraw. What is the justification—and here is the most shocking aspect of the Bill; I hope you do not rule that this is not one of the principles—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I will rule where it is necessary.

Mr. AIKENS: Thank you. I am still on my feet, by the grace of God and my own endeavours.

What is the justification for unloading on the people of Queensland another 13 politicians? The Bill provides that they shall be unloaded on the back—on the already over-loaded backs of the people—another 13 members. What justification is there for it? The

Premier, by implication and by direct statement in his introductory speech, said that the rank-and-file members were already pretty well hard worked to carry out their Parliamentary duties. Let me say this, and let me say it so that the people of Queensland will know, just as the people of North Queensland know: there is not a member in this House, rank-and-file member of any party, who can stand up here and truthfully say that he works anything like a 40-hour week as a member of Parliament.

Mr. Hanlon: My God, you ought to be ashamed.

Mr. AIKENS: I do not say that I am any better than some rank-and-file members, although I say I am a damn sight better than most. I give my electors 24 hours a day representation, seven days a week. I am there all the time. I live in my electorate and I come to Brisbane only when Parliament is in session; consequently I am available to all the electors any hour of the day or night. When I go to the various parts of my electorate I put a notice in the paper letting the people know I am coming, letting them know where I am staying and the hours during which I shall be there; so when all is said and done I more or less call tenders for as much Parliamentary work as I can get.

It is a matter of human nature. If you are on the spot living in the electorate it is only natural that you will get more work than if you come to Brisbane and live away from the electorate. If a person has a problem and needs your help and advice and can approach you personally he will have no hesitation in doing so, but if he has to sit down and write to Brisbane, more often than not does not bother to do so. Sometimes he is unable to put his problem on paper and sometimes he is unwilling to do so. The fact remains that a member who lives in his electorate gets more work to do than a man who does not and who spends most of his time in Brisbane.

Mr. Sparkes: Do you think that is why the western man lives in Brisbane?

Mr. AIKENS: That is why the northern men live in Brisbane. They not only dodge a lot of work but also a lot of expense, because when you get representations made to you you have to send letters and telegrams and sometimes make trunk-line calls, all of which costs money. By not living in the northern electorates they not only dodge the work consequent upon personal representation but they save these expenses in connection with writing letters and sending telegrams and making trunk-line calls.

I do not claim to be a political paragon or the personification of Parliamentary perfection; I am prepared to admit that there may be one or two members on either side who give as much attention to their electorates as I do.

With all these things, with all the work I do I am prepared to stand here or anywhere and say that I still do not work for the whole of the year anything like 40 hours a

week, as a politician. I defy any member of the House to say that he does. Let me take some members of the Opposition—let me take the hon. member for Mirani. He gives to his electorate all the representation that his electorate desires; and not only that but also, from what I can gather, his electorate is very satisfied with the representation he gives it. In addition to that, he finds time to have extensive business interests, to be chairman of a particularly progressive co-operative sugar mill. Does he look over-worked? Does he look on the verge of physical and mental collapse?

The hon. member for Toowoong gives his electorate all the representation his electorate desires and from what I understand his electorate is quite satisfied with his representation, and that hon. member has one of the fullest and most lucrative practices at the Brisbane Bar. Does he seem to be on the brink of premature destruction from over-work? So I could go on with all the members of the Opposition, and many members of the Labour Party. I have no other business interests other than the exception that I can find time to be a particularly active alderman of the Townsville City Council and to go organising my party in North Queensland, much to the discomfiture of the Labour Party. I can find time to come here. I can find time to travel at my own expense and in my own time, and I repeat that I still do not work anything like 40 hours a week as a politician all the year round—and no-one else does.

The statement that the rank-and-file members of the Labour Party of this Parliament have too much work to do is unalloyed and unadulterated bunkum; the sooner the people know it the better. The sooner we debunk all these stories about Parliament, the sooner we shall get down to a standard of honesty in our dealings with the people.

What are these extra 13 politicians going to do when they come here?

Mr. Evans: They will have a vote here.

Mr. AIKENS: They will have a vote in the House and that is probably why. What will be the use of sending down the members of these northern electorates? It is said that there will be three extra members for the northern coastal zone and three extra for the western zone, and the Premier hopes they will be Labour members of Parliament. What really happens when a Labour man is elected to represent a northern or western electorate? He is not in Parliament 10 minutes before he shifts his home to Brisbane. Whether he does this of his own volition or to jockey for position within his party we do not know, but the fact remains that he is not in Parliament very long before he comes to Brisbane to live. When he does he becomes a Brisbaneite in thought and deed. All his personal, financial, social, sporting, and business interests are centred in Brisbane. I agree that some of them give time to their northern electorates. Some of them return to their northern electorates very frequently and remain there for reasonable periods. On the

other hand, others make very fleeting visits—the people do not know when they are coming and half the time the electors do not know they have been there until they have gone. What is the use of having a Bill that will provide for extra Labour members to come down here and represent their northern electorates? They do not represent their northern electorates now. They are hardly there for a couple of weeks a year to know what is going on in their electorates. Why all this stupid talk about its being absolutely imperative, because of the growing population of our State, to go in for this and that and unloading on the backs of the people of Queensland another 13 politicians? That is the most shocking thing that has taken place in this Parliament for very many years.

I finish on this note: to be honest, I should not mind the Bill very much, because I did not make the votes in some electorates small—I was not responsible for the depopulation of the northern and central electorates. I should not oppose it very much. As a matter of fact, I suggested in one of my earlier speeches that I would support giving to the northern and country electorates a smaller electoral quota than that provided for the electorates of Brisbane. I should not have objected to the Bill one bit if the Government had not wrapped it round with camouflage and political dishonesty; they are telling the people that now this Bill will give to the country the representation that has been denied them so long.

They are telling the people that this Bill will provide for greater representation for the North and for the West. They are telling the people that this Bill will attract population to the North and to the West, that this Bill will be responsible for the establishment of industries in the North and West, and when they say these things they lie, and they know they lie.

Mr. Barnes: Hear, hear!

Mr. AIKENS: All this Bill will do will be to provide for 13 extra rank-and-file politicians, unless the members of the Labour Party have an idea in their heads of electing still another couple of Cabinet Ministers.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will have to withdraw the charge that hon. members of this House lie. It is unparliamentary.

Mr. AIKENS: Very well, I withdraw that, too. You see, there cannot be a fight unless both are willing to fight. I withdraw that.

All this Bill will do is bring into this House 13 politicians with nothing for them to do, because the members who are here at the present time can do their work, do it comfortably, and, in many instances, do it on their heads. As a matter of fact, very few of them do anything. Many hon. members of this Parliament adopt the attitude that they are here merely to get as much money as they possibly can and give as little work as they can in return for it. You

have only got to see them around the House and see the work they do, or the work they do not do.

I am going to oppose this Bill first of all because of the shocking set-up. What justification can there be, for instance, for placing Chillagoe, Mungana, Mt. Mulligan, Forsayth and all those places, that were once prosperous mining towns and are now ghost towns, thanks to the policy of this Labour Government, the towns that have been reduced from prosperous mining centres to ghost towns—I suppose the incidence of depopulation would be greater in that Chillagoe, Mungana, Forsayth area and the rate of depopulation and percentage of depopulation would be greater than in any other part of the State—in the northern coastal zone? Despite the fact that some of those places are from 200 to 250 miles inland from the coast, they are being classified in the northern coastal zone while Charters Towers, which is virtually a suburb of Townsville, which is only 82 miles by rail from the coast, has been placed in the western zone, with a quota of 4,500 electors.

Mr. Wanstall: There are going to be two seats, I suppose.

Mr. AIKENS: If there are going to be two seats it means that we shall win two. We were expecting to win only one. The railway men of Charters Towers will be pleased to know that they are being placed in the western zone because at the present time they are in the rotary transfer pool with Townsville men and they have to go west from Charters Towers to Hughenden and west of Hughenden in order to achieve western service.

Mr. Wanstall: Do they get the western parity allowance?

Mr. AIKENS: They get the western allowance from Hughenden west.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! We are not discussing railway matters.

Mr. AIKENS: I was merely pointing to the ridiculousness of this to me. I oppose the Bill because it is shocking gerrymandering bordering on fraud and corruption, and the ideal or principle of unloading another 13 members on this Parliament—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will have to withdraw the term "fraud" and "corruption."

Mr. AIKENS: Once more into the breach—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will withdraw them with respect, too. He will withdraw them in a manner in keeping with the traditions laid down in this House. Any hon. member who makes a suggestion of fraud and corruption is making a very grave charge against some hon. members of this House. It is not Parliamentary, and he must withdraw it.

Mr. AIKENS (bowing): I withdraw, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must withdraw without any reservation or without any acting in the circumstances.

Mr. AIKENS: I withdraw, Mr. Speaker. I only hope you look up "Hansard" and see some of the things the Premier has said to me. I did not object. I did not mind anything he said about me. I can give it and I can take it, but apparently the Labour Party can only give it and cannot take it.

For the reasons I have enumerated, I am opposed to this Bill. I not only oppose it vigorously, but intend to go back on the public platform in the North and expose it for the rotten fraud and sham it is.

Mr. LOW (Coorooora) (4.20 p.m.): In rising to speak to this Bill, I should like to say that I oppose the creation of 13 additional seats in Queensland, and I do not agree with the statement made by the hon. member who has just resumed his seat that hon. members as a whole do not work 40 hours a week. If an hon. member does his job well, it is a job from daylight to dark, with week-ends included.

Mr. Aikens: You are pulling your own leg.

Mr. LOW: I am not pulling anybody's leg. I work that time myself and do the job to the best of my ability, and I find it difficult to do the work electors in my area expect of me.

Mr. Power: And so it is with every private member.

Mr. LOW: It depends on how willing you are and the confidence that the electors have in you. There are thousands of electors in Queensland who would like things to be done for them but have not the courage to approach their member about them. Hon. members of this House should instil confidence in their own electors so that they will be able to put the case for their electors in the right quarters.

The Premier said that the Bill was designed for the purpose of bringing about better representation for the people of Queensland. I feel that it is not designed for that purpose at all, but introduced in view of the results of the last election, which brought home to the Labour Party the fact that the writing was on the wall, and that the votes in the State were divided virtually 50 per cent. for both sides. I feel that the Bill is designed to create more seats in Queensland to more or less fence the Government in. And I feel also that it is laying the foundation for a dictatorship within the State. I have read the Bill and do not find anywhere in it that one person cannot submit his name and contest the 75 seats that will be created. If that is so, one man could submit his name and could be elected to represent every electorate in this State.

Mr. Power: You put your name in for Barooona and see how you go.

Mr. LOW: It is not a matter of what electorate you submit your name for. The power is there, and I submit that it is laying

the foundation stone for one to represent the whole of Queensland, which would be dictatorship.

Mr. Hanlon: You can nominate for any electorate now if you are on the Queensland rolls.

Mr. LOW: And you can nominate for them all, according to the Bill.

Mr. Hanlon: The Election Act deals with that.

Mr. LOW: I feel that if there were better government in Queensland there would be less complaint, and the job for each member of this Assembly would be made easier. The Premier has mentioned decentralisation and each hon. member of this Assembly must confess and realise that we must stop the drift from the country to the city, if it is possible to do so. There certainly will be a definite drift of at least nine country people to the city when we have nine additional country members in this House after the next election. A more equitable and proper way to give the people of Queensland better representation would have been to restore the preferential vote.

Each member has received a map showing the division of the State into zones but that action is very wrong when we know perfectly well that the State has already been carved up into the electorates concerned.

Mr. Hanlon: Who told you that?

Mr. LOW: It is general knowledge round this House.

Mr. Hanlon: Did it ever occur to you that it is only people with evil minds who would say these things without some evidence of them?

Mr. LOW: It is generally known. When anything of this kind is taking place and a Bill is drafted to bring it in it is known exactly where the boundaries will be. A Government would be crazy, if they did not actually work this out. It is worked out all right and the Premier knows it. I have even been told where my boundaries will be and I am quite happy about them. If we are to have these zones, then let us have the real boundaries so that we shall all be on the one footing.

Mr. Hanlon: What a great opinion you have of members of Parliament generally!

Mr. LOW: Labour members know where the new boundaries will be. I am quite satisfied about that.

Mr. Power: I do not know. I should like to know.

Mr. LOW: The hon. member for Gregory knows.

Mr. Devries: No.

Mr. LOW: I bet he knows exactly where his electorate boundaries will be.

Mr. Hanlon: Dirty hands and dirty minds go together.

Mr. LOW: I have worked out the scheme and I have come to the conclusion that at the next election Labour will win 40 of the 75 seats, on the basis of the zones set out in the map, and provided the people vote in the same way as they voted at the last election. I am sure that will be pretty near the result. At the same time I feel that the electors generally will be rather hostile about the fact that the electorates have already been drawn up.

Mr. Hanlon: That is not true and you know it.

Mr. LOW: The appointment of a Commission will be farcical.

I was astounded to hear the Treasurer support the Bill because it is known that we shall finish this year with a deficit. The money could be used for a much better purpose than creating another 13 seats for politicians in this House.

Mr. Hanlon: He never said that we should finish with a deficit.

Mr. LOW: Last year we ran very close to the wind and escaped a deficit by a few thousand pounds but the way we are going now, with all the increases—

Mr. Power: You are getting your share.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must discuss the principles of the Bill.

Mr. LOW: I was just replying to the Treasurer and reminding him of the effects of these increases. I was also saying that the money that will be required to provide for the thirteen additional seats could be used for a much better purpose, such as the construction and maintenance of main roads, in helping local authorities, and in giving educational facilities in country centres.

All these increases will be an enormous cost to the Treasurer. The 13 additional members provided for will find it very difficult indeed to get accommodation, even in our own Country Party room, as it is difficult to accommodate the present members. (Government interjections.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The question of accommodation is not a principle of this Bill.

Mr. LOW: I was merely drawing attention to the fact that even before these additional members are elected we have little or no accommodation to offer them in this building.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The question of accommodation is not a principle of this Bill.

Mr. LOW: The Government have fallen down on their job. They have failed to give the country a fair go. The redistribution as proposed is definitely a dishonest piece of legislation designed for the sole purpose of giving the Government a longer tenure of office. I have always regarded this Bill as a Ned Kelly Bill designed by Ned Hanlon in order to make secure the political future of the Labour Party.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will have to withdraw that term "Ned Kelly" and "designed by Ned Hanlon." I suggest to the hon. member, as he is only a young member, that unparliamentary expressions do not enhance one's speech.

Mr. LOW: I will withdraw. I did not think that remark was unparliamentary. I have heard a lot worse remarks than that.

Mr. SPEAKER: From my experience the words "Ned Kelly" denote something sinister, which is unparliamentary, and the hon. member knows it.

Mr. LOW: I believe in the principle of one man, one vote and one value. I hope we shall always stand by it. Queensland is part of the British democracy. I am of opinion that the forces opposed to Labour should challenge the validity of this legislation and seek a restraining order to stop the Government from implementing this outrageous measure which is designed for the purpose of taking away the democratic rights of the people. I therefore oppose the Bill.

Mr. PIE (Windsor) (4.33 p.m.): First of all, I want to say that this Socialist Labour Government occupying the benches on the opposite side of the House—

Mr. Power interjected.

Mr. PIE: You know you are a Socialist and Communist.

Mr. POWER: Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I demand not only a withdrawal but an apology for the statement that I am a Communist.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Hon. members must refrain from personalities. The term "Communist" as applied to the hon. gentleman is offensive and I ask the hon. member for Windsor to withdraw it and under the circumstances he should apologise.

Mr. PIE: As long as—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. PIE: I withdraw the statement that he is a Communist but he is the greatest Socialist in this House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must obey the Chair's ruling and he must withdraw unreservedly.

Mr. PIE: I will withdraw unreservedly that he is a Communist.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must apologise.

Mr. PIE: And I apologise to the hon. member for Baroona.

This Socialist Hanlon Government are at it again. First of all, not satisfied with their rise in salary—while all wages were pegged, not satisfied with putting their own salaries up by £1,100 a year—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. PIE: Not satisfied with the super-annuation fund, they now want to remain in power for all time on a minority vote. Whatever you say, Sir, you know that to be right—that this Hanlon Government expect to occupy the Treasury benches with a vote of 39 per cent. of the total population. I will prove it. Let us have a look at the position. Where, as my leader said, is the great West represented on the front Treasury benches? Where is Northern Queensland represented on the front Treasury benches? By the Secretary for Public Instruction and the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs.

Mr. Hanlon: And the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock.

Mr. PIE: And the Minister has the worst farm on the Atherton Tableland. Let us look at the great Government who are supposed to develop Northern and Central Queensland. What have they done? They have done nothing to develop this great State.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. PIE: Let us analyse this Bill. When it first came before the House I said it would result in the Labour Government—or the Socialist Government—being returned by a greater minority than ever before in the history of Queensland. I repeat that. This new Government will go down on a vote representing the greatest minority that has ever happened within a British democracy. After a close study of the measure and the effect it will have when eventually proclaimed, I repeat that it is the greatest outrage on the people of Queensland that has been ever perpetrated by any Government at any time. I say again that if the people really understood what was in this Bill, and if it could be put to the people effectively by the Press and from every political platform, they would turn this Government out—although they have the cards stacked against the Opposition—and they would go out of power for all time. I say that this Government are achieving by underhand Socialist methods—and the Premier knows, because he was the one who moved the resolution at an A.L.P. conference; and I have a copy of it, and it was tabled in this House—he knows that by underhand methods he is foisting on the people of Queensland this socialistic and, I say, communistic domination. They go side by side. No-one can deny that the rule by a minority is a socialistic, totalitarian and communistic principle. They are all bound up together and no-one can deny it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member might tell us something about the principles of the Bill.

Mr. PIE: I am. I am telling you that as a result of the Bill this Government will rule with a minority of 39 per cent. of the total votes of the people. I shall prove that as I go along. When the people do realise this blatant manipulation of their democratic rights they will rise up against this Government; and this Government, although they may retain power for another six years by this manipulation, will go down—as I said

before—as the greatest manipulators and endeavours to obtain power behind the back of the people that have ever existed in the history of Queensland politics.

Let us look at something more. What does rule by minority mean? It means no respect for the wishes of the people. No-one can deny that; the Premier cannot deny it. I know there are many good Labour men on that side and outside Parliament. I know many of them—and I can name them any time you like, Labour men and friends of mine—who are disgusted with this manipulation of boundaries. They are disgusted and they know what is going to happen. They know that the Labour Party, which once held power by clean open-cut methods, is now sinking to a level where it has to get power not by the will of the majority, not by the will of the working people in the majority of the seats, but on a minority vote of approximately 39 per cent.

Mr. Hanlon interjected.

Mr. PIE: The hon. gentleman can talk as much as he likes; I did not interject when he was speaking. It hurts this Labour Government, it hurts this Socialist Government, to be linked up with the Communist crowd; but at the same time, when their principles are totalitarian—just as this measure is—one must link them up with the Communists because that was the basis on which they built their regime in Russia. They are governing by a minority, by a people who will remain in power for all time, even on a 39 per cent. vote.

Now let the House have a look at the picture as it will be under this Bill. In 1947 the Government got only a 42-per-cent. vote of the total of the people of Queensland. The Premier can play as he likes with any figures, or as he likes with any statistical reports, but cannot deny that the Government retained power in 1947 on a 42-per-cent. vote of the people. Twelve per cent. was gained by Independents; therefore I repeat that this Government are ruling on a minority of the votes of the people of Queensland. Labour won 35 of the 62 seats on a 42-per-cent. vote. In other words, the present Labour set-up is based on a 42-per-cent. vote whereas the Opposition are based on a 57-per-cent. vote. Nice work if you can get it!

