

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 4 OCTOBER 1956**

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Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. J. H. Mann, Brisbane) took the chair at 11 a.m.

QUESTIONS.

TIMBER ROYALTY AND RATES PAID TO  
HAULING CONTRACTORS.

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Secretary for Public Lands and Irrigation—

“In view of the increased rates of timber royalty being charged by the Sub-Department of Forestry, why is this Sub-Department pursuing a policy of keeping the rates payable to timber hauling contractors at such low levels in comparison with those prevailing several years ago, that timber hauliers generally, faced with sharply increased running and maintenance costs and badly deteriorated roads, now find it difficult to earn a net income approximating a reasonable living wage within a 40-hour working week?”

**Hon. P. J. R. HILTON** (Carnarvon) replied—

“Assessment of upset stumpages for Crown timber sales by the Forestry Department are based on rates prescribed by the Timber-getters and Timber-fellers' Award, and are amended with award variations. The Department is not aware of any dissatisfaction in this matter.”

## OCCUPIED PUBLIC BEDS IN QUEENSLAND HOSPITALS.

**Mr. MORRIS** (Mt. Coot-tha) asked the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs—

“Further to my question of 2 October, and his answer thereto, and to avoid the research necessary to supply the information covering public beds in all the 130 Queensland hospitals, will he advise how many public beds have been occupied continuously by the one patient, (a) for 12 months, or more; (b) for six months but less than 12 months in the Brisbane General Hospital, and, shown separately, in the South Brisbane Auxiliary (late Diamantina) Hospital?”

**Hon. W. M. MOORE** (Merthyr) replied—

“(a) Three in the Brisbane General Hospital. Thirty-five in the Rosemount Hospital which operates in conjunction with the Brisbane General Hospital. One hundred and sixty-six in the South Brisbane Auxiliary Hospital. (b) Fourteen in the Brisbane General Hospital. Twelve in the Rosemount Hospital. Eighty-five in the South Brisbane Auxiliary Hospital.”

## ROLLING STOCK ORDERED BY RAILWAY DEPARTMENT.

**Mr. CHALK** (Lockyer) asked the Minister for Transport—

“1. On 30 June, 1956, what rolling stock was on order by the Railway Department under the following headings:—(a) Diesel locomotives, (b) Steam locomotives, (c) Rail motors, (d) Carriages, (e) Wagons (stating various types)?

“2. With what workshops or private firms are the orders standing, giving the dates of lodgment of such orders; what deliveries, if any, have been made against such orders, and when?”

“3. In view of the offer of Southern engineering firms to supply diesel locomotives and rail wagons on a credit basis spread over several years, and the fact that Victoria and New South Wales have already placed forward orders under such scheme, has he given consideration to this form of ordering, and have any orders been so placed?”

**Hon. J. E. DUGGAN** (Toowoomba) replied—

“1. (a) Diesel locomotives—10 diesel-electric 1,310-h.p., ex Clyde Engineering Co. Ltd., New South Wales; 12 diesel electric 710-h.p., ex Australian Electrical Industries, Brisbane; 2 diesel-mechanical, ex Commonwealth Engineering (Q'ld) Pty. Ltd.; (b) Steam locomotives—20 BB18½ locomotives, ex Walkers Ltd.; (c) Rail motors—2 stainless steel diesel rail cars, ex Commonwealth Engineering Co. Ltd.; 2 aluminium diesel rail cars, ex Ipswich Workshops; (d) Carriages—1 all-steel air-conditioned train (12 vehicles), Ipswich Workshops; 50 goods brake vans (bodies

only), Ipswich Workshops, underframes and bogies by Commonwealth Engineering (Q'ld) Pty. Ltd.; (e) Wagons—200 “BLC” (louvred goods wagons), ex A. E. Goodwin Ltd., New South Wales; 100 “KS” (cattle wagons) bogies by Industrial Steels Ltd., underframes and steel superstructures by Commonwealth Engineering (Q'ld) Pty. Ltd. and bodies by Ipswich Workshops; 50 “LJ” sheep vans by Commonwealth Engineering (Q'ld) Pty. Ltd.; 200 “WH” (bulk wheat), ex Evans Deakin & Co. Ltd.; 41 “CLC” (louvred cars), ex Evans Deakin & Co. Ltd.; 100 “CMIS” (refrigerated vans), ex Commonwealth Engineering (Q'ld) Pty. Ltd.

“2. 10 diesel-electric locos., ex Clyde Engineering Co. Ltd.—Order placed 22 September, 1955; deliveries to date—nil; 12 diesel-electric locos., ex A.E.I. Pty. Ltd.; order placed 25 March, 1952; deliveries—first on 18 January, 1956, second on 27 May, 1956, third on 3 August, 1956, fourth on 27 September, 1956; 2 diesel-mechanical locos., ex Commonwealth Engineering (Q'ld) Pty. Ltd.—Order placed 23 April, 1956, order completed 31 July, 1956; 20 BB18½ steam locomotives, Walkers Ltd.—Order placed 17 November, 1948, 6 completed up to 30 June, 1956; 8 completed up to 13 September, 1956; 2 stainless steel diesel rail cars, ex Commonwealth Engineering (Q'ld) Co. Ltd.—Order placed 27 April, 1954, first car delivered 17 August, 1956; 2 aluminium diesel rail cars, ex Ipswich Workshops—Order placed 7 May, 1954, 1 car delivered 10 May, 1956; 1 air-conditioned train (12 vehicles), Ipswich Workshops—Order placed 26 April, 1949, 1 car delivered 31 August, 1956; 50 2nd-class brake vans, Ipswich Workshops—Order placed 12 October, 1954, 12 delivered to 30 June, 1956, 18 delivered to 14 September, 1956; 200 “BLC” (louvred goods wagons), A. E. Goodwin Ltd., New South Wales—Order placed 14 February, 1955, 6 delivered to 30 June, 1956, 21 delivered to 19 September, 1956; 200 “WH” (bulk wheat wagons), Evans Deakin & Co. Ltd.—Order placed 9 March, 1949, 162 delivered to 30 June, 1956, 180 delivered to 14 September, 1956; 50 “LJ” (sheep vans), Commonwealth Engineering (Q'ld) Pty. Ltd.—Order placed 23 December, 1954, 49 delivered to 30 June, 1956, order completed on 16 July, 1956; 100 “CMIS” (refrigerated wagons), Commonwealth Engineering (Q'ld) Pty. Ltd.—Order placed, 1st 50 on 14 January, 1955, 2nd 50 on 11 April, 1956, 16 delivered to 30 June, 1956; 30 delivered to 5 September, 1956; 41 “CLC” (louvred cars), Evans Deakin & Co. Ltd.—Order placed 22 January, 1948, 37 delivered to 30 June, 1956, 41 delivered to 7 September, 1956; 100 “KS” (cattle wagons)—Bogies by Industrial Steels Ltd., underframes and steel superstructures by Commonwealth Engineering (Q'ld) Pty. Ltd., bodies by

Ipswich Workshops; order placed 15 December, 1954; no complete deliveries to date.

“3. Consideration has been given to this form of ordering, but no orders yet have been so placed.”

**PEARL SHELL BANKS NEAR BOWEN.**

**Mr. COBURN** (Bowen) asked the Treasurer—

“As golden-lip pearl oysters have been washed up on to the beaches at Bowen during boisterous weather and a large specimen of the species was pulled out by a fisherman on his fishing line recently, and also, because it is believed that they exist in commercial quantities in the waters off the coast from Bowen, will he kindly have investigations undertaken to ascertain the quantity and the quality of the pearl shell in the ocean in the neighbourhood of Bowen?”

**Hon. E. J. WALSH** (Bundaberg) replied—

“The presence of a few samples of pearl-shell on beaches near Bowen does not necessarily mean that banks, which it would be economical to work, exist off the coast. In former years, pearl-shell was fished as far south as Mackay, and it is considered certain that if it was still present in payable quantities old-established operators based on Thursday Island would be aware of the fact. An investigation on the lines suggested would involve substantial expenditure, which, on the facts, cannot be justified.”