To go a little bit deeper and see how the Bill will work out, let me take the quotas of the various areas.

Mr. Roberts: Why are the Communists supporting you in your opposition to this Bill?

Mr. PIE: I had better not talk about it.

Let me look at what was happening. In the first of the areas, the metropolitan area, we now get 49 per cent. of the votes against the Government's 45 per cent. Despite this, as is well known, the Government got 12 seats and we only 8. That is done because of the fantastic boundaries that operate. For instance, take those of my own electorate. My electorate goes right down to Breakfast Creek, which should be part of

Mr. Speaker's electorate of Fortitude Valley. It goes right out to Kedron. It comes to the boundary of Windsor but does not take in Windsor. It does not take in the Windsor State school, the railway station or Windsor proper, nevertheless it is called the Windsor electorate. I understand that under the new scheme Breakfast Creek is to come out of my electorate and I get back Windsor in order to make a strong seat for my party, because the Government know that they can never again win the Windsor electorate. But the alteration will make the Fortitude Valley seat strong. That is common knowledge.

Mr. Roberts: Where did you get that?

Mr. PIE: I can tell the hon. member about Nundah because we have discussed the matter. He knows what is to happen in the Nundah electorate. (Government interjections.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. ROBERTS: I rise to a point of order. The hon. gentleman said I knew what was going to happen to the Nundah electorate. That is incorrect. To my knowledge, no member of this House knows what is to happen in his particular electorate, and I ask the hon. member for Windsor to withdraw that statement. (Renewed interjections.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Hon. members must obey my call to order. If my call is not obeyed, sooner or later I will take drastic action. The hon. member for Windsor will have to accept the denial or assurance of the hon. member for Nundah on the point raised.

Mr. PIE: I will accept his denial but I will draw a map to show where these electoral boundaries are going to be. I know exactly where they are going. I know what is happening. We have on this side the bits of news in regard to the new electorates.

Mr. Hanlon: What else do you know? (Government interjections.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. PIE: I know what is going to happen generally.

Let us have another look at the position. Take Zones 3 and 4, the North and the West. They are traditional Labour strongholds. The quotas there are reduced to 7,352 and 4,783 respectively. A 20-per-cent. margin means one-fifth, so that if that is taken from the 4,783 it means that a man can be elected to this Parliament on just under 4,000 votes in that area, whilst in a metropolitan electorate, where the quota is 10,000, it means that with the 20-per-cent. margin it will require 12,000 votes to elect a man.

In a Labour stronghold the boundaries could be rigged this way, although I do not say that they will be: where there are 10,000 people there is nothing to prevent the Government's so arranging the boundary that after allowing for the 20 per cent. all that would

be necessary to elect a Labour candidate would be 8,000 votes. That is the weakness of the whole thing. In one electorate a man can be elected to this Parliament on under 3,000 votes while in another electorate it will require 12,000 votes. Is that democratic government? Is that government by the will of the majority of the people? Is not that a negation of all we hold right, of the principle that we shall represent all the people honestly and truly? The very basis of this suggestion is entirely wrong. The sole purpose for introducing it is to enable this Government to remain in power for another six years at least—because I do not think we shall be able to get them out in less than another six years. During that period the socialistic programme can be developed further and still further. There can be no question but that the socialistic programme is being developed. In every piece of legislation going through this House we see such things as power of compulsory acquisition, increased wages without reference to the people, centralisation of everything, and superannuation of members of Parliament without reference to the people, despite a strong denial by the Premier at the last election that there would be superannuation.

Let us go a little further and look at what happened in Zone 1. At the last election the Queensland People's Party polled 122,652 votes for 49 per cent. of the total votes for the area. We won eight of the 20 seats, whilst Labour, with only 113,760, or 45 per cent. of the total votes, won 11 of the 20 seats. How is that brought about? The only answer is that the electorates were manipulated or formed in such a way as to allow of such discrepancies. Is that democratic government? Is that government by the will of the majority of the people? This Bill makes the position still worse.

Mr. Hanlon: No. This Bill corrects that. That is where you are wrong.

Mr. PIE: Take Zone 2. Here the Queensland People's Party and the Country Party together won 15 of the 25 seats, with 50 per cent. of the total effective votes. Between them they gained 117,522 votes, whereas, with only 90,820 votes—27,000 fewer or only 38 per cent. of the total—Labour won 10 of the 25 seats. That is wrong in principle.

Take Zone 3—at the last elections the Queensland People's Party/Country Party gained 261,496 votes or 30 per cent. of the total votes polled and did not win one of the ten seats. Labour, with 42,514 votes or 47 per cent. of the total, won eight of the ten seats. On the same percentage under the new distribution which increases the number of seats to 13, the parties in Opposition would still not win any of the seats. It is obvious that Labour will still win 11 of the 13.

Turning to Zone 4 we find that the Queensland People's Party/Country Party polled 19,405 votes or 40 per cent. of the total votes polled, to win one seat of the seven, whilst with 56,477 votes or 54 per cent. of the total Labour won six of the

seven. On the same percentage of working when this Bill goes through the Opposition would still have one only and Labour nine of the 10 seats.

It is an acknowledged fact in this House that the Labour Party is out to win certain electorates. There is no question about that. The Bundaberg electorate is one, Mirani is another—and I say that they will never get the present member for Mirani out—and the electorates of Bowen and Mundingburra are being sought. These things come to us.

Mr. Roberts: And Windsor?

Mr. PIE: Windsor, as a matter of fact, will be made a strong seat and the Valley seat will be made stronger too. Those others are the people that the Government want to get out. The hon. members representing those electorates have caused trouble in this Assembly by their strong speeches—not that I always agree with them in their criticism of the Labour Government. The boundaries of Bundaberg, Mirani, Bowen and Mundingburra are being formed in such a way that it will be difficult for the present members to get back into this House.

Let us now turn to the great West we hear so much talk of. The West is not thought enough of to have a Cabinet Minister representing it. There will be more members from the West in this House; the electorates of Gregory and Warrego will be cut in two but never on the front benches of this Assembly do we find a Minister representing Western Queensland. That is one reason why the West has been neglected and I say that surely the problems of the West are great enough and important enough to warrant representation of that part of the State by a front-bench member or Minister.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! This Bill is not electing the Ministry.

Mr. PIE: I hope that in the division of the western areas the West will get a dominating vote in Caucus. Let us look at this great North that this Labour Government—this Socialist Labour Government—say they are developing.

Mr. Jesson interjected.

Mr. PIE: I knew the hon. member for Kennedy would come in. Would it please the hon. member for Kennedy to know that I have recently bought a building in Townsville to start a factory there on 1 May? I have preached decentralisation and I try to carry out what I preach. (Government interjections.)

Let us have another look at the position. If the same percentage of votes is recorded for Labour members at the next elections as were recorded at the last elections Labour can win, and that is because of the quotas that have been fixed. On the various zones Labour will get 44 out of the 75 seats and that is fairly obvious to anyone who studies the position. Of course, they will not need to win 44 seats to get a majority, they will need only 38 seats. Therefore the Hanlon Government can

afford to lose seven seats and still be on the Treasury benches. Probably they will lose some seats at the next elections.

This is a serious matter. The Bill is the very negation of democracy. It is the socialistic plan in operation and the Premier knows it. That is why he is so jubilant. The Bill enables the socialistic Hanlon Government to introduce their Socialist policy. (Government laughter.) Hon. members opposite may laugh but anyone who reads the history of this Government, with their powers of acquisition and their doing of things behind the backs and without the knowledge of the people, knows that we are on the road to Socialism.

An analysis of the position clearly shows that if a little over 30 per cent. of the votes go to the Labour Party the Government can remain in power. Is that right? It is wrong in principle and no one can deny it. My figures are correct. I ask hon. members to see whether I am not right after the next election. If the Government get a little over 30 per cent. of the votes of the people they can obtain a majority of the seats in Parliament. The Bill is iniquitous; it is wrong.

The Government have gone the wrong way about developing the State of Queensland. I know very well that there must be established a Ministry in North Queensland. That is obvious every time you go to the north. There must be such a Minister with responsibility on Cabinet level to cater for the requirements of the people of North Queensland. There must be a secretariat for North Queensland too so that decisions may be made on behalf of the people of the North. I have already pointed out that the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs might be an ideal Minister for the new province of North Queensland.

Now Central Queensland. Here again a Ministry should be established in Central Queensland to develop those areas. Look at the tommyrot we heard about Blair Athol and look at the publicity that the Premier got in connection with the Blair Athol scheme. What did it turn out to be? As the hon. member for Mirani said, a schoolboy made a fool of the Premier and that is what really happened. Then the Premier went to London but we knew before he went that he would not do any good.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will not be in order in discussing that matter.

Mr. PIE: To sum up the measure it makes possible the rigging of elections and it makes possible the rigging of votes. How often have we heard some members of Parliament say, "I start off with 500 votes before I kick off," and how often have I explained to this House how that is fixed before they start? It is obvious that there are certain people in a number of homes who may be regarded as strong supporters, as dyed-in-the-wool Labour supporters. At some of the homes there are three people whereas there are five people on the roll in respect of each home. What happens when the police go round to check the rolls?

All they do is to say, "These five people still live in this house?" "Yes." We tried to counteract that. We had legal opinion, including K.C.'s opinion, but there is no way of getting to the bottom of it. That is why this Labour Government will never adopt the principle of uniform rolls for the Commonwealth and State. That is the basic principle; they want to control the rolls of this State.

I still say, in summing up, that this Government will be elected again on the greatest minority that has ever been in a parliament in a democracy. You cannot get away from these figures. We know how in a totalitarian state a few people put the Government in power and they stayed there. When you analyse the figures you see that this Government can be elected by 39 per cent. of the total number of people. Surely on principle that is wrong and a negation of democracy.

Before the Government put this Bill into operation they should review the position, because the day will come when they will rue it. You know the problem of a big party in Caucus where everyone is seeking power, and where every man wants to be a Minister and there are not enough Ministerial portfolios to go round. You can imagine what would happen after the next election. Instead of the number of Government members there is now, you will have another 10. Look at the activity there will be in canvassing for votes to get on the front bench! I do hope we shall see on that front bench after the next election the beaming Deputy Premier. (Government interjections.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Mann): Order!

Mr. Gair: He is blooming enough to prevent you from breaking the industrial laws.

Mr. PIE: He is blooming and goes on like an empty can. (Government interjections.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask that the hon. member be allowed to make his speech without interruption.

A Government Member: How does he make it?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. PIE: They remind me of a lot of giggling hyenas.

You know the problems that will be created by the extra members who will come in on the back benches. You know how difficult it will be to prevent another measure from being introduced to increase the number of Ministers, or another measure probably to increase salaries, because, after all, a member of Parliament today says he wants a lot of money to keep up his position, a lot of pay to cover the hard work he has to do, work that goes into the night and causes him to sweat on his brow. It must be very difficult today to fill the position of a member of Parliament, to answer the telephone calls and the personal calls on him. I do not know how these members of Parliament get through their work. They must find it extremely difficult.

We heard when the Bill providing for increased salaries was being put through this House how necessary it was that hon. members should get an increase in salaries because of the amount of work they did. We heard how every hon. member opposite was doing a good and a splendid job, and was working hour after hour to do it. As soon as that increased salary was assured and the Superannuation Bill was passed and the increased salary was in the banks, what did they turn round and do? They said, "We will now ease up on our job and instead of working harder for our increased pay"—as you would expect any man to do—"we will cut down the job that we have to do and for which we are getting paid extra money." That is the principle involved. It is wrong and something has to be done about it. I said before this is a plan of Socialism at work. First of all Labour socialises the banks. Then we get compulsory acquisition, and now this Bill will make it possible for all time for the Socialist state to come into operation.

Mr. EVANS (Mirani) (5.5 p.m.): I spoke on the first reading of this Bill and, whether right or wrong, gave my reasons why it was introduced.

I have had an opportunity during the debate on the second reading of listening to the Premier, the Treasurer, other members of the Labour Party, and members on this side of the House. I received no further information from the Premier in his second-reading speech than I received on the day he introduced the Bill.

The only conclusion I can come to, on analysing the statements made by the various members of the Government on previous Bills, is that their desire is to retain office at any cost. In order to bring the matter before members very forcibly again, I shall read what the Premier said in this House in 1931. It was read before but I must read it again in order to emphasise the inconsistency of the Premier—not only the Premier but the Treasurer and the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs, who on that occasion voted for the amendment. Mr. Hanlon is reported as saying on that occasion—

"I agree that it is necessary for the Commission to have a certain amount of latitude in fixing the size of electorates; but I do not agree that there should be legislative instructions for the seats in some districts to be small and for those in others to be large."

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what has happened to the Premier? Was he consistent, was he honest in the statement he made on that occasion or is he honest on this occasion? Let us analyse the position, and see whether he was right then or whether he is right or wrong today, and what is the reason for this somersault, for this change-over. Today the Labour Party—or the Socialist Party—is in power; it is handling the reins; it is riding the horse. As a matter of fact, if he had a "Otairi" in and had the handicapping of that horse, I can assure you that on Saturday the Premier would have given him a 500-yard start and he would have made sure of winning, irrespective of

the people who backed the other horses. The Premier and members of the Government are riding the horse—they have the reins—and they are the handicappers, too. Why have they departed from the statement made and supported by their party that there should be no legislative action controlling the size of these electorates? What have they done here? Absolutely the contrary to what the Premier stated on that occasion. When they come to North Queensland to electorates such as my electorate, they will want to get rid of Evans because he defeated the man who probably would have been Premier.

Mr. Aikens: What a licking you gave him, too!

Mr. EVANS: And I will give him a bigger licking if he comes back, irrespective of any redistribution.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member is not in order in touching on that matter. I ask him to keep to the matter before the House.

Mr. EVANS: I am a very obedient member and I have listened to the debate and I have heard all angles discussed; but I do bow to your ruling on this occasion. If I am out of order in discussing that I will revert to the figures in connection with the various electorates. At the general election in 1947 Labour polled 272,350 votes and had returned 35 members. The Queensland People's Party and the Country Party polled 287,237 and had returned 23 members. For each member the Labour Party polled 7,781 and the combined Opposition parties 12,488. Was that not a big enough racket? Was that not tough enough? Was that not cockeyed and lopsided enough, without having a further redistribution?

A Government Member: It is not as bad as 1912.

Mr. EVANS: I am talking about what happened last election. I was not here in 1912.

The Premier has told us of the better service that these members will give North Queensland in the House but only about three or four days ago, when the Abattoirs Acts Amendment Bill was being discussed hon. members on this side and the hon. member for Mundingburra made a strong plea for a northern representative on the Queensland Meat Industry Board. What happened? The Government would not accept the amendment. If the northern people who grow the cattle are not entitled to representation on that board, why do the Government want additional members of Parliament in North Queensland? Is it to represent the people of North Queensland or is it to stabilise and strengthen their position in this Parliament?

Mr. Barnes: That contradicts their argument.

Mr. EVANS: Of course it does. In a former speech the Premier told us it was democratic. Where is the democracy?

Mr. Hanlon: You would not know it if you met it.

Mr. EVANS: Since I have been listening to you and heard you sponsoring monopolies, go-getters and calling members of harbour boards ghouls, I am satisfied that I do not know much about it, if you are right!

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not indulge in personalities but keep to the matter before the House.

Mr. Barnes: Personalities are the privilege of the Government only.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Barnes: I will give them personalities when I speak.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. EVANS: I tell the Government and every member of the Government connected with this Bill that Ned Kelly, Nigger Telfer and Al Capone, if they were back on earth, would blush with shame if they were charged with being connected with this Bill. Nigger Telfer was a three-card man. I go further and say that the people who brought about this matter, who worked this scheme, divided it up, are no better than cheats and swindlers.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not in order in imputing improper motives to members of the Government and I ask him to withdraw that remark.

Mr. Hanlon: The hon. member should be compelled to apologise for referring to members of this Government as cheats and swindlers. He should be made to withdraw.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the hon. member to withdraw that remark and apologise. It is offensive to the Premier and members of the Government.

Mr. EVANS: I will qualify it by saying "political cheats."

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I have asked the hon. member to withdraw and apologise.

Mr. EVANS: I regret very much that I think it is true and I cannot withdraw.

Mr. Barnes: Hear, hear!

Mr. Aikens: Another rebel.

Mr. Barnes: Good on you. That is the stuff they want.

NAMING OF MEMBER.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the hon. member to withdraw and apologise and obey the Chair. If he does not obey the Chair I shall have to name him.

Mr. EVANS: I regret very much that I cannot agree to your request.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I name the hon. member for Mirani for wilfully disregarding the authority of the Chair.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (5.14 p.m.): I hope the hon. member will not persist in that attitude. It is the duty of every hon. member in this Chamber to obey the ruling of the Chair.

Mr. Aikens: Bar members of the Labour Party.

Mr. HANLON: That is the duty of every hon. member. I hope the hon. member will do his duty and uphold the dignity of the Chair.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the hon. member to accept the Premier's request and obey the Chair.

Mr. EVANS: I regret that I was restricted more than other members in this House today and I regret very much that I cannot.

Mr. Barnes: Good on you, Ernie.

Mr. Aikens: It would have been all right if a Government member said it.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (5.15 p.m.): The hon. member leaves me no alternative. I feel sorry this has to be done. I do not like to see members having to leave the Chamber. I move—

“That the hon. member for Mirani be suspended from the service of the House for fourteen days.”

Question put; and the House divided—

AYES, 29.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Jesson
„ Bruce	„ Jones
„ Burrows	„ Keyatta
„ Clark	„ Larcombe
„ Crowley	„ Moore
„ Davis	„ O'Shea
„ Donald	„ Power
„ Duggan	„ Roberts
„ Dunstan	„ Smith
„ Farrell	„ Taylor, J. R.
„ Foley	„ Turner
„ Gair	
„ Gunn	
„ Hanlon	<i>Tellers:</i>
„ Hilton	Mr. Devries
„ Ingram	„ Theodore

NOES, 21.

Mr. Aikens	Mr. Müller
„ Barnes	„ Nicklin
„ Brand	„ Pie
„ Chalk	„ Plunkett
„ Evans	„ Sparkes
„ Heading	„ Taylor, H. B.
„ Kerr	„ Wanstall
„ Low	
„ Luckins	
„ Madsen	<i>Tellers:</i>
„ McIntyre	Mr. Decker
„ Morris	„ Marriott

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Collins	Mr. Macdonald
„ Gledson	„ Maher
„ Graham	„ Hiley

Resolved in the affirmative.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS BILL.

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Debate resumed on Mr. Hanlon's motion—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Mr. BARNES (Bundaberg) (5.21 p.m.): It is quite an experience to be in the House and vote that somebody should not be sent out. Generally it has been I who has done the going out.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order: The hon. member for Bundaberg!

Mr. BARNES: I have been speaking, Mr. Speaker, in case you don't know it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order: The hon. member will keep to the question, too.

Mr. BARNES: I went out for a fortnight five times without pay and was fined, and the hon. member for Enoggera went out for one day.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BARNES: And the hon. member for Mundingburra.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not in order in discussing the question of suspension at the moment. The business before the House is the Electoral Districts Bill and I ask the hon. member to discuss the principles of it.

Mr. BARNES: That is just what I am leading up to. The hon. member for Mundingburra went out for one day and the hon. member for Mirani was sent out for a fortnight, because he had sufficient courage to oppose the Bill in such a way.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will discuss the principles of the Bill.

Mr. BARNES: I will speak to that point as there is no chance of my dropping dead. The hon. member for Mirani is to be congratulated in the highest terms on standing to his guns in this particular instance. He maintained that the Bill was brought in for an ulterior motive and not out of consideration for the North and the West. He stood to his guns. If the Opposition had the guts of the hon. members for Mirani and Bundaberg there would not be a Labour Government on that side of the House. The Government are supposed to be a Labour Government representing the Labour dills of Queensland.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BARNES: We can excuse the electors because they do not understand the workings of the “Yes” men organisation in Parliament, but I do not excuse the supposed Labour Party that occupies the Government benches.

I was the first to speak the other day after the Premier replied to the Leader of the Opposition or somebody else. In short, the Premier based his argument for introducing the Bill on the wide open spaces in the West and the North. That was the only concern of the Premier; he wanted to give the country people better representation. In the breath before that he gave Cooktown a lousy £500, as I told hon. members the other day. That showed his concern for country people. In the next breath he gave the Rockhampton and Gladstone shire councils that were affected by the cyclone a lousy £2,000. So much for his concern with country Queensland! He is concerned with nothing else but retaining the “Yes” men in Parliament. The Premier, being very smart so far as political tactics

are concerned—not smart in the true sense of the word—knows that the Independents at the last election had a colossal following and he knows that the Independents might put his Government out of power. That is the only body the Premier is frightened of.

Let us assume for the sake of argument that the Independents can take six or eight seats from him. He is preparing now to get those six, eight or nine seats by providing for 13 new members. There is nothing else behind it but that. As the seats are controlled in Queensland now, the number of votes obtained by hon. members in Opposition, excluding myself, far exceed those obtained by the Government. The object of the Government is to get more seats and to make their security in government stronger. They will get nine of the 13 new seats at the next elections.

The Premier realises the danger spot at the moment. A moment ago I credited him with a lot of political cunning but I am not going to give him full marks for it. He has travelled the world and probably he met Bernard Baruch, because he went to America. Perhaps he advised the Premier about these political tactics, and perhaps the Premier is not responsible for them entirely. He has been to Downing Street and to Wall Street. The scheme may not be his at all. It may not be the product of his brain. I doubt whether it is but if it is then I give him 100 per cent. marks. At the same time I debit him with 1,000 per cent. in respect of his interest in the people. He is not interested in the people. He is only interested in occupying the middle seat of the front Government benches as Premier of the State. He is merely interested in being Premier and protecting the "Yes" men of his Government. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to cast your left eye over your right shoulder at the members of the Government Party and say whether they are capable of any sound thinking. The Premier has to do all the thinking for them. They simply sit back in their seats and vote when required.

Mr. Smith interjected.

Mr. BARNES: Here we have this Tory member from the western country who pretends to be a Labour man, worth about £100,000. When the pressure is put on and it comes to taking the bulls belonging to his Tory constituents he speaks against a Bill and his party providing for the acquisition of bulls. I refer to the Bill for the establishment of new abattoirs.

Mr. Aikens interjected.

Mr. BARNES: He knows nothing about industrial legislation. He charges 1s. 6d. a unit for electricity at Mount Isa. That is how much he is interested in the working people. His only interest is in being Norm Smith, the member for Carpentaria.

Mr. Smith: Break it down or I will bash you down.

Mr. BARNES: You could not knock a sick woman.

Mr. Smith: I will do it now. (The hon. member for Carpentaria crossed the Chamber to the Opposition cross benches.)

Mr. BARNES: I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that you will suspend the hon. member for Carpentaria.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I heard the remark of the hon. member for Bundaberg.

Mr. BARNES: I rise to a point of order. I bring under your notice the fact that I have been threatened in this Parliament by the hon. member for Carpentaria. I want an answer.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I have taken full cognisance of the hon. member for Bundaberg's remarks and the matter will receive my consideration.

Mr. BARNES: Ted Maher was sent out of this House for the same thing. There are 72 different rules in this House. Shortly after I was elected to Parliament I was told that there were two rules in Queensland, one for the rich and one for the poor. After a while I found there were three, one for the rich, one for the poor and one for members of Parliament. Later still I found that there were four rules, one for the rich, one for the poor, one for members of Parliament, and one for some members of Parliament and I was included in the last class.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has every opportunity of discussing the principles of the Bill. He must do that. I appeal to hon. members generally to avoid personalities and personal references. They are not allowed in Parliament. The hon. member had an opportunity of discussing the principles of the Bill.

Mr. BARNES: On the introductory stage I was tempted to move an amendment but when I showed it to an hon. member on this side of the Chamber he disagreed with me. The amendment that I proposed to move was for the omission of all words after so-and-so and the insertion of the words, "to make better provision for the return of Labour candidates at the next Queensland election." When I showed him that he said that would be no good, the Speaker would rule it out of order, as that in any event it meant the same thing. His subtle humour on that occasion was unquestionably correct because had I moved it it would still have meant in effect the same as this Bill will bring about, that is, it has been introduced for no other purpose but to put the Labour Party back in power at the next election, the following election, and if possible, the election following that.

All the electorates in northern and western Queensland—were held by Labour representatives—none by the Opposition. Until recently all the electorates in North Queensland were represented by Labour candidates. The Government, to consolidate their position, are now giving themselves three times the value of the present vote despite the fact that the very Labour platform on which they were selected contains the plank of one vote,

one value. The Premier, in introducing this Bill to keep his Government in power, has ridden roughshod over his party's platform. The Government are not concerned with Labour's platform. It does not come into consideration on this Bill. (Government interjections.)

Mr. BARNES: This is a Portugese Parliament. We are all talking at the one time.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member can continue his speech. I can hear all he is saying.

Mr. BARNES: I had to speak three times before you heard me. The Premier told us of the vast expanse of territory represented by hon. members elected for western and northern constituencies, but he did not tell us that the Brisbane electorates contain only 1.5 square miles, 1.6 square miles and 1.7 square miles, while his own electorate contains 3.3 square miles. Compare those areas with the hundreds of square miles in the Gregory electorate. Yet the Premier says that because of the 156,000 square miles of territory in the northern and western electorates they must give consideration to country representation. If it is true, the metropolitan constituencies with an area of 1.5 square mile, &c., should be increased to, say, 4 or 5 square miles to offset the disadvantage of the country electorates because one man in Brisbane could attend to 5 square miles much more easily than half the territory represented by the hon. member for Gregory.

Take for instance my own electorate. When I interview people in Bundaberg the first thing I say to them is, "What is your name and address?" I do not say to them, "As you live in Port Curtis go and see the member for that electorate." I do not say to people living only three miles out of Bundaberg when they come in to see me, "You live in Isis; go and see Mr. Brand." No, Sirree, I proceed and take their complaints and handle them. Bundaberg is practically a metropolitan area. It is a simple one for me to work. Electorates like Stanley, Fassifern and Albert are wide and scattered and much harder to work. Does this Bill provide for help to be given me in those electorates? No, it provides for less work for me in my electorate because the Government are not interested in the workability of an electorate, a factor on which the Premier bases the whole of his argument. If it did then his Government would have the Brisbane electorates 3 square miles instead of 1.5 square miles. But the Government are interested in only one thing, retaining their seats at the next election.

In 1941 there were 21,000 people out of work in the country. What did the Premier do about it? Nothing. The only thing that avoided a depression in 1941 and 1942 was the World War. The war occurred and protected him. That number of people were out of work despite the fact that we were then two years at war. The hon. member for Mirani asked for local representation on the Queensland Meat Industry Board for the district he represents.

That representation would ensure easy working and would be practical evidence of the Government's desire to give effect to the policy. The Premier's refusal was evidence of his refusal to support North Queensland.

The Queensland People's Party came out with a propaganda campaign for a new State in North Queensland. It did not argue about where the boundary should be, but the Premier went one better; he drew a line straight through Queensland and said, "You can have two States." The Premier now tells you that because of the vast territory in the North and West they needed extra men—extra representation because it has been so neglected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is altogether too much noise in the Chamber.

Mr. BARNES: That is what I said three hours ago.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is a little bit facetious, but he will obey my call to order.

Mr. BARNES: I drew your attention to the noise several time before and you ignored me; now you come to my corner and agree with me.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will obey my call.

Mr. BARNES: I was talking about the vast unhelped areas of North and West Queensland. That is an indictment of the Government who have been in power for approximately 32 out of 35 years. They have made that statement and by doing so they clearly admit that they are responsible for the neglect of the West and of the North.

Mr. Aikens: The longer they are in power the bigger Brisbane grows.

Mr. BARNES: That is true. It is a shocking indictment of the Government. Now they plan for extra seats to give the West and North better conditions. The new seats will not improve the West or the North one iota; they are not meant to improve it one iota; the Bill is meant to bring in extra voting power for the Government. Most probably the selections will be A.W.U. men, so that they will have full and proper control over them and if they do not do what they are told they will not be endorsed. When you read the speeches made by members opposite when the Moore Government were in power, such as the one delivered by the hon. member for Ithaca, in reference to a similar issue, and when they come here today and by their speeches turn a complete somersault, you ask, "Why? What is behind it that causes the complete somersault?" Well, what is behind it? Is it purely that the hon. gentleman got instructions or that he wants to get the increased vote or is it that he got orders from the Learned Elders of Zion? The Learned Elders of Zion may want a Labour Government in at the next elections; and if they want one there will be one; rest assured of that. I might go further and suggest that they may want the

Labour Government to do something to suit them. That they have been good and faithful servants so far is proved in the legislation passed since I have been here that contains communistic or socialistic provisions, call them what you like. I tell you that the Protocols say: "The aristocracy of the goyim as a political force is spent but as land-owners they can be of considerable interest to us." In the Blair Athol business the mines will be nationalised and in the Food for Britain venture all the lands are brought in and under the Abattoirs Acts Amendment Bill all the cattle are brought in; everything is virtually nationalised. I warned the Government and the Opposition what was behind all these Bills. If the Abattoirs Acts Amendment Bill is not being put through with the object of causing extra strikes and starvation in two years' time, I will resign.

The same thing applies here. The Opposition have as much chance of being the Government after the next election as I have of flying to the moon. What chance they did have is gone because of this Bill. This Bill allows a minority Government to carry on through a Caucus junta. It often opposes legislation in Caucus. For instance, on one occasion they voted 21 to 20 in Caucus on a liquor amendment and in the House they all voted for it. When this Bill becomes law it will allow the Government to bring in similar legislation. These new members will probably be men selected through the A.W.U. or some such clique; and there will not be any militant Labour members who will get in.

I know that the Government have to find a way to get me out of the Bundaberg seat. They have spent days and days and thousands of pounds trying to find a way. They have done divers things. They have taken my salary from me. They have fined me. They have done everything possible. Today I get no publicity under any consideration. The Government will not suspend me, it does not matter what I say, because if I am suspended it means that will give me publicity. They hope to kill me by not giving me publicity. In the meantime, however, the people are reading in "Hansard" all the speeches I make. The piece of poetry I quoted the other day was shown to me in two offices last week. When I am ready to open that door closed against me I will open it—you need not worry about that. As I said in my speech on the introduction of this Bill, they can take the middle, the sides, the inside or the outside or any side at all from the Bundaberg electorate, but they will not be able to take my seat from me.

A former Deputy Premier, the ex-member for Mirani, has been asked by some members of the Chamber of Comies in Bundaberg, some of the high Tories, to stand for the Bundaberg seat and they have promised to support him. When asked the same question years ago he said, "After the result of the previous elections, if I had no chance in Mirani I have less in Bundaberg. I held a meeting in the city in support of young Barney McLean and only 22 turn up, and

on that night Barnes held a meeting in the bush and speaks to 55." Again the Chamber of Comies has asked him to stand for Bundaberg; he will not oppose me in Bundaberg despite the opinion given by the hon. members of the Opposition today. He will not stand for the seat I stand for. He has not got the guts to oppose me. In addition, he would have more common sense than to fight me—I give him credit for that. That is one of the hard parts about this Bill; the Government cannot get rid of the political cancer the hon. member for Port Curtis always refers to, in defending the party. He thinks it is his job to defend the party in every debate that takes place. They have not Buckley's chance of defeating me, whichever way it goes.

The glaring part about this Bill is the splitting up of the zones. Suppose that it is true that this is to be the job of the Commission, and that the redistribution is not organised beforehand.

An Hon. Member: It is not—

Mr. BARNES: It is, and I know it. Suppose that what I told the Committee in my speech on the introductory stage as to where the boundaries are to be is true. If this splitting up is not a glaring thing, then what is? Here is a map showing the zones. One zone deliberately proceeds inland up the coast, then to the coast at Mackay. They cut the Tory part of Mirani out of that zone. That is a most glaring example of zoning. The Commission cannot alter that. Why is that done? Because the former Deputy Premier of Queensland is venomous and desires to get rid of the hon. member for Mirani. He cannot do so himself. He knows that. Hence their reason for wanting him stand in Bundaberg. He must use every machine to have the hon. member for Mirani excluded from the best part of his electorate which he himself will stand for. Ernie Evans has greater initiative than 42 Walshes, as was proved in the last election and in this House he has more guts than 3,000 Walshes put together. Though they cut the inside or the outside from his electorate he will win that electorate, therefore there are the representatives of two electorates that they will not get rid of. The Government will fail to upset these two.

The position in Queensland has been unique for some time. It is considered that the average life of a Government is two sessions of Parliament or six years, but Queensland is a freak in this respect. The Premier, being the Premier of Queensland, would be in possession of this knowledge.

Being in possession of that knowledge, the Premier realises that this cannot go on forever in Queensland, that he cannot just go on ruling, ruling and ruling, that something must be done, so he has devised this means of overcoming the difficulty.

Much has been said about the work that hon. members do. I challenge any hon. member to produce copies of correspondence to prove that he is doing half the work I have done in this Parliament. I admit that since

the last election I have cut down my work considerably. When I say that I mean that I do not attend to correspondence coming from Timbuctoo or some other out-of-the-way place as I used to do. Furthermore, I do not go out campaigning all over Queensland at my own expense. My effort to educate the people of Queensland has cost me a minimum of £22,500. I lost a considerable amount of money when I came into this Parliament. When I came into this Parliament I had by a long way the biggest hotel business in Bundaberg, a business worth £3,000 a year to me from a commercial point of view. It was not run as a commercial institution but as a political institution. I gave that up to come in here at a salary of £650 a year, which means that I lost over £2,000 a year at the minimum. That means in eight years I lost over £16,000 fighting the dirty "Yes" men in the Government in the country and at Bundaberg in connection with the liquor cases I spent £6,000. I flogged them, and the people put me in here. That means that I have lost up to £22,000 and then I spent another £2,500 out of my own pocket, out of my salary, in campaigning since I have been in Parliament trying to educate the people of Queensland to the fact that "Labour aint Labour no more." They are not wearing the crown of such good old Labour stalwarts as King O'Malley, Andrew Fisher, Davy Bowman and others. At terrific cost to myself and in spite of being financially embarrassed—I have been kicked out of here without salary, I have been pushed out of the Lodge—on every occasion I have given the Labour rats the flogging of their lives. Constitutionally, I have flogged the insides out of them.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has had a good deal of latitude and I cannot allow him to refer to hon. members as rats. He will have to withdraw that statement.

Mr. BARNES: We will not debate that.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will have to withdraw the statement.

Mr. BARNES: All right, I will withdraw it. I have got a reason for it.

As to the running of electorates, I have done more for the individual people of my electorate than any other hon. member has done. Sometimes when it gets a bit tough, when I get a few hard ones, I pass my electors on to the hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Farrell, and I take this opportunity of thanking him for all he has done for my electorate.

Mr. FARRELL: I rise to a point of order. I deny that the hon. member for Bundaberg passes any of his work onto me.

Mr. BARNES: You have never attended to the wants of any of my Bundaberg constituents?

Mr. FARRELL: As the hon. member for Maryborough, I look after my own electorate and deny that the hon. member for Bundaberg has ever passed any work onto me.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Bundaberg must accept the denial of the hon. member for Maryborough.

Mr. BARNES: I accept the denial. As I was saying, when things get hard in Bundaberg and I am overworked I say, "You go to one of these neighbouring electorates and tell them that Barnes is a dill and ask them to do something for you," and that goes for both sides of my electorate, excluding Isis. And they have done it!

There is another very important thing in connection with politics. I refer to the recent major attacks on Communism and the part Governments are playing. Last night in Rockhampton a certain audience booted down the Comms. That means nothing. That was organised from within the ranks of the Labour Party but it means nothing because those in the ranks of the Labour Party who organised it are organised from Wall Street, who in turn want you to think Communism is on the down grade. Take this Sharkey case that is before the courts today. Years ago a J. B. Miles made a much stronger statement than Sharkey made and nothing was done to him. Nothing was done because it did not suit them in Wall Street to do anything at that time. On this occasion it suits them to take up the Sharkey case to cause further strife. Politics is rotten to the core.

Mr. DECKER (Sandgate) (5.50 p.m.): Since the last election the alteration of electoral boundaries has been uppermost in the minds of the Government because it became apparent that some change would have to be made. It would appear from speeches made by hon. members opposite, particularly that of the Treasurer, that previous Parliaments in Queensland brought in Acts to rig electoral boundaries. In looking over the history of Queensland we find that changes have been made from time to time by various Acts, particularly in regard to personnel, but I would point out that without exception the Government have taken only limited steps in regard to the alteration of electoral boundaries. Governments have followed that policy religiously since Parliament was established in this land. At various times Parliaments have considered an alteration in the number of representatives in this House and in the Upper House, but Parliament has set a limit to its decisions and left the alteration of electoral boundaries to a special commission. Today the Treasurer stated that under the Moore regime a number of Labour seats were sacrificed or obliterated altogether. The Moore Government did nothing more nor less than limit the number of representatives; the boundaries were altered by a commission. There is no doubt about that.

Mr. Roberts: It is just a coincidence that they were Labour seats.

Mr. DECKER: That is not the true position.

Mr. Roberts: Of course it is.

Mr. DECKER: The Labour seats that were eliminated were joined to contiguous electorates in which Labour held representation. Ever since those electorates have been held by Labour under the very Act that the Treasurer condemned. There was no such thing as stacking of boundaries, as the work was done by a commission. This is the first time—and it is without precedent in the history of the State—any Government have taken upon themselves the onus of creating fixed electoral zones as they are doing in this Bill. Never in the history of this Parliament has that device been practised. In this Bill we are creating electoral zones and asking the commission to divide the electoral zones into a certain number of seats on a quota system. That is the point that in my opinion is absolutely wrong and I think it is a precedent that should not be established because when we do that we are faced with a charge of rigging electoral boundaries. Who created the zones? Not a commission. These are the zones that are in the minds of Cabinet Ministers and they are supported by members of the party. This is something done outside the work of a commission altogether, something thought of and hatched up as a new method of subdivision and it is a method that in our minds does not savour of democracy. It is not upholding democracy. It is a deliberate attempt to make boundaries coincide with electoral opportunities weighted in favour of the Government.