**DAYS ALLOTTED TO SUPPLY.**

**Hon. J. E. DUGGAN** (Toowoomba—Deputy Premier): I move—

“That during the remainder of this session, unless otherwise ordered, the House may, on the days allotted for Supply, continue to sit until 10 o'clock p.m. Each of the periods between 11 o'clock a.m. and 4 o'clock p.m. and between 4 o'clock p.m. and 10 o'clock p.m. shall be accounted an allotted day under the provisions of Standing Order No. 307. Three allotted days shall be allowed for the discussion of the Estimates of a department. At the termination of the period so allowed the Chairman shall put every question necessary to decide the Vote under consideration, and shall then proceed to put the question for the balance of the Estimates for that department; all such questions to be decided without amendment or debate: Provided that, if the discussion of the Estimates of a department be concluded before the expiry of the three days so allowed, the period remaining shall be allocated to the discussion of the Estimates next brought before the Committee. All provisions of Standing Order No. 307 shall, mutatis mutandis, continue to apply.”

Motion agreed to.

**SUPPLY.**

**COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT—  
RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.**

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Clark, Fitzroy, in the chair.)

Debate resumed from 2 October (see p. 672) on Mr. Gair's motion—

“That there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1956-1957, a sum not exceeding £1,122 to defray the salary of the Aide-de-camp to His Excellency the Governor.”

**Mr. DONALD** (Bremer) (11.8 a.m.): Members and supporters of the present Federal Government, when trying to defend that Government's retaining such a large percentage of the revenue from income tax, invariably say, “We gave the States so much,” and so on. That may sound all right and, to the unthinking, satisfactory and convincing, as I believe it is intended to be. However, a little examination will show that that answer does not reflect the true position. It must be admitted that income tax revenue comes from the States, so it could be logically claimed that, from that source of revenue, the Commonwealth Government give the States nothing. In fact, the States give the Federal Government approximately £1,000,000,000 each year, or almost double the amount of taxation raised by the Chifley administration, from which huge total they return to the States the miserable sum of £250,000,000, or only one quarter of what they take.

That is bad enough, but unfortunately the injustice does not end there. After taking such a large amount from the taxpayers of the States, the Federal Government then tell the States that they are willing to lend them some of their own money, provided they pay high rates of interest on it. They have also the nerve to tell the State Governments how they should spend their money, although they cannot manage their own affairs without creating depression conditions with their consequent pool of unemployed. As a result, five of the six State Governments have deficits totalling £16,393,009, while the Commonwealth Government have accumulated a surplus of £61,612,952. Our opponents cannot claim that this great difference came from the superior administration of a non-Labour Government, for the non-Labour State Governments fared no better than Labour State Governments in the year I am discussing. In fact, the only State Government to record a surplus was the Labour Government of Tasmania. The non-Labour Government of Victoria finished with a deficit of £4,582,307, and the South Australian non-Labour Government with a deficit of £1,430,000. On a per-capita basis the Queensland Government have the best record of the five mainland Governments, their deficit per head of population being £1 5s. 6d. as against £1 18s. 9d. in Tory-governed Victoria and £1 14s. 3d. in South Australia.

There can be no doubt that the State's deficits and the Commonwealth's large surplus spring from the same source, the unsatisfactory allocation of income tax receipts amongst the respective Governments. No-one can honestly dispute that the Commonwealth Government have placed themselves in an extremely advantageous position under uniform taxation. Their income tax collections are more than 35 times as high as before the war and represent about eight times as large a share of the national wealth. They retain most of the revenue from income tax for their own services and give the rest to the States for such essential functions as education, health, transport, police and other services.

But the Commonwealth Government are not content with denying the States their proper share of revenue from income tax. They lend surplus revenue from taxation to the States at full rates of interest, which, of course, adds to the States' difficulties. That is clearly illustrated in the Treasurer's Financial Statement where he says that the increase in tax reimbursement grant over the preceding year was only £549,729, or 2 per cent., compared with an increase of 8 per cent. in income tax receipts by the Commonwealth Government. I emphasise that interest payment by Queensland to the Commonwealth in the same year increased by £376,270, to which must be added £132,000 increased pay-roll tax payment, making a grand total of £508,270 extra paid by Queensland to the Commonwealth.

By charging high interest rates on special loans for State Public Works the Commonwealth Government are pursuing a policy of forcing State Governments to finance their services not in the equitable way the States would finance them if they had a fair share of income taxation but by increasing fees and charges for State services which fall equally on all people irrespective of their incomes and which are therefore a much more serious burden on those with low incomes.