Is it any wonder that we complain when Cabinet fixes electoral zones for all time and a commission is merely required to fit the number of seats into the zones set out? The Government have taken very much into their own hands and it is time the people aligned themselves against the proposal and fought it tooth and nail. The proposal should be challenged. We have a Constitution. If it permits Parliament to adopt electoral zones so that seats may be manipulated for election purposes, it should be altered. In my opinion this attempt is constitutionally unsound. The Government have clouded the issue and have merely taken this step in the interests of expediency. Their purpose is to gain seats at the expense of rigged electoral boundaries. If that is so, it is something to which we should object.

Judging by the methods adopted by the Government, I should say that electoral development is moving too fast in this State. For instance, we see the dictatorial hand in relation to electoral boundaries. We have dictatorial ideas on every side. There are dictatorial methods in Government departments. Take, for instance, the office of the Commissioner of Prices. Could anything be more inequitable or dictatorial than what we have there? Then there is the principle of building control. Could anything be worse than that, where one part of the State enjoys a privilege denied to other districts and where one party can get an advantage that is not available to another? If equity is to be the basis of our democratic institutions, all our departments should be conducted on equitable lines.

In my opinion the Government have gone to the extreme. It is said that if you give a calf enough rope it will hang itself, and so I say that the Government have taken too much rope this time. They have done what no other Government would dare to do and therefore we shall oppose the Bill very strongly. This diabolical scheme of fixed electoral zones is designed to entrench the Government in power and to place a stranglehold on our Constitution. That cannot be tolerated. The proposal is grossly unfair. It is a perpetuation of Hitlerism and, what is worse, the Government have taken advantage of a situation to install themselves permanently in office, despite the wishes of the people. I object strongly to the method they have adopted and I doubt very much whether it is constitutionally sound.

Mr. WANSTALL (Toowong) (7.15 p.m.): The Bill before the House is one of the most important that hon. members have had to consider since I entered Parliament. It is important, not only from the point of view of Parliament, but from the point of view of the whole people. It is a matter in which it behoves the people to take a most intense personal interest. Consequently, the way in which it is debated is of the utmost importance, because the opportunities of hon. members and the general public to understand and appreciate its contents can be measured only by the quality of the debate that centres around it, and by the quality of the reports going out from this Chamber through the newspapers to the people. Above all, the attention of hon. members to the issues of the Bill is by far the most important aspect from the point of view of instructing the public mind. Consequently, if ever there were a debate that called for the utmost reasonableness in approach this is one, but I regret very much that the tone set by the Premier in opening it this morning was such that it was inevitably fated to take the turn it did this afternoon.

Mr. Hanlon: That is not true.

Mr. WANSTALL: I lay at the Premier's door the responsibility for certain of the happenings in the course of the debate today. I do that because there can be no doubt that much of the high feeling that has been engendered in this debate is the direct result of unjustifiable innuendoes and personal insults that were hurled at members of the Opposition and parties to which they belong by the Premier this morning. (Government dissent.)

Mr. Hanlon: That is rot.

Mr. WANSTALL: The tone set by the Premier can be gleaned from the remarks that have been reported by "Hansard." The nature of his approach to this Bill has been entirely one of abusing the Opposition.

Mr. Hanlon: Rot!

Mr. WANSTALL: Instead of giving consideration to the arguments that have been advanced by hon. members on this side of the House, the Premier has followed tactics of attacking them and every one of them personally.

Mr. Hanlon: That is not true. As a matter of fact, I opened the debate. How could I give consideration to what you were going to say?

Mr. WANSTALL: The Premier knows perfectly well that very solid arguments were advanced against the Bill on the initiatory stage, but at no time has he attempted to justify the scheme by a reasonable argument. On the contrary, he has imputed motives to hon. members on this side of the House. I ask hon. members to hark back to the months when the Premier was overseas and consider the dignity with which the debates were conducted.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not going to use this Bill as a means of making an attack on anyone. He must confine himself to its principles.

Mr. WANSTALL: I am not attempting to do that, but I am suggesting that the tone of this debate so far as the Premier is concerned—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I felt the remarks of the hon. member about the tone of the debate. I have striven all day to keep personalities out of it. There are sufficient principles in this Bill to occupy the full time of hon. members. I suggest to the hon. member that he continue his speech and give us the benefit of his great knowledge of its principles. (Government laughter.)

Mr. WANSTALL: I fully appreciate the difficulties against which you have striven all day, Mr. Speaker. Let me assure you that I do not intend to add to them.

It is a matter for the greatest regret that the Premier has seen fit to introduce his Bill and debate it in the atmosphere in which he has. The reasons he advanced can only be characterised as being in the nature of a spiel.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Did I understand the hon. member to use the word spieler?

Mr. WANSTALL: I did not say "spieler." I said that the arguments are in the nature of a spiel; in other words, they are specious; in other words, the argument is designed to convince the people on entirely fictitious and unjustifiable grounds.

Mr. Hanlon: Very edifying language for a barrister.

Mr. WANSTALL: It is more edifying than the language habitually used by the Premier of this State.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! These personalities must cease. If the hon. member does not get on with his argument on the principles of the Bill I shall take certain action.

Mr. WANSTALL: Very well. Above all, I do not want to emulate the language used by the Premier.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! If the hon. member will persist I shall ask him to resume his seat.

Mr. WANSTALL: The whole scheme of the Bill has been designed with one purpose in mind only, and that is to frustrate the will of the people as it is expressed in the ballot box in this State. The Premier advanced no justifiable reason for making such an uneven distribution of quotas in this State as are contemplated in the Bill. I have on the public platform described the whole scheme as a ramp and a racket; and nobody challenged me. (Government laughter.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. WANSTALL: It is necessary, in criticising a measure such as this, not to mince any words, but in order to inform the minds of the public as to the ramifications of this evil scheme it is necessary that one should call a spade a spade, a ramp a ramp, and a racket a racket. They are the most appropriate words to describe the scheme behind this Bill. The opportunities for the people to inform their minds as to what is contemplated in the Bill can only be presented to them by hon. members on this side of the House. In order to do that I find it necessary to use the strongest language, because this is an absolute negation of democracy; a deliberate attempt to prevent the people's free will from prevailing in this State. The Premier and his minions are responsible for this attempt.

Mr. Power: We accept our responsibilities; we are not shirking anything.

Mr. WANSTALL: Hon. members opposite will accept the responsibility because they cannot evade it. That is the only reason why they will accept the responsibility.

If we envisage electorates in certain zones of the State which come under the provisions of the Bill, we see that some have a quota of 3,000 electors whereas on the other hand there are other electorates that return the same number of members—one—having a possible quota of some 12,000; and that reaches the very summit of political dishonesty. It is being foisted on the people of this State, not straightforwardly, but under the guise of an attempt to improve the conditions of the people in the undeveloped sections of the State. No wonder it is described as a specious argument. If I meet a rogue and he says he is a rogue I have a certain amount of respect for him, but if I meet a rogue who masquerades as an honest man I have for him only the most cynical contempt.

That is the attitude with which the people of this State should greet the argument of a man like the Premier who comes out to foist upon them this dishonest electoral racket under the—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I have given the hon. member ample latitude. As he does not cease using unparliamentary language and personalities I ask him to resume his seat.

Mr. Pie: What a nice state of affairs! (Opposition interjections.)

Mr. KERR (Oxley) (7.26 p.m.): I rise to record my repugnance to this great insult that is being inflicted on the people of this State. It is one of the greatest insults we have seen of all time. The Government have put forward in this Bill the plea to retain the principle of one man, one vote, but the whole thing, Mr. Speaker,—(Government interjections.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I would ask the House to give the hon. member for Oxley an opportunity to continue his speech.

Mr. KERR: I was about to say with all the force that I possibly can command that although we have the protection of the principle of one man, one vote, the whole thing is negated by the zoning principle involved in this Bill and the people of Queensland should know the full facts. We have the pretext of one man, one vote agitated by the Government, but then the whole thing is knocked over like an Aunt Sally by the zoning principle involved in the Bill. This is a departure that has never been known in the history of politics in any country in the world. But we see a Labour Government in all their arrogance bringing such a contemptuous state of affairs into our political life. I think it is disgusting, contemptible, and the act of rogues.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! It seems that hon. members will persist in using unparliamentary language. Did the hon. member use the term "rogues?"

Mr. KERR: I did. I used the term "rogues" and that is what I think of them.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! As the hon. member admits he makes that statement I will now ask him to withdraw and apologise.

Mr. KERR: In my opinion, a Government who would bring in a measure like that are nothing less than political rogues. I have maintained that and I still hold to that idea.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will withdraw that statement and apologise to the House.

Mr. KERR: This is the first occasion in the six years that I have been in Parliament that I have disobeyed the Chair, but in these circumstances, much as I respect the Chair and the office you, Mr. Speaker, hold, I cannot feel it within myself to withdraw and apologise.

NAMING OF MEMBER.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Before I name the hon. member for Oxley I wish to say that apparently there are some members here who will not accept the Speaker's direction.

Mr. Barnes: If it is unfair, why should he?

Mr. SPEAKER: I regret that the hon. member for Oxley will not accept my direction and I have no alternative but to name him for disobeying the Chair.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (7.29 p.m.): It is no use my making any appeal to hon. members, who have planned—

Mr. Barnes: Rats!

Mr. PIE: I rise to a point of order. The Premier has no right to say this is a planned scheme. (Government interjections.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HANLON: I say quite frankly that the hon. member got up with the intention of being offensive, and offensive to the Chair, and I have no alternative but to move—

"That the hon. member for Oxley be suspended from the service of the House for fourteen days."

Question put; and the House divided—

AYES, 27.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Ingram
" Bruce	" Jesson
" Burrows	" Jones
" Clark	" Keyatta
" Crowley	" Larcombe
" Davis	" Mann
" Devries	" O'Shea
" Donald	" Power
" Duggan	" Theodore
" Dunstan	" Turner
" Farrell	
" Foley	
" Gunn	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Hanlon	Mr. Roberts
" Hilton	" Taylor, J. R.

NOES, 21.

Mr. Aikens	Mr. Morris
" Bjelke-Petersen	" Müller
" Brand	" Nicklin
" Chalk	" Plunkett
" Decker	" Sparkes
" Heading	" Taylor, H. B.
" Kerr	" Wanstall
" Low	
" Luckins	
" Madsen	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Marriott	Mr. Barnes
" McIntyre	Mr. Pie

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Collins	Mr. Macdonald
" Gair	" Russell
" Gledson	" Maher
" Graham	" Hiley

Resolved in the affirmative.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS BILL.

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Debate resumed on Mr. Hanlon's motion—
"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. WANSTALL: I rise to a point of order. Before the incident that has just occurred and whilst moving the motion for the suspension of the hon. member for Oxley the Premier made the statement that the attitude of the hon. member for Oxley was part of a deliberate plan on the part of members of my party and those on this side of the House. In doing so he imputed a motive to hon. members against which there is a clear Standing Order and I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to enforce that against the Premier.

Mr. Pie: Hear, hear! I bet you he does not.

Mr. Barnes: Yes, he will. I will make him.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! In reply to the point of order raised by the hon. member for Toowong, that hon. member has refuted any suggestion the Premier has made and it is now the Premier's duty to accept the assurance of the hon. member for Toowong.

Mr. HANLON: I am glad to have that assurance.

Mr. BARNES: I rise to a point of order. They implied that the same thing applies to me. I knew nothing about it and I ask the Premier to accept my denial.

Mr. HANLON: I accept it.

Mr. ROBERTS (Nundah) (7.37 p.m.): I have sat, as other hon. members have done, listening to a very vicious attack upon the measure before the House. As some hon. members have suggested, such measures as these are discussed fully by this party before they are brought into the House and to that extent we are pleased to be able to support such a measure, which will give Queensland better representation in the election of the Assembly. We have heard during the day very hard words used by hon. members opposite and to be quite fair to them I do not doubt for one minute that if by some ill fate they were occupying these benches and I and other members of my party were in opposition we should be deying the measure just as they are doing. This is obviously an opportunity for them to attack the Government and personally I do not blame them for that. It is part of their duty and it is their function to endeavour to place any such measures as this in the light of something upon which the people at an election 12 months off might be influenced to give them the support they desire. So, Mr. Speaker, to be quite fair to them and whilst I do not agree with the hard words they have used I do not wonder at the attitude they have adopted.

To get down to the basis of the Bill, I must say I was quite interested in the speech of the hon. member for Logan this morning and likewise was I interested in his speech in the initiatory stages. He has adopted the policy—and it is a sound one, as the Premier pointed out—that the fundamental principle we must consider in such a measure is equal representation. That is the fundamental principle at the very basis of the measure before the House. The hon. member for Logan said in effect that his complaint was one of degree, and that his party, I take it, was prepared to concede that so long as that fundamental principle was observed, there must today, because of the distribution of population in the various parts of the State, be some modification of that general principle. His only objection to the Bill is that the Government have gone too far. That is a reasonable argument and the only weakness in it is that it is easy for

every speaker in Opposition to adopt the attitude that the Government have gone too far. It is probably the duty of the hon. member for Logan to argue along those lines.

Let us have a look at the Bill itself. We all recognise the fact—and I say it advisedly—that there was some need for a review of the electoral districts of the State. Hon. members of the Country Party have said it on more than one occasion, and so have hon. members of the Queensland People's Party. We must now come to some basis of redistribution that will give the people of Queensland an equitable opportunity of electing their representatives to this House. In view of the fact that we have to modify the general principle of equal representation the question is: how are we going to divide the State into zones in order to give effect to that modification? It means that we must have different zones, and the question is whether we should have one, two or more. That is a fundamental principle of the Bill. New South Wales has three zones, a metropolitan zone and country zones. Perhaps we could have done that in Queensland, but, taking the arguments of hon. members of the Country Party, that would have inflicted a greater injustice than they allege the Bill will inflict on country districts. They have pointed out that there are large rural towns and inland and coastal cities outside the metropolitan area, and that because of the Bill some of these towns with fairly large populations will not have the same voting strength as electorates in the metropolitan area. However, if we adopted the policy in operation in New South Wales and in other States there would be only three zones, the metropolitan zone and country zones. That would make the differentiation between western towns and towns in what is described in the Bill as the South-Eastern Zone greater than it is in the Bill at present.

For the life of me I cannot see why there should be any objection to any of the zones set out in the Bill. We must recognise the fact that the most densely populated part of the State is the city of Brisbane, and we must recognise also the fact that the next most densely populated part is that referred to in the Bill as the South-Eastern Zone. Then we have the Northern Zone and finally the Western Zone. What principle could be adopted that would enable us to find a more equitable system of representation than the one contained in the Bill?

I cannot see one. Despite what I term a vicious attack on this measure—and I have listened very attentively—I have not heard one constructive suggestion made by hon. members opposite to cure what they prefer to term a Bill to allow this Government to gerrymander or manipulate the electorates. Personally I am in quite an open frame of mind.

Hon. members opposite, apart from the Leader of the Opposition, who did treat the measure critically, have not made one constructive suggestion to improve the measure. The hon. member for Logan went the closest to doing so but all he could say was that

it was a question of degree. He failed, though, to tell us how he could make the degree of differentiation between the zones any better than as provided for in the Bill.

During the course of the debate—and this also touches on the Bill itself—we have heard again the statement that the Government are a minority Government, that they have power although only 42 per cent. of the votes were cast for them at the last election. As a matter of fact, I stand corrected. I am sure it was 49 per cent. However, that may be, what hon. members opposite fail to recognise, and particularly the hon. member for Windsor, who prophesies that after the next election this Government will be again in power but by a vote of only 37 per cent. of the people, is that if there were 10 parties in the field it is quite possible for any party, be it the Country Party, the Queensland People's Party, or Labour Party, to occupy the Treasury benches of this or any other Parliament under a democratic constitution with only 20 or 25 per cent. of the total votes cast at the election. As the hon. member for Logan said on the introductory stage, he could see no objection to a minority Government. No reasonable person can find any objection to a minority Government if we are living under a democratic system of government as we have here today. (Opposition interjections.) It is very easy for hon. members opposite to group all parties outside the Australian Labour Party as one, and say, "Look at us! We have 51 per cent. of the votes of the people, and you, the Labour Party, occupying the Government benches, got only 49 per cent. We should occupy those benches." One of the fallacies of that argument if it were sound, is that we should have to accept the proposition that the policies of the Country Party and Queensland People's Party are identical. I do not think for one moment that even hon. members opposite would endeavour to argue that. I recognise that the Country Party has a policy, but the Queensland People's Party has no policy.

Mr. Pie: That is not a principle of the Bill.

Mr. ROBERTS: There is one major principle and that is whether we are going to have zones.

Mr. Sparkes: To make yourself safe?

Mr. ROBERTS: In order to give the people who are pioneering the country, that is, the people of the West, an equal opportunity of being represented in this House.

Mr. Sparkes: A lot you worry about them.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. ROBERTS: I spent harder years in the western country than the hon. member ever did. (Opposition interjections.) Like every other hon. member on this side, whether they represent a city or a country electorate, we recognise the fact that the whole basis of our political economy is that our very social, economic and industrial system depends on the wealth produced, primarily by the man on the land. We are

endeavouring to give some effect to that truth. Despite the pleas made by hon. members of the Country Party for the man on the land, they are doing everything they possibly can on this occasion to negate the fundamental principle provided for in the Bill—to give the people in the country better representation in this Parliament.

We should remember also, when considering the principles of the Bill, the illustration of the zoning in Victoria where an anti-Labour Government brought it into being. In that State they have the metropolitan and rural zones, the metropolitan electorates having many more electors than those in the country districts. One of the effects of that is to make it a practical impossibility for the Labour Government ever to obtain office in the State of Victoria. If there was any truth in the suggestion by hon. members opposite that it was the desire of this Government in bringing down this measure to protect themselves in office and to keep themselves in power, despite the wishes of the people, then I say that the last thing this Government would ever have done to achieve that purpose would have been to zone the State as it is being zoned under this measure. So far as we are concerned—and I speak frankly—it would in my opinion be to the political advantage of the Labour Party not to have any zones whatever in Queensland. We have been actuated by a desire to give to the people better representation in this Parliament. That is what this Bill is doing.

I did not intend to speak on this measure at this stage, but in view of the attacks made on it and hon. members on this side, I thought it only fitting that I should make one or two observations on it. As far as I personally am concerned I can say that I wholeheartedly support this measure. I really believe that it will make for the betterment of the people of Queensland through their representation in this House.

Mr. BRAND (Isis) (7.53 p.m.): It is refreshing to hear from the hon. member for Nundah that he would be prepared to accept any reasonable amendment to this legislation—

A Government Member: He did not say amendment at all.

Mr. BRAND: I should like to know what he did say. I understand the Bill is in the charge of the Premier, who is adamant about not receiving any suggestions on this Bill.

Mr. ROBERTS: I rise to a point of order. I understand that the hon. member quoted me as saying that I was prepared to accept any reasonable amendment made by hon. members opposite. That is incorrect. What I said was that I was prepared to accept any reasonable suggestions made by hon. members opposite and I would give them my consideration.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Isis must accept the assurance of the hon. member for Nundah.

Mr. BRAND: I accept his assurance. There is very little difference between what I said and what he says he said. I will accept his assurance that he did not mean that he was going to accept any amendment. Evidently he is of the same mind as his leader. He is going to be adamant in not accepting any reasons whatever for amending the Bill for the benefit of the people of Queensland.

There should be no misgivings about one point—we know what Labour is doing in bringing down this Bill at this time in the close of the second session of Parliament. We know that Labour has to retain office at all costs.

We know that after the last election Labour was very disturbed because one of their strongest men had been so strikingly defeated at the poll. Shades of Mirani! We have seen it today. The ukase then went forth that Evans had to be stopped at all cost. We have heard that from then until now. Labour members of this House who were expected to stop him at all cost have not done so and this Bill is designed to stop Evans and a few other from being returned to Parliament.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I suggest to the hon. member and to other members that in referring to an hon. member they give him his title.

Mr. BRAND: I was referring to the hon. member for Mirani. At all events, this Government have determined that, holding power as they do, with a large majority but on a minority of votes, it is their duty—and they have been dictated to—to see that the electoral laws are altered so that they can retain power on a smaller minority even than they had at the last election. Any person studying this Bill can understand that they are determined not to accept any reasonable suggestion that may be made from this side for the improvement of the Bill for the benefit of the people of Queensland; in other words, political party must come before the electors of Queensland in the election of a Government. Pressure politics—and today pressure politics are the order of the land—

Mr. Power interjected.

Mr. BRAND: When there are pressure politics, which the Minister who so rudely interjected knows so much about, democracy has to go by the board. If we wanted proof that democracy has nothing in it for the present Government we should find it in their behaviour when an hon. member was suspended from the service of the House. They laughed and were glad when an hon. member was being hoisted out of Parliament.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BRAND: I am not discussing that side of the incident. I am referring to the hilarity with which Government members accepted that motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hilarity of Government members has nothing to do with the principles of the Bill.

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Mr. BRAND: It has a good deal to do with it when a Bill is being brought down that provides for the alteration of the whole system of elections for this Parliament. There was a time when Labour remembered the party's history but today Labour has forgotten the history of its fights to win recognition of the principle of one man, one value. In despite of what the Premier said this morning when opening this debate, Labour was respected for its fighting plank of one man, one value, by men who were not Labour and who were not voting for Labour. They believed it was a principle worth supporting and gave Labour credit for fighting for it. By this Bill Labour has shown that it has forgotten its history. I do not know why Labour has taken up this attitude, but wherever Labour is in power today we find it manipulating the electoral law and electoral machinery for the purpose of making it easier for it to retain office, to give its members a break over their adversaries.

They do not want to fight squarely and fairly; they want that break. A number of hon. members on the Government side support the Government in giving them that break, and I should like to ask the Premier why he thinks that Labour men and Labour men only should have a small number of voters in their electorates whilst those opposed to Labour must have a vastly greater number of voters.

Mr. Jesson: That is not true.

Mr. BRAND: It is true and it has been true for the last 30 years, since Labour came into office in this State. On every occasion on which it has been necessary to readjust electoral boundaries the Labour electorates have had small numbers of voters.

Mr. Jones: The Moore Government cut out nine Labour seats.

Mr. BRAND: The Minister knows that when his seat was cut out on that occasion there were very few left in the electorate. There were something like 3,000 voters in the electorate on that occasion.

But let us come to the present and take Zone 4 which is represented wholly by Labour men. It includes seven electorates at present with a total enrolment of 47,561 voters or an average of 6,794 to the electorate. We also know that at the polls there would not be the full 6,794 voting.

When we come to an equivalent number of seats represented by hon. members of the Opposition, electorates such as Murrumba, Logan, Oxley, Enoggera, Sandgate, Albert, and Toowong, with a total of 101,545 voters or an average of 14,500—

Mr. Power: That is a different zone altogether. Why don't you be fair?

Mr. BRAND: I am quoting present-day figures and giving the number in Zone 4 as compared with the number in seven electorates represented by the Opposition. If the figures I have given do not bear the ratio of three to one against the Opposition I do not know what does. Actually, under

this famous zone system that has been discovered by the Premier—we do not know whether he discovered it overseas but we do know that it is being introduced on his return—we find a scheme designed to ensure the return of the Labour Government. The quotas for the various zones are—

Zone 1	..	..	..	10,716
Zone 2	..	..	..	9,536
Zone 3	..	..	..	7,852
Zone 4	..	..	..	4,783

Mr. Burrows: Give us their areas?

Mr. BRAND: No. 2 zone is supposed to take in that great country area from the border of New South Wales to out as far as Stanthorpe, through Dalby and right up to near Mackay. They are all country electorates and the quota is 9,536. Zone 4, which is represented by Labour, has a quota of 4,783. The proportion here is exactly two to one.

I have heard it said on many occasions in this Parliament by hon. members on the Government side that you must not give gum trees a vote, that you must give people a vote, but it looks to me as though Labour were out to give sheep a vote because they are easily manipulated on the rolls. I should say that when you look at it from that point alone the hon. member for Nundah, who claims to be a man of justice, should be convinced that this scheme is not right.

If democracy is to have any place at all in the life of the people of Queensland, it is only right that it should play some role in the life of a member of Parliament, whether on the Government side or in Opposition. This Bill is introduced because the Government feel that in recent years they have lost the confidence of the people of Queensland. They cannot get over the loss of one of their leading men, their deputy leader, at the last election. This loss followed very closely upon the defeat of a very big man in the Federal Parliament, the Deputy Prime Minister. The Deputy Prime Minister and the Deputy Premier of Queensland were both defeated at the polls.

I have been long enough in this House to know that the party in power has the right to a redistribution, and that right has been exercised by all Governments over the past 30 years, but I have not seen a leader of any of those Governments submit a proposal that was so blatantly in favour of his own party. This rearrangement of boundaries in the zone system and the way they have been picked out is so blatantly loaded in favour of Labour that it should not be accepted by this Parliament. One cannot understand how those entrusted with the task of preparing this design or map were able to arrange the boundaries of the zones as they have done. The very boundaries of the zones disclose that they were designed in malice, to get at something. They show that they were not designed in any judicial way or in a way to favour every section of the people of Queensland, but to give a preponderance of weight in favour of the Labour Party. For example, can the Premier explain why Charters Towers is in the western zone and the electorate of Dalby has been placed in No.

2 zone? I say that he cannot, and I say that the boundaries of the zones have been deliberately located for the purpose of helping Labour candidates to the detriment of candidates on this side of the House. There has been no endeavour, in my opinion, to follow the natural boundaries upon which all electorates should be designed.

That is wrong and that is why we are debating the Bill.

It is only natural that some heat should be engendered. You have been long enough in this House, Mr. Speaker, to know that provocative Bills have a tendency to cause heated debates, and this Bill is provocative from beginning to end. I make bold to say that the Government, following their actions of past years, will not be prepared to have a redistribution commission consisting of a Supreme Court judge, the Surveyor-General, and Principal Electoral Officer. The Premier would not be prepared to accept a commission like that.

Mr. Hanlon: You are stealing your Leader's amendment.

Mr. BRAND: I do not care if I am.

Mr. Hanlon: Let him move it; he gave notice of it.

Mr. BRAND: The Labour Government are not prepared to do the fair thing by the people of Queensland and by all the political parties, otherwise they would not hesitate to accept such a commission, as they have done before. The Government will not do it.

Mr. Hanlon: We may accept it.

Mr. BRAND: The Premier simply said that he may, but at this stage I venture the opinion that he will not accept it because he has other people in mind for that purpose. Bad as the Bill may be, in its expression of political venom against the opponents of Labour it can be regarded as gentlemanly compared with the redistribution commission to be appointed. I can understand that the Premier himself has in mind now just how the redistribution is going to be made.

We object to the Bill, not because of the injustice directed against hon. members on this side of the Chamber, but because it does not give the people of Queensland the measure of justice they have a right to expect from a Labour Government. Again I am reminded of the long-cherished beliefs of the Labour Party and I am prompted to say that Premier Hanlon is no longer a Labour man.

A Government Member: Then what are you growling about?

Mr. BRAND: I have reason to growl a great deal about that. I am afraid that this is part of a master plan of the Communist Party. What is the use of our condemning Stalin for his undemocratic methods of election and his undemocratic attitude towards the rest of the world when we, in the British Parliament in Queensland, pass a Bill containing electoral machinery that will enable a minority of the voters to return the Government? That is not a good thing and I think the words of former Labour

Premiers, Theodore and Forgan Smith, should be heeded today when such a Bill is before us. The principles of the Bill should be in conformity with justice and fair play to all political parties and for the benefit of the people as a whole.

Mr. DAVIS (Barcoo) (8.15 p.m.): I am one of those who do not always venture an opinion on debates in this House but the course of the debate today forces me into that channel. In all my experience in this Parliament I have never experienced or listened to such an exhibition of political spleen as I have heard today. Decorum has been completely absent, and dignity has been thrown to the wind. We have had hurled across this Chamber all the epithets we should expect to hear in the gutters of the city of Brisbane but not in this Chamber. Why has this occurred? Only because the Opposition disagree with this measure. Surely to God, if the Opposition do disagree with the measure, is it not possible to discuss it in a gentlemanly manner as should be the case within this Chamber?

I am rather surprised at the attitude adopted by the Country Party, but the argument put forward by those who represent the butcher, the baker and the candlestick-maker in the city of Brisbane is not surprising. Surely those who represent country electorates must realise that the country needs greater representation than it has at the present time. I have heard the areas of certain electorates quoted. I represent an electorate of about 57,000 square miles. Within it are 13 towns and hamlets. It has an electoral roll verging on 7,500 electors. It is about 500 miles long and 160 miles wide at certain parts. Can anyone on the Opposition benches conscientiously advocate or, I would say, convince this House that I am capable of travelling the whole of that electorate?

The argument has been put forward that there should be some equality of representation in both country and city electorates. If that was done, we should find Governments wholly representative of the butcher, the baker, and the candlestick-maker.

We should find that the outback parts of the State—the source of the wealth of this State—would be almost without representation. Surely no member of the Country Party can support the advocacy that has been put forward in this Chamber today, unless he is swayed by political spleen.

Mr. Brand: Don't you think Dalby is more western than Charters Towers?

Mr. DAVIS: I am talking about the whole of the western parts of the State. Reference has been made to the three-card trick, the thimble and pea, and all those appurtenances that are familiar to a certain section of the community. They have intimated that this is something unusual in the Commonwealth of Australia. Let hon. members opposite make inquiries with regard to what is happening in a State that is very dear to their hearts, the State of Victoria, where it is possible for a Country Party member to be elected on a franchise of 4,000

votes whereas in the industrial areas it takes 20,000 votes to elect a member. (Opposition interjections.) It is the same in New South Wales. There it is possible to elect a member in a country area with a franchise of £,500.

Mr. Brand: Do you think they are right?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Mann): Order!

Mr. DAVIS: I do not as a rule drift into irrelevancies, as the hon. member does. (Opposition interjections.) I would ask him to make an investigation if he has any doubt as to the accuracy of my statement. (Opposition interjections.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask hon. members on my left to allow the hon. member to make his speech without interruption. He very rarely interjects himself and I ask them to give that courtesy to him.

Mr. DAVIS: I endeavour not to make irrelevant statements in this Chamber but I invite the hon. member for Isis to make an investigation of the statements I have made regarding the possibility of election to the State Houses in New South Wales and Victoria on a smaller franchise than the one he is criticising this Government for laying down here. It is regrettable that we hear so much of personalities in our debates. Surely we are capable, irrespective of our political views, of carrying on a debate in the manner in which it should be carried on in this Chamber. I believe that if I had a full knowledge of the inner thoughts of members of the Country Party on the Opposition benches—and I look directly at the Leader of the Opposition, who in the beginning was rather inclined to favour the Bill—I should find that they agree that there should be greater representation of country areas of the State of Queensland.

If they do not agree that the whole of the administration of this State should be engulfed and controlled by the city area of this State, there is no alternative to giving greater representation in this Parliament to country areas where the primary producers live and produce the wealth of this State—not within the walls of the warehouses or retail shops of this city but in the fields and pastures of Queensland. Surely they are entitled to as much representation as this Government can offer them.

If the members of the Country Party disagree with my contention they must agree to giving the control to those who represent the warehouses, the shipping, the wharves and the retail businesses who are battenning upon the primary producers of the State. I use those words advisedly. Any person who would disagree to giving greater representation to the primary producers knows nothing of primary producers. He has no interest in primary production but is concerned wholly and solely as to whether he shall occupy the benches of this House, whether as the Government or the Opposition.

Mr. Sparkes: Why not put the other primary producers on the same basis? Dairymen, wheat-growers and fat-lamb-growers are primary producers.

Mr. DAVIS: Who is making this speech? I am speaking of the primary producer. Is he confined to the coastal belt of this State?

Mr. Sparkes: Not at all.

Mr. DAVIS: Where does the wealth of this State come from, if not from the primary producer?

Mr. Sparkes: Of course it does, but put them all in the one boat.

Mr. DAVIS: They are all on the one basis but mark this, a member could probably give better representation to an electorate in the coastal belt, where he could spit from side to side, than I could give in an electorate 500 miles long and 100 miles wide.

Mr. Sparkes: They would not see any more of you than they do now.

Mr. DAVIS: At least they could make a personal approach to their member, because it would take only 10 minutes to do that, but in my case circumstances are such that very few can do their business with me by personal contact, and the others have to depend on correspondence. In some electorates the majority of electors can be met in half a day but that is not so with the western parts of the State. I think, in decency, the Country Party should recognise the merits of this Bill, which endeavours to give to the primary producer of the State a greater measure of representation than they have at present.

Despite the blatant arguments that he puts forward here from time to time, the hon. member for Aubigny does recognise that the vast areas of outback electorates, when compared with those of the coastal electorates, warrant greater representation in this Parliament. No one knows that better than he.

In conclusion, let me say that there is no real merit in the arguments that have been adduced by the members of the Country Party against this measure, and they have merely made a political issue of the question, an action that I fear is not to their credit.

Mr. DEVRIES (Gregory) (8.31 p.m.): Mr. Speaker, in "As I see it," (Opposition interjections.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I will call the hon. member for Gregory when the interruption on my left subsides.

Mr. DEVRIES: In "As I see it," in the "Telegraph" from time to time we read articles contributed by the leaders of the various parties in this Parliament. I follow them with keen interest and give them a good deal of consideration. It was because of that that I am amazed at the statement made by the Leader of the Opposition—and he made it with a full knowledge of all the facts—that the Bill is designed especially to give the Australian Workers' Union control of the Labour Party Caucus. We know that the Opposition are resisting this Bill because they, like their leader, believe that the Australian Workers' Union will command that power, which their leader fears.

Mr. Pie: I think it would be better if the A.W.U. did control it.

Mr. DEVRIES: No-one holds the Leader of the Opposition in greater respect than I do. I know he is always very charitable, very tolerant, and certainly never provocative, as are many other members of the Opposition, but that statement made by him is very uncharitable. If the Bill was designed for the purpose that he fears—and it never was—I know that certain hon. members of the Opposition who are loud in their praises of the Australian Workers' Union—

Mr. Pie: It is the best union in Australia.

Mr. DEVRIES: As a vice president of that organisation I want to defend it from some of the mud that is hurled at it from time to time.

I have a quarrel with the hon. member for Mundingburra for his strictures upon that organisation. I suppose he has reason to be critical and to be uncharitable to an organisation that will make him play the game. And I can understand the criticism of hon. members of the Opposition against that union, but when the Leader of the Opposition makes the statement in the column "As I see It," knowing in his own heart and soul that there is no truth in it, then I say it ill becomes him to use his political position to condemn an organisation that has no ambitions in that regard.

We must not lose sight of the fact that when the Moore-Barnes Government decided to make a redistribution of Queensland electorates this Parliament consisted of 72 members. That was done in the pre-war years and today people in the country areas are clamouring for greater representation. I remember that when we were discussing a Bill last year the hon. member for Toowong interjected, "The hon. member for Gregory should not lose sight of the fact that I," that is, the hon. member for Toowong, "do represent numbers." For years the people in sparsely populated areas of the State have believed, and rightly so, that they have not had the representation in Parliament that was desirable. I feel that it is not a question of what areas of Queensland are actually represented in this Parliament, because when a man is sent here by the people he is sent for the purpose of legislating not for one particular section of the State but for the State as a whole.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. DEVRIES: I feel that the Opposition are, from time to time, driving a tragic wedge between country and city interests. We know that money available for spending will be expended in the part of the State that offers the greatest potentialities for the development of the national wealth of the State. As a representative of a country electorate, I am not going to condemn the Government for their alleged apathy or unsympathetic attitude towards those inland areas of this State.

Mr. Pie: They are unsympathetic.

Mr. DEVRIES: It is all very well for the hon. member for Windsor to make that statement, but he cannot substantiate it by facts. The development of the western areas of this State is somewhat restricted to the primary industries, particularly the cattle- and sheep-raising areas. After all those communities can absorb only a given number of people.

Mr. Sparkes: You have not absorbed them but sent them away.

Mr. DEVRIES: The hon. member for Aubigny is not fair when he makes that statement. Let us examine the Opposition's condemnation of the Government for their alleged failure to develop the western areas of the State and to give financial accommodation, which the people of the West think they are entitled to.

The State Government have been very generous in their treatment of the people in the western and north-western areas. One has only to look at the legislation that has been passed by the present Government for the development of the western areas of the State to find proof of that assertion. I give credit to the hon. member for Windsor for attempting to give effect to the policy of decentralisation by establishing a secondary industry in Townsville but I challenge any hon. member opposite to show where that can be done in the Gregory electorate. What secondary industries could the Government develop in the western areas of the State, and by that I mean at the moment my own electorate?

Mr. H. B. Taylor: What about an inland abattoir?

Mr. DEVRIES: The Commonwealth-Chifley Government, so bitterly assailed by hon. members opposite, financed a company in Winton to the extent of, I think, about £30,000. In other words, the Commonwealth Government gave the graziers of Winton financial accommodation to enable them to build the mutton dehydration plant. When the dehydrated mutton was required by the Federal Government for shipment overseas the company was able to keep the works going but the time arrived when dehydrated mutton was not required by people overseas and the company was compelled to close its works.

Mr. Wanstall: What have your Government done?

Mr. DEVRIES: Let us see where the State Government could develop the inland abattoir at Winton. To build an abattoir is one thing, but to keep it in production is quite another matter.

Mr. Sparkes: Do you think an additional member of Parliament will do it?

Mr. DEVRIES: I do not.

Mr. Sparkes: At least you are honest.

Mr. DEVRIES: I have suggested to the Premier that he give consideration to a proposal to acquire that abattoir in Winton because I believe it can be worked successfully. I believe that with the acquiring of cattle we can probably make a success of it.

Over the years there has developed what has been called the movement for a new deal for the West. It is sponsored by the different progress associations and other bodies and over the years they have complained to the Government about the lack of representation of western areas in this Parliament.

Mr. Luckins: In the Cabinet.

Mr. DEVRIES: No, in this Parliament. The Premier has given consideration to their requests and if I have been responsible for bringing the matter forcibly before him, then I shall be happy in the fact that I have played my very small part in this work.

The Opposition talk about the western country as being dominated by what they term a Queen Street Government—the hon. member for Isis was very nasty in that respect. He does not like to see any man with any intelligence or capability being appointed to the front Government benches. I know that the Opposition are on a fishing expedition. They do not know the set-up of the Parliamentary Caucus. I dissociate myself entirely from the assertion of the Opposition that the Cabinet are a Queen Street Cabinet. That is far from the truth. Any hon. member who is elevated to Cabinet rank by this party earns the promotion by his ability, diligence, and attention to his work, whether he represents a city or a country electorate.

Let us see whether hon. members of the Government are all Queen Street politicians. Take the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs. No-one will suggest that he is a Queen Street politician. No-one would suggest that the Secretary for Public Lands is a Queen Street politician.

Mr. Sparkes: Where does he live?