Under the tax reimbursement scheme the Commonwealth Government alone decide policy on income taxation, its general severity, its incidence at various levels of income, and the distribution of burden between personal and company taxation. The Commonwealth also have sole power in the fields of excise and sales tax. Policy in these major taxation fields has a great effect on the cost of production and the price of goods.

Through their immigration policy the Commonwealth determine very largely the extent to which the economic system is called upon to adjust itself to an increasing population.

Finally, the Commonwealth Government have the major voice in decisions reached each year by the Loan Council on the rate at which State public works programmes can proceed, while their own developmental and defence plans, which have a large bearing on

our economic problems, are decided by them without reference to the Loan Council. There is a very distinct difference which gives real advantage to the Commonwealth Government over the State Governments. In contrast, the States have no direct power in relation to general economic policy.

It is true that the States can legislate on certain specific matters such as prices and capital issues, but it is generally accepted that to be fully effective such controls must either be administered or co-ordinated at Federal level and be integrated with Commonwealth general policy. Without Commonwealth co-operation they can achieve only limited success.

It is against this background that the conference held some time ago on wages and inflation must be reviewed. In some quarters it has been regarded as a failure in the sense that no practical line of action emerged. This is true. The conference did fail to hammer out any decision. However, in one important sense it was not a failure. It did, I believe, provide a forum for the discussion of vital problems affecting the economic wellbeing and development of Australia. Through the exchange of views—or I might say the clash of views—between the Commonwealth and the States the conference did reveal the need for a carefully considered and comprehensive approach to our economic problems.

Before the conference the opinion was widely held that variations in the basic wage in accordance with the cost-of-living "C" series index were a major, if not the major, cause of the continual rise in prices and depreciation of the currency. By the end of the conference I think that opinion had changed to the wider view that prices and wages were largely an effect of inflation which itself is caused by more fundamental factors.

When the basic wage was pegged for two years in New South Wales prices rose at the same rate as in the States where it was not pegged. In South Australia where the basic wage is pegged—there has been and still is no variation in the basic wage in accordance with the cost of living—the rise in prices has been the same as in other States. It is interesting to note that despite differences in wage adjustment policies since 1953 retail prices rose fairly uniformly in all States. The basic wage rose by 5.06 per cent. in Brisbane and did not rise at all in Adelaide. Over the same period the price rise in both Brisbane and Adelaide was 7.4 per cent. In Hobart where the wage rise was the greatest at 5.1 per cent. the price rise was the lowest at 4.41 per cent. This effectively destroys the arguments of those who contend that wages are affecting prices and that price increases and costs are responsible for the inflationary trend.

If price control had no effect at all, and in the light of experience could be dismissed as being of no value, why was it that in Queensland the percentage increase between 1939 and 1956 was the lowest in the "C" series retail index and, of course, in the basic wage?

The Queensland Government price-control legislation has given the State the lowest basic wage and as a result some people have been uncharitable enough to refer to Queensland as the low-wage State when in actual fact it is the low-cost State. This has been admitted by no less a person than Mr. Playford, the non-Labour Premier of South Australia. During the discussions at the recent Canberra anti-inflation conference he complimented the Queensland Government on their efficient and effective price-control legislation. This Government need go to no other person for such a glowing tribute.

**Mr. Walsh:** Mr. Playford said that Queensland was the only State that had effective price control.

**Mr. DONALD:** That is a more effective way of saying it than the way in which I put it.

However, to be really effective, price control must be introduced on a Commonwealth basis. It is unfortunate, therefore, that, due to the influence of Labour's opponents, the Australian people refused to give our national Government the necessary power to control prices throughout the Commonwealth.

**Mr. Pizzey:** The Commonwealth did nothing of the sort; it was the Commonwealth Arbitration Court.

**Mr. DONALD:** I am speaking on a national basis, not a basis of Commonwealth Government against State Government. I am speaking of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court in opposition to the State Arbitration Court. If the Opposition cannot understand that, I cannot help it. I will refer to the Commonwealth Court, if that will satisfy the hon. member. Do not forget that it was pressure from the Commonwealth Government that resulted in the Court's doing that. That is something that does not happen in Queensland. Our Court is allowed to function in its own way, without any interference from the State Government.

When the Commonwealth ceased the practice of making quarterly adjustments to the basic wage in 1953, the States of New South Wales, Western Australia and Tasmania also abandoned the practice, but circumstances forced each of these States to resume these adjustments within the short period of two years in the interests of justice and equity.