Mr. DEVRIES: Never mind where he lives, it is where he represents and the people he worked for that counts. Even though the hon. member lives in Dalby, many people in his electorate know him by name only. They have never seen him. I have been through his electorate and I have met scores of people who have not met him personally. Therefore, he should not castigate anyone in this House because he does not live in his electorate.

Then take Mr. F. W. Bulcock, who until a few years ago represented a western electorate until he accepted a post in the Commonwealth service. Take the late Mr. Johnny Mullan, who represented Carpentaria, one of the western electorates, and the late Speaker, Mr. Pollock, who also represented a western area. The members of the Cabinet are men who know the south, east, north, and west as well as if not better than the hon. member for Isis.

Mr. Brand: I did not say a word about your Cabinet.

Mr. DEVRIES: I know the Opposition do. We cannot be charged with any neglect of the western areas. The present members of Cabinet, before they entered Parliament, were all working-men, good honest, God-fearing men who had worked in all parts of Queensland. Take the hon. member for Nundah. I suppose in the early '30s he suffered as much as any man suffered in Queensland. He did not always enjoy the security of a job and the stability he enjoys today. The hon. member for Aubigny might be surprised if he knew the early history of the hon. member for Nundah, and be a little more generous to him in his criticism. I say in all sincerity that although I am pleased the party has agreed to give greater representation to the Central West and North-west parts of Queensland, nevertheless if we crowded the front Treasury bench with representatives of the inland areas, the Opposition would say, "There is the western atmosphere dominating the city." They would squeal if too much went west instead of coming to the city. We cannot have it both ways.

Mr. Brand: It will not be long before you are on the front bench.

Mr. DEVRIES: I know as a positive fact that I do not need to be a Cabinet Minister to get favourable conditions for the western areas of the State of Queensland. When I have presented a case from time to time to Cabinet the Government have been as sympathetic with the West as the hon. member for Aubigny or Isis or anybody else. I often wonder whether the Queensland People's Party and Opposition members have any thought for the western areas. (Opposition interjections.) Look at what happens when a school teacher is to be transferred from one of their areas into one of the western areas. An objection is immediately sent to the Secretary for Public Instruction praying that the transfer be not given effect to.

Mr. Sparkes: I have never done that.

Mr. DEVRIES: If the hon. member has never done it then I think he is a wonderful man.

The test of any Government is ability to spend the funds wisely. Their funds must be expended in those places where the potentialities are the greatest. It is true that it is possible to build up a community round a secondary industry; but in those western areas you can only build a community big enough to be absorbed by the local conditions. Take Longreach, which, I suppose, is the most progressive inland town in Western Queensland. I feel that at this moment it has reached its absorption figure.

An Opposition Member: The Premier said it should have 70,000.

Mr. DEVRIES: If we put industries there. They charge the Government with being unsympathetic with the western areas. I have told hon. members that the community can only be as large as the number that can be absorbed by industry offering employment in the area. The population of Longreach is

reaching the absorption point. Would you suggest that you dump 8,000 people in Longreach if industry there could absorb only 2,000? You must have secondary industries there to give your additional employment. When we speak of developing those inland areas, there is only one thing the Government have to concentrate on, that is, to find ways and means of creating or developing secondary industries. We know that employment in that part of the country now is purely primary employment, in connection with the sheep and cattle industries. The sheep men and cattle men look to those communities from which to draw their labour. Do not forget that those men, who have their interests in these localities, stand to gain. After all, why should the Government be continually abused—and the Opposition do abuse them—for their inability to provide certain amenities in these western towns?

After all, the man who is deriving his wealth from this State has an equal responsibility to that of the Government.

Mr. Pie: That has nothing to do with the Bill.

Mr. DEVRIES: It has everything to do with the Bill.

Mr. Pie: What?

Mr. DEVRIES: We are talking of representation.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! In reference to the interjection of the hon. member for Windsor, I have allowed a fairly broad discussion on this point.

Mr. Aikens: You did not allow me too broad a discussion.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the hon. member for Mundingburra said all he desired to say on that point.

Mr. Aikens: Tut! Tut!

Mr. SPEAKER: I would suggest to the hon. member for Gregory that he might connect his remarks with the principles of the Bill.

Mr. Pie: I do not mind, so long as we get a fair deal.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Windsor can rest assured that I do not take exception to the remark beyond saying that he is frequently very wide of the mark.

Mr. DEVRIES: This Bill is designed to give additional representation to the western and northern parts of the State. Not long ago the hon. member for Mundingburra was a champion of the New State League.

Mr. AIKENS: I rise to a point of order. I never advocated it in this House or outside this House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Gregory must accept that assurance.

Mr. DEVRIES: Very well, I accept the assurance of the hon. member.

It is not a question of the representation of those western areas in this Parliament but of the attitude and outlook of Parliament. After all, why should not the vote of a station hand away down in Birdsville be equal to three votes of a man who lives in the city? I know Opposition members resist that principle.

Mr. Snarkes: Do you agree with that?

Mr. DEVRIES: Of course I agree with that. If I had my way I would give a station hand there 10 votes to one vote in the city. Hon. members need "make no bloomer" as to where I stand. (Opposition interjections.) Mr. Speaker, I have no apology to offer for making that statement. It was made in rebuttal of the contention of the hon. member for Toowong who has said that we must not forget that city members of Parliament represent people, implying that I represent acres. Do not forget that there are some very large areas in the West.

As a representative of a western electorate of Queensland I am indeed grateful to the Premier and the Government for giving effect to the desires of the people in the West and North-West. If the Opposition believe that this Bill is so dangerous and sounds the death-knell of the Labour Party in Queensland they should support it. Why should they fear if they believe it will destroy the Labour Party?

Mr. Pie: Not the Labour Party—democracy.

Mr. DEVRIES: After all there is only one organisation that stands for true democracy and that is the Australian Labour Party. (Opposition laughter and interjections.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Pie: The Australian Workers' Union?

Mr. DEVRIES: Yes, the Australian Workers' Union.

Some time ago the Right Hon. Arthur Fadden, Leader of the Country Party in the Federal Parliament, said he would like to see more officials of the Australian Workers' Union members of the Federal Parliament, and I do not think he made that statement lightly.

Mr. Pie: Did he say that?

Mr. DEVRIES: He did, and I do not think he was joking.

I welcome the Bill and I believe the people of the West will welcome it. Whatever may have happened in the past, whatever they may have thought about the meagre representation they had in this Parliament, the people of the West at least can now be assured that in future they will have greater representation, their voice will be stronger and probably their amenities will be greater.

Mr. McINTYRE (Cunningham) (9.1 p.m.): I listened with interest to the debate today and this evening, but to my mind nothing inspiring has developed either in the debate or in the happenings of the day.

This measure is very important for many reasons. Perhaps the chief of them is that it is a definite departure from the principles of democratic government. Such a step should be taken only with the greatest of caution and I felt that the Premier was making very heavy weather of it when moving the second reading this morning. Perhaps he had in the back of his mind his recollection of the great fight of the Labour Movement in the early days for equality of political representation, for the principle of one vote, one value. Anyone who has a superficial knowledge of the political history of the State will remember the long and bitter fight put up in the days when the State was controlled by a minority.

To my mind the Bill contains certain principles that are nothing more nor less than a prostitution of the principle of democratic government, and one is justified in concluding that there is something ulterior behind the whole thing. When we examine the zones as outlined we can come to no other conclusion than that the primary producers are not getting equality of representation. I firmly believe that if the Government had made an attempt to give them equality of political representation there might not have been this opposition to the Bill. An examination of the zones as outlined will disclose great disparity of representation of the primary producer.

Perhaps the only bright feature in the whole of the debate was the statement by the hon. member for Nundah—and I hope he was speaking on behalf of the Government—when he said that due consideration would be given to any suggestion that might be made from this side of the House.

I think anyone who has made a study of the present electorates will agree that some form of redistribution is indeed necessary, but I believe that the present act provides sufficient scope for bringing about a satisfactory redistribution and giving the representation desired by the Government without our taking this extreme step of bringing into the House 13 additional members.

Much has been said today about the capacity of the 62 members to represent the people in this Parliament adequately. Whilst I do not subscribe to the sentiments expressed by the hon. member for Mundingburra, that this an easy part-time job, I believe we have here who that are necessary to give effective representation of the people. I believe that if an hon. member is doing his job, he is a busy man; I think we should be prepared to be busy and work hard, otherwise we should get out of our positions. We are well paid for our services and anyone who takes even a superficial interest in what has happened, will find that when we take into consideration the improved transport that exists today compared with the past, the opportunities to represent our electors adequately have been greatly improved. I remember the time when a member of Parliament in a rural electorate had to travel by horse and saddle or horse and sulky, but today we have modern methods of transport available and I do not think there is any-

thing in the activities of our rural areas that demands this drastic step to increase the number of members of Parliament by 13. As a matter of fact, I have arrived at the conclusion that if we were to reduce the number of members of this Assembly we should perhaps get better results. I have not been inspired by the standards of administration in the government of this country. I have arrived at the conclusion that this is indeed a wonderful country and I marvel that it is as good as it is, in spite of the way it is governed. As I have moved about the State, particularly since this Bill was introduced, I should like to tell the Premier and senior members of his Cabinet that I have noticed public resentment on every hand regarding this measure. I think there is little wonder that it exists, because the addition of 13 new members and another new Minister will cost the State in the vicinity of £50,000 or more a year. I have been on a tour through four States of the Commonwealth and everywhere I see displayed in public places placards over the signature of the Prime Minister, Mr. Chifley, preaching the policy of "Save, Save, Save, for Security." If we are prepared, without justification, to introduce legislation in this House demanding an expenditure in that vicinity, or perhaps in excess of it, I think we are leaving ourselves open to criticism. I believe that resentment can be found on every hand.

The suggestion has been made that the Bill solves the problem of centralisation. I think that is a defeatist attitude. It is a confession by the Government that they have failed to decentralise. We know that the anomaly of centralisation has become aggravated all the time. The Government are in effect saying, "We have administered the affairs of the State over a period and our policy has brought about centralisation so that people who lived in rural areas are now coming to the towns."

The Government argue that the only thing left for them to do is to increase the number of electorates and give the people more parliamentary representation, but I suggest on behalf of the rural people of the State that if we are to bring about a more effective system of decentralisation more is required than an increase in political representation in those areas. If the Government dispute that contention let me remind them that the North and West have for as many years as I have been interested in political life in the community been represented by members of the Government and that as a result people are leaving those areas, that centralisation is taking place and is becoming more aggravated as time goes on.

I do not want to labour the question, because it has been emphasised by hon. members on this side throughout the day, but an analysis of the zoning system and the electorates to be established show that it will make minority rule in this House certain and permanent. The Labour Party has made an error in introducing the Bill and we are justified in arriving at the conclusion that they have politically pitched their tents toward

Sodom. Although the Bill will give them control of the Government benches temporarily, ultimately right will prevail. There will be a rising of the masses in resentment and opposition to this attempt of the Government to give themselves security on the Treasury benches by a minority vote. I believe that the political life of the State is in reverse and that we have created an atmosphere and a fertile field for the development of all the 'isms—Communism and the like—that are a direct challenge to our democratic system of government. That is something that should be opposed by every sane, sensible person who has a fundamental interest in the future well-being of this great State of Queensland.

Mr. MORRIS (Enoggera) (9.12 p.m.): Three weeks ago tonight I was required to undergo an operation and that is the reason why I have been absent from the House. However, my absence gave me an opportunity to study one or two Bills that had been introduced in this Chamber while I was away and that study revealed to me so many weaknesses, so much that was evil and so much that was bad, that I decided to put those thoughts into words in this House at the first opportunity. Further, the events of today made me realise that if I did actually put into words what I thought of the Bill I should be sharing the fate of those other hon. members for whom I have a very much greater respect today than I had before; and it was very great then.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The remarks of the hon. member amount to a reflection on the Chair. I suggest to him that if he uses parliamentary language he will be in no trouble whatever.

Mr. MORRIS: I shall use parliamentary language. I propose to speak on the Bill for only a few minutes in the present circumstances. I should like hon. members to cast their minds back a few weeks. They will remember that I referred in this Chamber to the danger facing Queensland and Australia today. I refer to the danger of Communism and I intend to link those remarks with the Bill. I went on to say that in the olden days the Labour Party stood as an instrument for a section of the people but today it has thrown away its birthright and it has taken on the mantle of Socialism, Marxism and Communism. No statement ever made in this House has been proved so utterly, so completely and so rapidly as the statement I made on that occasion.

This Bill, when it becomes law—and I have no doubt it will, irrespective of the protests of members on the Opposition side of the House—can become an instrument that can bring to this country so much evil and so much loss of democracy as to make us realise that we are heading for a state of Socialism. That is the ideal and desire of the Australian Labour Party, as typified not only by its members in the Federal House but unfortunately by its members here in Queensland. That is the tragedy. I am sorry that the forecast I made a few weeks

ago in this Chamber is coming to fruition and will be a fact when this Bill is placed on the statute book. It is an utter and absolute disgrace to this country and State. Anyone who believes in democracy and who reads this Bill with understanding, whether he is a member of Parliament or one of the general public, must oppose it. Nobody believing in democracy could uphold it.

I heard the hon. member for Aubigny express the wish that the Premier should submit this Bill to a referendum of the people. That is the wisest suggestion that has been made during the debate. I am completely in accord with it and am sure that if the people had an opportunity of expressing themselves on this measure, and if they understood it, as undoubtedly they would if it was put to a referendum, they would show their opposition to it in no uncertain way.

Mr. Brand: They would be ten to one against it.

Mr. MORRIS: That is so. It would be a greater landslide than occurred when the Federal Government put their referendum before the people last year.

The Premier said that the people of Australia will have an opportunity of expressing themselves on the Bill. That is utter and complete nonsense. No-one knows that better than the Premier. He knows very well that the will of the people, which has been expressed in the past but not carried out, cannot have any effect whatsoever on the Bill as there would need to be a real political landslide before it could be put into effect. I firmly believe that that landslide is coming because the people are going to see, as one member said today, that their rights are being filched from them. I have sufficient faith in the people to know that they will realise and recognise this sign for what it is and that they will stop the issue before it goes any further. I challenge the Premier to take a referendum. I know he will say that a referendum will cost money but the cost of the additional 13 members will be no greater over a three-year period than its cost. I challenge the Premier to take a referendum on the Bill. If the referendum is agreed to, I have no hesitation in saying the members on this side of the House will accept the verdict of the people and withdraw any opposition they have to it.

Mr. HEADING (Wide Bay) (9.20 p.m.): I have listened very carefully to the debate on the Bill, particularly to the speech of the Premier when he introduced this measure a few days ago. I am keenly interested in it because some contradictory statements have emanated from the Government benches. It makes one wonder whether the Bill is as they claim or whether there is some other motive behind the whole thing. I believe the Premier really should withdraw the Bill and apologise to the House and the people for attempting to "put it over" the people in the way he has done.

The reason given by the Premier for bringing down the Bill is the greatest condemnation that the Government could get.

Here we have a Government who have been in power for 31 years, yet the Premier told us that the North had been neglected and the population there had not increased as it should have, and he told us the West had not been developed in the way it should have been, and that he believed we should have an extension of production, which was necessary in the interests of Australia and the worker. I entirely agree with him. After all the years Labour has been in office, he comes along here with a Bill such as this to give greater representation to these areas because he believes we should get that production. If there is no better will behind the Government, after the new members are elected, than there was before, there is not going to be any greater production because of the increase in Government members.

I rather admired what the hon. member for Gregory said because he endeavoured to bring the debate onto a better plane. The hon. member said that if members of the Opposition voted against the measure it meant that we were not in favour of greater representation for the country. I say that that is not my personal view. I quite believe that we should have better representation for the country. I ask members to have a look at this Bill and see what is in it before we either confirm or condemn it.

I am not going to introduce many figures, but I have taken out the percentages of increase in order to see whether the Premier was as genuine as he sounded when he said that he wanted to bring in the Bill for the improvement of the representation of the country people. In Zone 4, which is the western one, we find the number of seats is to be lifted from seven to ten, a rise of 43 per cent., which, it must be admitted by everybody, is a pretty big increase. In Zone 3, the northern area, the number is raised from 10 to 13, an increase of 30 per cent. When we come to Zone 2 we find there are 25 seats, and they have been given three more seats, an increase of 12 per cent. What do we find when we come to the city? I ask members to bear in mind the fact that the Premier was emphatic that this Bill was brought in to benefit the country people and to give us the greater production that he talked about. We find that in the metropolitan area, where they have 20 seats, the number will be increased to 24, a rise of 20 per cent. That is what makes us wonder whether the Premier is genuine when he states that the Bill is for the benefit of the country people.

Mr. Hanlon: How would you suggest giving more representation to the country if you do not have zoning?

Mr. HEADING: The point I am making is that in Zone 2 we find there is an increase of 12 per cent., yet we find in the city there is an increase of 20 per cent. Why should that be so if the Bill is introduced to help the country people? Are not the people from the border of New South Wales to Mackay country people? It contradicts what the Premier has put to this House that this Bill is introduced in the interests of the primary producers.

The greatest number of primary producers in Queensland is in Zone 2. That is where the great part of the wealth of Queensland comes from, but that zone will not get as large an increase in representation as will the city. The reason, I take it, is that so many of the seats there are held by members of the Opposition. That is what it points to. It makes one wonder when we find the Premier putting forth a statement that is not founded on fact. He is bowled out on his own figures as to his story that this Bill is for the benefit of the primary producers of Queensland.

This thing has been worked out so nicely to suit the Labour Government. In a House of 62 members the city of Brisbane has virtually one-third of the representation and in the redistribution under this Bill the city of Brisbane will still have virtually one-third of the representation in this Parliament. That is sufficient for you, Mr. Speaker, to see the reason behind the fight the Opposition are putting up against this unfair division. I protest against giving Zone 2 where most of the wealth comes from the least increase in this redistribution. The Opposition have cause to say that it will give more power to the city.

The Premier is putting up Aunt Sallies to knock down. Let us look at some of them. He himself has said that he is giving greater representation to the people of Brisbane than he is giving to the Zone 2. He stressed the development of Queensland and said that if we did not develop our State as we should other people would come to this country. Ever since I have been in this Parliament I have been mentioning the need for the development of the country part of the State. It is not only the Labour Government who know all about that; the members on this side know just as much about it as Labour, and a good deal more; there must be development of the outside districts.

Another Aunt Sally put up is that we were opposed to a single chamber Parliament in Queensland but since I have been in this Assembly I have not heard one member voice the opinion that there should be two Houses of Parliament in Queensland. That is merely another Aunt Sally put up by the Premier because he had so few arguments to advance. He had to put up a few Aunt Sallies to knock over in endeavouring to put forward a case for this unfair measure.

The hon. gentleman said also that the vast majority of people did not do the thinking they should but that is quite evident, because if the people did the amount of thinking they should this Government would have been put out of power long ago.

He said also that the Opposition could not take a wide national view. That is just another Aunt Sally put up to be knocked over. It was a personal opinion but the members on this side have as broad a view of the national position as the Premier. I am quite sure that if the hon. gentleman had as wide a national view as we have he would never have brought down this Bill.

There is an interesting point that makes me more suspicious of the Bill than anything else. We had the Premier saying that the western and northern areas should have greater representation, but the Treasurer put forward an argument in contradiction of that.

The Treasurer denied that North Queensland lacked development. Why, he said the Government had spent £4,000,000 on the Cairns railway. Like most hon. members on the Government side, he goes back into the dim and distant past for his facts. He said also that they spent £2,500,000 on the Monto railway and he referred to the wonderful development that has taken place there. Actually he implied that the Premier was wrong in saying that North Queensland lacked development. Who was right, the Premier or the Treasurer?

He also stressed that there had been an increase in population in the North since 1914. He ignored the fact that it has not increased as it should have in the last few years, but went back to 1914 to prove that the population of North Queensland is much higher now than it was then. So on the one hand the Premier says that greater representation is necessary for the North and West because those areas have not been developed, and on the other hand the Treasurer points out how well the North has been developed. I leave it to hon. members to decide whether the stories we have been told have any foundation in fact.

The Treasurer said also that we want co-operation and good will. Both are always available if the Government would only seek them. We know that the outside areas require a great deal of development and the expenditure of much money and we are willing to help wherever we can.

Mr. Dunstan: The Opposition have always been against improved franchise, improved representation, manhood suffrage, the abolition of property franchise, and all the rest of it.

Mr. HEADING: Again we have an hon. member of the Labour Government going back into the dim and distant past. That may or may not be so—I know little about those days—but I suggest that hon. members on the Government side forget the past and take an up-to-date view. We have an Opposition who believe in progress and we are willing to do anything we can in that direction.

When speaking about the days when there were 72 members of Parliament, compared with the 62 today, hon. members have lost sight of the fact that in the days when we had 72 members in this House the horse was the chief means of transport. In many instances a member walked round his electorate. Today we have motor-cars and aeroplanes, and I venture the opinion that 62 members today can represent the electors of Queensland much more easily than the 72 could in 1890. Today you can fly to North Queensland in a few hours, whereas in the days of the greater number of members of

Parliament it took days to get there and weeks to get round the electorates. Today the members of the Government travel in fast, powerful motor-cars and meet most of their people in that way.

I admit that in the far West they have big areas, and I do not object to giving greater representation to the country so long as country people are treated equally. We are not objecting to the giving of greater representation to the country people if you give it to all of them, but if you go to the West, where the Government hold seven of the seats and hope they will win the 10, and if they go to the North, where they hold eight of the 10 and hope to get the 13—

Mr. Gair: Did you hear anything about the Moore Government's redistribution?

Mr. HEADING: Again we have an hon. gentleman living in the past and digging up something that perhaps he knows very little about to help him. Hon. members of the Government have had to go back to the sins of the Moore Government. If they had done the things they claim to have done in the years between there would be no need for them to go back to the sins of other Governments. They have referred to the sins of the Opposition in order to get something to bolster up their case.

In conclusion I am not objecting to increased representation for the country areas so long as you give it to all country people. Under the present measure the Government would build up the city at the expense of the country.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Nanango) (9.37 p.m.): In introducing this measure the Premier in a plausible way sought to convince the members of this House and the people generally that it was designed to give greater representation, greater benefits and freedom, as it were, to the people of the State. But when you consider the principles of the Bill you come to the conclusion that its purpose is to get greater control over the lives of the people, as it is in effect saying to the public, "Whether you like it or not, we will be the Government; whether you like our policy or not, you have to accept it."

It is interesting to note how the measure is aimed at getting results. During the last elections Labour candidates went round the country saying if they were not elected people in those areas would not receive fair consideration; that they would not get the benefits they were entitled to receive. Those tactics or methods did not achieve the desired results, hence this Bill. It is a "bill of sale" over the lives of the majority of the people of this State for the benefit of this Government and the minority they represent. Truly, these are grave days for the people of Queensland, not so much because of the enemy without as because of the enemy within. Little do the people realise the grave injustice that is silently being inflicted upon them. In a most subtle way their freedom to select the Government they want to

represent them are being taken away from them. In many other countries people are brought to heel by more ruthless methods. In this State the bringing in of full control over the lives of the people is being accomplished by legislation of one kind or other. In this legislation the people are given the right of voting, admittedly, but the odds are so greatly against them that to achieve the results they desire is impossible because the predetermined zones and the numbers set out will mean nothing but that the majority will be ruled by the minority.

Today as never before the Press of this State have a great responsibility to save the people from indifference or apathy before it is too late.

They must be made aware of the real motive, purpose and design of the Bill. Listening to the opening remarks of the Premier, one is forced to the conclusion that there is an ulterior motive behind it. On the surface and to the unthinking, probably it would appear to be a worthy Bill. Taken at its face value, the measure is to improve representation in country areas. That was claimed for it by the Premier but, as the hon. member for Wide Bay said, that constitutes a striking indictment of Government policy over past years. It is an admission by the Government that they have not been fair to country people, that they have not given them the representation they deserve and are entitled to get. No other interpretation can be placed on the Premier's remarks than that it is just such a Bill. But the point to be remembered here is the fact that if the Government were sincere in their expressed desire to give the outer portions of the State the representation to which they are entitled they have the power to do so now. Adding further to the members of the Government party will not change their colour or their attitude, nor will it give the Government added financial resources. The State Government gets certain moneys from the Federal Government but they do not carry out much of the work that should be carried out in many areas. Adding to their number will not improve the position. The measure will not give a fairer deal to the inland people. Therefore, as I said, there must be some ulterior motive and one has no alternative but to accept that position.

The Premier stressed the greater numbers of members of Parliament in other States and said that this was necessary to give all the people fair representation. Surely again an admission that he felt his Government were not doing a fair thing by the people. The same can also be said when we remember that for 31 years the people have been represented by 62 members and the Government have always said that they are doing a splendid job. So I repeat there is an obvious purpose behind the measure. How could more members improve things for the country people? We cannot even now get the things carried out that are necessary or desirable. Either the Government are not willing or shortages of material prevent such work from being carried out. I could mention many things that the Government know are

desirable in inland areas that they are not prepared to carry out although they have both the power and the opportunity and they know what the people want.

But this is not the purpose of the measure, as the Premier tried to make the people believe. It is simply and purely this, that at the last election the Government won by the promise of a 40-hour week with all its supposed benefits and glory but the people have now been disillusioned. This time the Government are out to win again—whether by fair means or foul does not matter—and they are going to impose themselves upon the long-suffering public by means of additional seats so arranged that Labour has the best opportunity to win them.

There are other aspects of the Bill I could discuss, but that would be of no value here because the Government have committed themselves to this course regardless of the principle of fairness or justice to the people. I can assure hon. members opposite, though, that we shall tell the full story to the public throughout the length and breadth of the State. The Bill, by the method by which it is to be applied or executed, is a crafty and vicious piece of legislation, if ever there was one.

Mr. PLUNKETT (Albert) (9.46 p.m.): I have listened to the speeches that have been delivered on this measure and whether we like it or not, we must admit that it is a very contentious one. No wonder tempers are frayed. We have had some very nasty episodes today, which I regret. I have no sympathy with anyone who disobeys the Speaker's ruling, but the measure of punishment meted out to achieve obedience to the Chair was a little bit too harsh. I regret that two members on this side of the Chamber were suspended today.

This Bill will either place the Government in a stronger position than they are or it may force them from the Treasury benches.

Mr. Hanlon: That is true.

Mr. PLUNKETT: The Premier, when introducing the measure, said its object was to give better representation to the people, and to achieve that an increase in the number of members was necessary. Another reason advanced was that we have only a single Chamber. Why have we only the single-chamber system? Because this Government wiped out the second Chamber. Why then use that as an excuse for increasing the size of this Parliament?

Mr. Gair: Why did you not reconstitute the second Chamber between 1929 and 1932?

Mr. PLUNKETT: I did not say I was in favour of it. I was merely relating some of the reasons given by the Premier for introducing this Bill. When you examine those reasons and the arguments advanced by the Premier, they do not seem to be just what we might expect from the Premier on such an important piece of legislation.

One part of the Bill I dislike very much is the institution of zoning. Immediately that is done you start to gerrymander the seats, because you say to the Commission, "You must put a certain number of seats in that zone and a certain number in another zone." Thus the hands of the commissioners are tied. A number of electors will be deprived of the power to express their views effectively and say who shall represent them. As I go on, I will give the reasons.

Mr. Jesson: How long will that be?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. PLUNKETT: I am prepared at any time to ask leave to continue my speech tomorrow morning.

The Premier, in his argument in favour of increasing the number of members of Parliament, said that the area represented by a member today was greater than that of other States. We all know that; it is a mere platitude.

The Premier then asked, "How can you get representation without zoning?" How has it been done before? How was it done years and years ago in other parts? Here the Government are hamstringing the Commission. They have zoned areas that will give them a great majority of members supporting the Labour principles.

The Premier talked about the isolated parts of the State. I want to know how the Government who have been in power with a big majority for so long can find an excuse for having neglected the North and West and they have the effrontery to say to these people, "You must be represented by more members." The hon. member for Gregory said that he would give a man in the western areas 10 votes and a man in the city one vote because he believes that somebody down near Birdsville is a Labour man.

Mr. Devries: No; he is the real producer.

Mr. PLUNKETT: If many members on the Government side had their way they would give a Labour man 10 votes to the capitalist's one.

The Premier said also that these vast areas should have greater representation. I think the people in the western country are the easiest people to represent in Parliament. The hon. member for Gregory says he agrees that they should have more representation, meaning better representation than they had in the past, which is an admission that what was done in the past was not very much.

Mr. Devries: He did not admit that at all. (Government interjections.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! If hon. members do not desire to listen to the hon. member for Albert, I do.

Mr. PLUNKETT: In Zone 1 it is intended to increase the number of members by four. In the city there is a greater community of interest, and in my opinion it is not necessary to increase the number.

A Government Member: Why?

Mr. PLUNKETT: Because you have the people in the compact area; you can walk from one end of your electorate to the other before breakfast. Instead of increasing the number to 24 you should leave it as it is, and do what you say you intend to do—give the people in the country more representation.

Why do the Government not do that? They talk of doing it. But in a zone with 253,000 electors the Government give an increase of four representatives. Under this Bill I can see the city of Brisbane getting an increase of four.

Mr. Power: Not necessarily.

Mr. PLUNKETT: We will see what will happen and if it is done it is done for one purpose only and that is to give Labour a chance of looking after the interests of the city.

Mr. Power: What would be wrong with that?

Mr. PLUNKETT: There is nothing wrong with it except that you invoke the power of the Government by legislation to do it without getting one word from the people concerned.

Mr. Gair: Who? The property-owners?

Mr. PLUNKETT: The powers of a Government are very strong, and those who take advantage of those powers for their own interests and for political protection are wanting in fairness and respect for democratic rights. That is apparent in this Bill, because, as I said previously, 253,000 electors in the city are to get additional representation and already in that area Labour holds 12 seats as against eight held by the Opposition. This means that Labour expects to obtain 16 seats there.

In the next zone, with 255,000 electors, there are to be an additional three seats, and when we find that 255,000 people will get three seats compared with 253,000 getting four, it suggests to me that there is an ulterior motive behind the Bill.

We find also that the Government have developed a great love for the country, according to this Bill. To prove my argument, I would point out that for 97,000 voters in an area where the Government have a majority of 11 of 12 seats, there are to be an additional three seats.

I now come to Zone 4, the West, where every person, according to the hon. member for Gregory, should have 10 votes as against one for the fellow in the city. Forty-seven thousand voters there are to have an increase of three representatives. I know it is quite easy for Government members to support this Bill because it gives greater protection to their seats in Parliament than ever they had before. That is in fact why they support it. But what of the remainder of the community? You cannot develop this great country unless equal justice is given to all, and if you take from a section of the people

the right of electing the persons they want to represent them in Parliament, and do not give them a fair chance, you deprive them of their inherent rights.

Mr. Davis interjected.

Mr. PLUNKETT: I can see the local authority in Greater Brisbane being increased by four seats, too. That is the basis probably of this Bill, and hon. members opposite cannot blame anybody for being suspicious about it. I draw attention, too, to the fact that the Government with 272,000 votes hold 35 seats, and the Opposition with 287,000 votes hold only 23 seats. How do the Government account for that? Is there justice in that? There cannot be.

I wish to register my strong protest at the zoning system contained in the Bill. It is wrong and it ties the commissioners to something that will not be in the interests of Queensland.

Mr. Jesson: You are like the Moore Government. They cut out nine Labour seats.

Mr. PLUNKETT: The Moore Government did have a redistribution of seats, but they did not do it in their own interests. (Government interjections.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. PLUNKETT: The proof of the pudding is in the eating of it. Labour won the next election by three seats, which should prove to any fair-minded person that the redistribution carried out by the Moore Government was equitable, so there is no good to be derived from raising that bogey any more.

Again I wish to register my strong protest at introducing the zoning system. It does not give the people a fair and reasonable opportunity to elect the party they wish to represent them.

Mr. MARRIOTT (Bulimba) (10.2 p.m.): Evidently there is some reason for the opposition to this measure. Let us examine for a moment the reasons for its introduction. We know that the existing Elections Act provides for the quota system in fixing the boundaries of electorates and it has been obvious for some years that the metropolitan electorates at any rate were increasing in population and exceeding the quotas fixed by the Act. There are various reasons for that increase in the number of electors. During the war period certain war industries were established, mainly in the metropolitan area. This brought about an influx of people from country districts. Since then, of course, newcomers to the State have made their homes in the metropolitan area.

Apparently the Government have decided that the remedy is to bring down this amending Bill with its zoning system and to provide for a greater number of members of Parliament. Personally, I think it would have been far better, because of various reasons that I am about to advance, had the Government brought down a Bill to amend the existing Elections Act to increase the

quotas allotted to metropolitan electorates instead of increasing the number of members of Parliament.

It has been mentioned here today that the basis of our so-called democratic electoral system is that one vote shall have one value. It was also stated that that principle was being observed as far as possible in the Bill now before the House. Actually, that is not so. Although the electorates that have exceeded the quotas fixed by the existing Act have necessarily departed from the principle of one vote, one value, the Bill under discussion does not restore that principle. It still provides that small electorates may have a voting power, as was mentioned here today, of three to one in value compared with metropolitan electorates.

Firstly, I am opposed to the Bill because, I ask: what will the increase in representatives in this House mean? Will it mean an increase in production in the metropolitan area? I say no. Will it mean an increase in production in country areas? I say no. Will it mean the production of one bullock more or one more sheep or the production of one more box of butter or an extra bushel of wheat? I say no.

Mr. Dunstan: It will increase the benefits to human beings.

Mr. MARRIOTT: I cannot see that it will mean any increase of benefits to human beings as some hon. member on my left interjected. I do say, however, that it will mean at least £20,000 a year additional expenditure to the people of Queensland, and I further say that that sum of money could be spent to greater advantage than in bringing additional members into this House. What will the additional members do? Quite a large number of them will not have the opportunity of speaking at all. It may be said that it has been adequately pointed out to us that the 62 present members have more work than they can properly attend to in the carrying out of their Parliamentary duties. I have no side lines, I devote my time to the interests of the electors whom I represent, and I say that my time is not so fully occupied with the number of electors I represent that the number should be decreased. I can find time to attend to the requirements of more than the number at present domiciled in my electorate.

Mr. Aikens: So can we all.

Mr. MARRIOTT: Yes. How many members of this House are in the position that they have no other business to attend to? We are not being paid to take up Parliamentary duties as a sideline to provide pocket money or chicken-feed to distribute amongst our constituents. We are sent here to represent the people of our electorates, and therefore I say that the bulk of our time, at any rate, should be devoted to our electors. As matters stand, the hon. member who honestly carries out his duties and finds insufficient time to attend to the requirements of his electorate must have some sideline that is taking up his time. The public are not paying him to attend to any but his Parliamentary duties.

It would have been far better for the Government to amend the existing Act to provide for a greater quota for the metropolitan electorates. There may be some anomalies for correction in country districts but using the arguments advanced in this Chamber today on the size of western electorates I say that the additional electorates proposed, particularly in the West, will not make the slightest difference to western people. An hon. member elected for an electorate in the western zone will not be able to get round every inch of his electorate as a metropolitan member, who, as one member of the Opposition said, can almost do so before breakfast.

Under the proposed Bill it will not be possible for members representing electorates in western zones to get round the whole electorates even if they devoted the whole of the year to it.

I am opposed to the Bill. I have pointed out that the added expenditure, conservatively estimated at £20,000—the amount might even be greater—could be better spent in other directions.

Hon. E. M. HANLON (Ithaca—Premier) (10.11 p.m.), in reply: Quotations were made from a speech that I delivered in this Chamber in connection with the redistribution scheme introduced into this Parliament by the then Attorney-General, Mr. Macgroarty. However, one part of that speech was not quoted and that was where I said that a Bill of such a kind could be considered by Parliament dispassionately from the point of view of the interests of the community and without any consideration whatsoever as to whether it favoured the Labour Party or the Nationalist Party, they being the two political parties in existence at the time. I had hoped that this Bill would be treated in the same way, but I am reluctantly compelled to say that it was not. I am very sorry for some of the things that happened today. When I opened the debate today I endeavoured to keep it on an even plane. There was a certain amount of good humour, a few wisecracks at one another, and certainly nothing offensive in what I said.

Many statements have been made today but there has been no constructive suggestion from hon. members opposite as to how we might improve the representation of the people in Parliament. Quite a number of hon. members admitted that we should have more representation, that there should be more members of Parliament, but they did not say exactly how many. Quite a number of hon. members said that there should be more country representation, but when they were asked what they would suggest they did not appear to make any positive suggestions.

Mr. Aikens: Take them out of the metropolitan area.

Mr. HANLON: The hon. member made enough noise this afternoon and I hope he will keep quiet for a while.

The hon. member for Logan said that this would become a dictatorship by franchise, whatever that meant. I have puzzled myself all the afternoon, since I heard his remark, trying to make out what he meant by dictatorship by franchise.

The Leader of the Opposition said that we were communising coal. Somebody else said that we were instituting Socialism, while others said that this was the beginning of the reign of Communism in this State. Actually the Bill simply provides for an increase in the number of representatives in this Parliament, and for giving better representation to the country.

During the debate some hon. members said that because of neglect by the Government the country had lost population. The western country has lost population and a number of factors contribute to that result. The northern part of the State has not lost population, although it has not made the progress that the south-eastern part of the State has. I should like to remind hon. members opposite that the exodus from the West took place while the Moore Government were in power, when thousands of people were unemployed, and all they could get was a paper ticket to get rations. That brought thousands from the western country, young fellows who used to earn a livelihood at odd times working on stations. Now hon. members opposite complain that for years there has been a shortage of labour in the West. People left the West, came to the city, found jobs, and have not gone back to the West. During the war period, I suppose the western part of the State made the greatest contribution, in proportion to population of any part of the State, to the armed forces. A great number of young fellows came in from the West and served for some years in various branches of the fighting services. Many of them met girls in the city, got married, and just did not want to go back to the West.

Therefore the West has suffered very heavily from the effects of both the depression and the war as far as the loss of population is concerned. However, we propose to try to correct that by increasing the representation there.