I contend that to talk about arresting or suspending quarterly adjustments to the basic wage during a period of rising prices and costs would be to reduce the purchasing power of wage-earners. To follow this course while

company profits have reached and maintained record levels would be the height of economic injustice.

During the year 1954-1955, the earning rate of capital increased from 17.9 per cent. to 18.2 per cent; aggregate profits rose by £15,000,000, or 10 per cent.; of 1,172 companies, 70 per cent. showed higher profits; dividends rose from 9.8 per cent. to 10.4 per cent. of capital; 59 motor companies earned 47.6 per cent.; capital of finance and hire-purchase companies rose by 50 per cent. and they still maintained a healthy 20.9 per cent. earning rate.

Yet people of influence in this community, in both the States and the Commonwealth, would peg the earning capacity on the only commodity a worker has to sell, that is, his labour, and reduce his effective purchasing power, reduce his effective wage rate, and feel they were doing justice while allowing these companies to amass these enormous profits. At the present time, the States, in attempting to maintain budgetary stability, are very much in the hands of the Commonwealth Government themselves. Prior to World War II, State Governments normally looked to income tax as the most equitable source of revenue and the most flexible means of adjusting revenue to expenditure.

Under the uniform income-tax scheme, the States have lost control of this major item of revenue. Grants under the formula have been inadequate for many years, as the Commonwealth Government have admitted, and supplementary grants have been made available.

These, however, are determined arbitrarily each year by the Commonwealth. All State Premiers, irrespective of Party—and I ask members of the Opposition to note this—are in agreement that even with supplementary grants the tax reimbursements do not represent a reasonable share of income taxation.

**Mr. Pizzey:** You have had surpluses for years.

**Mr. DONALD:** I shall tell the hon. member why. Under these conditions, therefore, action by a State Government is necessarily limited to adjusting its remaining revenues, including transport charges, to bring its total receipts into balance with what it considers its minimum needs for expenditure on State services. If adjustment of existing revenue cannot close the gap, the only alternative is to impose new forms of taxation.

The failure of the Commonwealth-States talks on inflation was the failure of the Menzies-Fadden Government to approach the issues involved other than those of wage control. The Australian Labour Movement refuses to accept the Federal Government's spurious political policy that wages and salaries are the basic cause of mounting inflationary pressures. The wage-and-salary

earnings are among the chief victims of inflation as their incomes are tied to an inflationary spiral largely caused by extortionate prices and excessive profits which are the uncontrolled sector of the cost structure. The Commonwealth Government sought to use the conference with the State Premiers as a means by which to force the State Governments into discarding their quarterly cost-of-living adjustments. This was to be done by Statutory Act, in spite of the fact that no State Government had any electoral mandate to do so. On the contrary, the electors in several States had expressed themselves as desiring to retain quarterly cost-of-living adjustments on the State wage. Unlike the Menzies-Fadden Government which, as long ago as 1949, sought and obtained—and this should be emphasised—an electoral direction to legislate against excess profits, the Premiers of these States refused to jettison an important item of policy which had been electorally endorsed by their people. The pattern of the present Commonwealth Government's approach to inflation can be traced to their airy generalisation of 1949 when they promised to put value back into the pound. From then on they have made a series of hysterical excursions into the realm of economic and financial affairs. The melodramatic manoeuvring in 1951 when they called a Special Citizens' Conference in Sydney to discuss what they ought to do about inflation has been typical of the abdication of their responsibility for the state into which they have allowed the country to drift.

**Mr. Low:** They maintained full employment.

**Mr. DONALD:** It is obvious that the hon. member has never been out of work looking for a job, or he would not make such a silly interjection.

It is obvious that the Federal Government went to the conference without the haziest notion of what they should do to combat inflation and with only one single-track idea, to deprive or cheat the wage-earner of price fixation through Commonwealth action while keeping their cost of living adjustments frozen.