Hon. members have said that we have a Government in office today who did not get a majority of the votes of the people. When you consider that at the last election there were six distinct parties, as well as a number of independent candidates, it was not remarkable by any means that no one party got a majority of the votes. I think we did remarkably well in the contest, in which six parties participated, to get 49 per cent., or whatever it was, of the votes polled. There is no way in the world under the single-seat system that will ensure that any Government will have a majority of votes cast at the election. With a single-seat system you cannot ensure that any Government will have a majority of the total votes polled. Even if you prohibit all candidates except a

candidate from the Government and a candidate from the official Opposition, you can still have a Government with a great minority of votes. You may have a seat with, say, 10,000 voters. It can be won by 5,001 votes to 4,999. On the other hand you may have a seat that can be won by 9,999 votes to 1. That is putting an extreme case. If hon. members study the history of elections they will realise that actually a majority of 32 electors can make a whole Government. You can see that a majority of one in each of 31 seats, which would be the case here, would give a party a majority although they had a difference of only 31 electors. There is no way by which you can ensure that there will be representation according to parties, except by proportional representation, a system that has proved to be totally unworkable. Everywhere it has been tried it has brought stagnation on the people. In Europe it has brought countries under the complete control of Communism. In the only State of Australia, that is, Tasmania, where it is practised you never have a Government with a good working majority. At the present time a Government are in office there with a minority of 1 on the floor of the House. Under the proportional representation system there the votes polled were so close that each party won 30 seats. That meant that the Government had to provide a Speaker from their own ranks and the Government have had to govern by a minority of one.

Mr. Plunkett: Why do they have the proportional system in the Senate election?

Mr. HANLON: It was instituted there as a safeguard to the States, to give an equal number of representatives from each State, irrespective of the population of the State. Under that proportional representation originally the Senators of New South Wales were representing four times as many people as Senators in other States. Now they are bringing proportional representation into the Senate under the new Bill. That will be all right in the first election as one side will get a majority, but it must settle down in time until there is a dead heat or very close to it. The majority in the Lower House will enable the Government to carry on as long as there is a Government majority in the Senate. It will not matter how narrow their majority will be there, because the bulk of the Ministry will be in the Lower House.

I want to say quite frankly that a majority of 62 votes could give one party the total 62 seats in this House if the election worked out that way.

You see, do what you will with these things, you cannot plan how the election is going to work out. Hon. members opposite have seen, even at times when their party has done quite well, that individual members have lost their seats. We have had the experience here and hon. members opposite have had it. When we have won elections individual members have lost their seats because in particular electorates the people took a different view from the electors in other parts of the State.

Anyone would think, from the statements made here this afternoon, that we were doing something that was unparalleled. Hon. members opposite have never given much study to the question or they would know that we are doing exactly what is done in three other States in this Commonwealth. New South Wales has three zones, a zone for the metropolitan area of Sydney, a zone for Newcastle, and a zone for the rest of the State; all with different quotas. Victoria has three zones, the metropolitan zone for Melbourne, the urban zone for the towns near to Melbourne, and a rural zone for the area right out in the country; all with different quotas. Neither that nor the New South Wales system was introduced by the Labour Party. They have been carried out by Governments consisting of Opposition parties. The recent redistribution in Victoria was carried out by the Opposition parties—the same parties as are sitting opposite—and it provided for three separate zones with different quotas.

Mr. Brand: Do you think Victoria has a good system?

Mr. HANLON: No, but we are improving on it. A year or so ago the Labour Government in Western Australia were defeated and a Liberal-Country Government were elected, and they immediately set about having a redistribution of the seats. I want to call hon. members attention to this very strongly. The Premier, Mr. McLarty, made no bones about the need for having separate zones in Western Australia. They worked out four zones. Although the population is only about half the population of Queensland, their Perth quota is 12,000. Then they have a more closely settled zone, where the quota is 7,000, and then they have a pastoral and mining zone, where the quota is 4,000 electors, and then they have the North-West Zone, where the quota is 450 electors. That was done last year. Four members are returned for the North-West Zone and they have a quota of 450. Why? Because both Labour and anti-Labour Governments in Western Australia know that this area in the North-West needs more members to represent it than they could possibly give with a quota anything commensurate with those of other parts of Western Australia. The uninitiated—hon. members opposite—had we suggested putting in such a thing would have said we were mad. Four hundred and fifty votes return one member, as against 12,000 votes in the city of Perth.

New Zealand is a very evenly populated country. In the very southern part of the South Island the population is thin but the rest is closely settled and pretty fully populated. They do it in a different way. They have what they call the weighting system. They rate 1,000 country votes as equal to 1,250 city votes. The quota is not as widely separated as in the Australian States because they have not the problem of the vast areas that the Australian States have.

Hon. members should forget about the idea that this is purely a Labour idea. You would not get a Labour Government or a Liberal Government in New South Wales to change to the system the Moore Government put in here, where there was one quota for the whole of the State. No party in Victoria would change to the equal quota for the whole of the State nor would any party in Western Australia do that. South Australia, which is an exception, leaves the thing entirely to its commission. Where there is a redistribution there they appoint a commission and give that commission the job of dividing the State into the required number of electorates, but there is no direction at all.

Mr. Plunkett: A preferential system?

Mr. HANLON: I am not talking about the vote, I am talking about the division of the State into electorates. That is an entirely different matter from voting. They merely give the commission the direction to divide up the State and the commission does it at its own sweet will and in its own sweet way without any guidance from Parliament. Personally, I do not believe in that system but that commission does not give the same quota to the country electorates as it does to the city of Adelaide. It uses its discretion in favour of the country electorates. There can be no argument against the system we are proposing.

Hon. members opposite seem very annoyed; they seem to think that this will result in a continuance of Labour Government. I want to assure hon. members of this Parliament that if any are thinking in that way they "have another think coming to them." There is no way in the world of defeating the electors if they want to change the Government. I do not care how the seats are made; so long as there is a free franchise in the voting, when the people decide to change the Government, the Government will be changed. If ever there was a system that was introduced to keep a Government in office it was the system introduced by the Moore Government in 1931. (Opposition interjections.) I remember perfectly well the then Secretary for Labour and Industry, Mr. Sizer, walking out to the lobby where I was standing just after speaking. Mr. King was very annoyed about some little dispute we had in the Chamber and the then Secretary for Labour and Industry patted him on the back and said, "Never mind, Reg, he is singing his swan song. We shall never see him again." When I saw the boundaries of my electorate I thought, "By jove, he was a pretty good prophet." I knew perfectly well that I would never be a member of Parliament again if it was left to the Moore Government and if I was to be in Parliament it would be by an overwhelming swing of the people against the then Government. In the 1926 elections we had a splendid win in Queensland; we won a majority of 14 seats and in my electorate I polled a record majority. Notwithstanding that, in 1932 if the same result had obtained in the seat I was given, I should have been beaten by 1,000 but I won by 1,700, simply

because, notwithstanding the "fixing" of this seat and the determination of the then Government that I was to go out of Parliament, the people turned against the Moore Government. That happened in seats all over Queensland. The people turned against the Moore Government and returned Labour to power. Anybody who thinks he can defeat the electors where there is a free franchise and a fairly conducted election, I repeat, "has another think coming to him." Right now I will say that if the electors think this Government are not to the satisfaction of the electors of Queensland, when the elections take place next year this Government will go out. I can give that assurance. There is no way in the world of getting past the electors; if they want to get rid of you, out you go. It is rather ridiculous to say that this redistribution will keep the Labour Party in office for all time.

In opening his attack the Leader of the Opposition was horrified at the disparity between the quotas—not of the city, he was not concerned much about that—in the area in which his interests lay and the farther-out areas of Queensland. Country Party members in this Parliament all come from an area within a fairly easy radius of Brisbane; consequently they regard the country area of Queensland as the territory running from somewhere between the Dawson Valley and the Tweed River and extending out, now, as far as Dalby. Since the last election their interests go out that far. That is the country area in the eyes of hon. members opposite.

We cannot take that view. We have to consider Queensland from Thursday Island to the Tweed River and from Point Danger out to the borders of South Australia and the Northern Territory. To me the amazing part about it is that notwithstanding the fact that the Leader of the Opposition says that our quotas are all wrong, that there is no justification for the measure—and his language was much more parliamentary and moderate than some of that used by other hon. members—he suggests it is a complete destruction of democracy to allow this system to go through. I am going to prove that his concern is that all the increases are not going to the area in which he and his Party have interests and in which they have a very good prospect of returning members to Parliament. If the whole of the increase went into that part of Queensland from, say, Bundaberg down to the New South Wales border and out as far as Dalby, this would be an excellent measure in their eyes. He is even prepared to make the disparity in quotas even greater than we are making it, in order to achieve that result.

I do not wish to trespass on a field that will be covered in the Committee stage of the Bill, but the Leader of the Opposition has had prepared an amendment to move in Committee. That amendment would have the result that instead of having the quotas ranging from 4,783 to 10,716, as proposed by us, they would range from 4,070 to 12,955,

but the bulk of the additional members would go into the area in which hon. members are reasonably sure they can win seats. The difference in quotas does not matter there. They are raising the maximum from 10,716 to 12,955 and dropping the minimum from 4,783 to 4,070, and still retaining the 20-per cent. rise and fall.

How can we take seriously the statement of the Leader of the Opposition that he believes that we are wrong, that he believes it is undemocratic for this Government to make the distinction in quotas, when, in order to gain additional seats in the area that is suitable to them, they are prepared to make the differences in quotas even greater than ours. I think that completely wipes out any case that the Leader of the Opposition has made today.

The case put for the Liberal Party by the hon. member for Logan is a different one again. He stated on the introduction of the measure, and he repeated today, that the quota should be one quota for the State. We could not distribute on the present law today; the population has grown so much. The 1931 Act fixed a definite number. We are not doing that. We are stating the maximum number of members of Parliament that an area can have, and it will not matter how the population grows because the proportion of electors is not affected. It does not matter if the population grows to 10,000,000, the proportion will remain the same. The Moore Government mentioned the number as a quota in the 1931 Act, and that is the quota for the whole State. We could not distribute on that today because after we used that quota we should have enough people left over to fill another three seats, and they would be without any representation at all.

But let us suppose we took the number out and used the present Act again. What would be the result with our present population? It would certainly suit the Queensland People's Party. There would be 28 seats in the metropolitan area and 34 in the country on the present quota if we adhered to the slogan of one vote, one value, which, as I said before, the Labour Party originated but which experience has made it necessary for us to modify.

No party—and I do not care what party it is—could say that we were doing the right thing by the people of this State if we went to the country and brought back into this House 28 members for the city of Brisbane as against 34 representatives for 670,000 square miles of country. There is no hon. member of the Country Party who would be game to put up that proposal in his own electorate or anywhere else. It is all very well to get up in this House and say it. I am not expecting our legislation to be taken by the Opposition without opposition to it, and without strict investigation. I do not in the least object to that, because it is the duty of hon. members of the Opposition to scrutinise legislation carefully, but I say that no member of the Country Party would support a

system that would give 28 representatives in this House to the city as against 34 for the rest of the State. Those figures alone destroy entirely the case made by the Opposition.

The hon. member for Aubigny has a great deal to say and started to quote little bits from a speech I made in 1931. I am quite prepared to have that speech distributed to every householder in Queensland if the hon. member will pay for the printing and distribution. I will stand by it. I made two speeches on the 1931 Bill, one in the second-reading stage, and the other on the Committee stage, on an amendment, and I have not a word to take back, other than the point I made when I introduced this measure—that experience has made us modify the old slogan of one vote, one value. What I am taking exception to is the suggestion that we did something wrong in the 1935 redistribution. The 1935 redistribution was carried out under the Moore Government's Act without the slightest alteration. There has been no alteration of the Moore Government's Act until today.

Mr. Sparkes: You took away a country seat.

Mr. HANLON: A Commission was appointed to divide the State on the one quota, and the only fault the hon. member had to find with it was that the seat that went from the West happened to be his.

Mr. Sparkes: No. it was not; it was Murilla.

Mr. HANLON: It left the hon. member hanging in the air. That is the only fault he found with the 1935 redistribution.

Mr. Sparkes: It gave the hon. member for Baroona a seat.

Mr. HANLON: It was the Moore Government's Act and not ours.

Mr. E. B. Maher, after the redistribution and when interviewed by the Press, said that he was satisfied with the new district, although he regretted the loss of Marburg, which he referred to as "My Burg." He was fully compensated by getting Harrisville.

Mr. Russell thought that the commission had well divided the boundaries and Mr. Nimmo, the late member for Oxley, said that he could not have done a better job himself. He realised the commission had a very difficult task, but had done its work well.

Mr. Godfrey Morgan stated that he had been well treated by the commission and that the position was not nearly so bad for him as he feared. You see, Mr. Speaker, they were all a "bit breezy." They thought that if the Government appointed a commission there would be something sinister about the redistribution, because it was ordered by a Labour Government.

He resisted any proposal to alter the boundaries of the district of Dalby as drawn by the commission. I do not know whether the hon. member for Aubigny made any protest to the commission but protests were made about the inclusion of Dalby, which the hon. member for Aubigny then represented, in the Murilla electorate.

Mr. Sparkes: There were no protests from me.

Mr. HANLON: I wondered whether the hon. member made the protests. If he says he did not, then I am sure he did not. However, there were protests from some people in Dalby about the inclusion of Dalby in the Murilla electorate, and Mr. Godfrey Morgan objected very strongly to any alteration. He said that the commission had done a good job. Mr. Godfrey Morgan appeared before the commission in Dalby and urged that the district proposed by the commission should not be altered.

We now come to an hon. member sitting on the front Opposition bench in this House, Mr. W. A. Brand, the hon. member for Isis. I should like hon. members to listen to what he had to say because what he said today is very much in conflict with what he said on that occasion. He expressed his satisfaction with the commission, which at his suggestion restored Biggenden to the Isis district. So long as the Isis was all right everything was all right!

Mr. Brand: Biggenden was never out of it.

Mr. HANLON: The records show that the hon. member expressed his satisfaction to the commission. It says that Mr. Brand expressed his satisfaction to the commission which, at his suggestion, restored Biggenden to the Isis district. If the hon. member says that he did not request the commission to restore Biggenden I will have the files turned up.

Mr. Fadden, the then hon. member for Kennedy, said that he was interested in the alterations made in two electorates, and he considered the commission had assisted him in making his choice. He was considering jumping from one electorate to another.

Mr. Annand and Mr. Deacon, hon. members for East Toowoomba and Cunningham respectively, jointly desired an exchange of territory between their respective electorates and the commission approved of the suggestion.

Mr. Maxwell was satisfied except that he thought the commission had unknowingly excluded his place of residence from his electorate. The commission granted Mr. Maxwell's suggested amendment and he expressed his unqualified satisfaction.

No patent cough remedy could have had a better list of testimonials from satisfied customers than the 1935 commission had. What is the use of saying now that there was anything wrong with the 1935 redistribution? I can assure hon. members that the commission to be appointed on this occasion will do the job fairly and honourably again.

Mr. Sparkes: But their hands are tied.

Mr. HANLON: No. They are free to go about the job within the ambit of the Bill and to proceed on a fair and reasonable basis.

The hon. member for Mundingburra made a great deal of noise and suggested that his words were like the bite of an asp to me. They were not. They were more like the wail of a terrified animal that saw the axe. He is wailing in terror because of the present position of the Communist Party. While the Communist Party was "on the up and up" it was O.K. with the hon. member, but he sees now what is happening with the Communist Party in this country. He has been tying himself with that party and he is now getting frightened. He is beginning to think that the Communist Party is not going to be an asset to him. It has been using him all right and he has been depending on it. The hon. member sees the axe coming and consequently is terrified.

He went on to say that all the electorates had already been fixed. That is the usual invention that he adopts. His remarks were followed up by some other hon. members opposite who were content to say the same thing. There can be no truth in the statements because no Commission has been appointed and nobody knows yet, including myself, who the Commission will be. We have not come to that. When the Bill is through Parliament it will be quite time enough to consult the Public Service Commissioner as to the appointment of a suitable Commission.

The hon. member for Mundingburra showed also how little he is in sympathy with the North. He made a great song about the conditions in the North at the present time and how we are neglecting that part of Queensland. He said there is nothing that could be done for the North that the Government could not do. How little he knows his "ekker," or how little he knows or understands the political set-up of this country! If there was a political State in the North there would be an additional 10 members in the House of Representatives from North Australia as well as another 10 members in the Senate. What a difference 20 members from the northern part would make in the Federal Parliament! All that the hon. member is interested in now is making a noise. He has not even taken the trouble to investigate the position.

The hon. member for Cooroora broke new ground. I was rather shocked at the statement he made. He got up and said that the Government would be crazy if they didn't fix the electorates before they appointed a Commission. What sort of mentality are we up against? I have not heard a member of his party that spoke since who dissociated himself from that remark. A Government would be crazy, said the hon. member for Cooroora, that didn't fix the electorates before appointing a Commission. I thought that hon. members opposite would have shown a little more sense of responsibility than they did, by dissociating themselves from that statement. The same statement was made by the hon. member for Windsor, following of course the statements made just previously by the hon. member for Mundingburra. In all three cases all I can say is that dirty hands and dirty minds go together.

The hon. member for Toowong waxed very indignant, but I think he got a little bit sad at the high-pressure politics stunt he put on.

The hon. member for Wide Bay said he believed in more representation for the country but again he supported that idea with the statement that that additional representation should be representation by the Country Party.

The hon. member for Albert told us the same thing.

He said that there should be greater representation, but again he says it should be somewhere around the area which the Country Party represents in this Parliament.

Summing up the whole debate I do not think we have ever heard a debate in which there has been less real constructive criticism, and less sound opposition or less sound reasoning. As I have said, the Opposition believe in more representation. One half of them believe that the more representation should be in the city, and the other half believe that the more representation should be in the country. The people who believe that the more representation should be in the country believe that the representation should be in their part of the country. (Opposition interjections). That is the story that has been told here. I have put in just 12 hours listening to the speeches of hon. members and I made a note of the points hon. members made. I am giving a fair and reasonable summary of the case made by the Opposition. That being so, I am satisfied we can safely recommend this Bill to the House.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time (Mr. Hanlon's motion)—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 29.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Ingram
" Bruce	" Jesson
" Burrows	" Jones
" Clark	" Keyatta
" Copley	" Larcombe
" Davis	" Mann
" Devries	" O'Shea
" Donald	" Power
" Duggan	" Roberts
" Dunstan	" Taylor, J. R.
" Farrell	" Theodore
" Foley	
" Gair	
" Gunn	Tellers:
" Hanlon	Mr. Crowley
" Hilton	" Turner

NOES, 18.

Mr. Barnes	Mr. Müller
" Brand	" Nicklin
" Chalk	" Plunkett
" Decker	" Sparkes
" Heading	" Taylor, H. B.
" Low	" Wanstall
" Luckins	
" Madsen	Tellers:
" Marringott	Mr. Aikens
" McIntyre	" Bjelke-Petersen

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Collins	Mr. Hiley
" Gledson	" Morris
" Graham	" Maher
" Moore	" Macdonald
" Smith	" Pie

Resolved in the affirmative.

ADJOURNMENT.

ALLEGED THREATENED ASSAULT IN CHAMBER.

The PREMIER (Hon. E. M. Hanlon—Ithaca) (10.55 p.m.): I move—
“That the House do now adjourn.”

Mr. NICKLIN (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition): Before you put the motion, Mr. Speaker, I desire to refer to the assault that occurred in the Chamber this afternoon. You said that you would give the matter attention and consider what action should be taken. Will you, Mr. Speaker, please inform the House what consideration you have given and what action is proposed?

Mr. SPEAKER: When the hon. member for Bundaberg drew my attention to what he claimed was an attempted assault I said that I took cognisance of his point. I have made certain investigations but when I see from “Hansard” what was actually said, along with firsthand knowledge of the incident, I will give consideration to it and at the opening of Parliament tomorrow morning I shall have some comment to make upon it.

Motion (Mr. Hanlon) agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.57 p.m.