**Mr. Pizzey** interjected.

**Mr. DONALD:** If the hon. member for Isis thinks that he can buy as much out of a fixed wage when the cost of living goes up he is not thinking correctly. That is what the workers have been asked to do. That is what the Commonwealth Government have compelled the workers to do. When a man's wage is pegged and the cost of living increases, his purchasing power is not the same as it was before. Wages were fixed in South Australia and wages were allowed to rise in Queensland. There was an increase of 5% in wages in Brisbane and the increase in the cost of living was 7.4% but the increase in the cost of living was the same in Adelaide despite the fact that wages there were pegged. Will the hon. member tell me

that a person whose wages increased by 5 per cent. in Brisbane is not better off than the worker in South Australia who got no rise at all, and that the latter is not robbed and cheated?

There was no mention by the Acting Prime Minister of what action, if any, his Government contemplated on the question of excess profits, which is very important or private monopolistic practices which have led to the elimination of competition and price fixation. If the Commonwealth Parliament is found to lack the power to exercise these functions, the Labour Party will readily support a move to amend the Constitution to obtain such power by referendum at the earliest possible moment.

The outcome of the Canberra talks was a clear indication that the Menzies-Fadden Government still adhere to their political beliefs that profits are sacrosanct and that prices are entirely a secondary consideration in determining the real causes of the parlous loss of real purchasing power of the Australian £1.

These talks again demonstrated that the Menzies-Fadden Government believe that the wage-and-salary earner should be called upon to bear the brunt of sacrifice in any far-reaching economic adjustment to strike a balance between the Government's two closest associates—inflation and deflation.

The Menzies-Fadden Government have given the Labour movement no cause to believe in the sincerity of their protestations of evenhanded justice in dealing with all sections of the community where profits and wages are concerned.

The representatives of the Commonwealth Government went to the Canberra conference and expected the Premiers of the Sovereign States to swallow holus-bolus their prescription for wage control without any indication whatever as to when the sections of the community which are making exorbitant profits through a system of economic anarchy are to be made to contribute their share of equality in sacrifice.

All the Canberra talks produced from the Commonwealth Government side was a suggestion that the denial of justice operating under Federal Awards in respect of the cost of living should be extended to employees under State Awards—that one wrong should be perpetuated by committing another. That is indisputable.

Both the industrial and political wings of the Labour movement have rightly condemned the denial of wage justice, for it is now abundantly clear that the harsh injustice of soaring prices and mounting profits is being borne by over half the wage and salary earners of Australia and the thousands of pensioners and others on small incomes to whom the Menzies Government have brazenly lied by claiming that to peg wages would mean reduced costs with greater competition and lower prices.

I deal now with those people who have retired from the coal-mining industry and who are in receipt of the Coal Miners' Pension. They number 1,060 in Queensland, together with their dependants, including widows of deceased pensioners. They have to exist on a fixed income and their purchasing power is so limited that they find it harder to make ends meet than a person on the basic wage, although a person on the basic wage finds it hard enough. There has been no adjustment for some time in their pension despite increases in the cost of living, and they with age, invalid, and widow pensioners are finding things more difficult as time goes on. I think the Coal and Oil Shale Mine Workers' Pension Fund is sufficiently buoyant to enable an increase in the pension in order to lessen the burden of the pensioners and make brighter the last years of their life. The fund, of course, has to be kept actuarially sound, but I think an increase could be given to relieve undue and unnecessary suffering.

Since its election in 1949 the Menzies-Fadden Government have been warning the nation about the dangers of inflation. These warnings, however, have always ended with an optimistic forecast as to the Government's ability to defeat inflation. In spite of the forecasts, and the promises of early remedial action, the Australian economy has progressively gone from bad to worse. Even now, as the situation becomes really desperate, the usual exhortations to the general public to work harder and save more, and the usual spate of complaints that everyone in the community except the Federal Government is responsible for our present parlous plight are continuing to be broadcast with monotonous regularity. They are put forward as a substitute and nothing else for a reasoned policy based on a national plan to deal with the grim realities of the situation.

It is cold comfort for those on fixed incomes, and particularly for a half million pensioners of one class or another to be told that the benefits they receive cannot be increased to meet increased living costs. At the same time, profits which have risen greatly over the years are still rising, and no attempt is being made to restrain the rapacity of the beneficiaries of such profiteering. I invite contradiction on that point. The whole responsibility for the present economic position rests on the Menzies-Fadden Government and their parliamentary supporters. It was the opposition of the Liberal Party and the Country Party that defeated the 1948 Prices Referendum. This defeat opened the way for all the price rises that have occurred since then. It is obvious that the Menzies-Fadden Government cannot solve the nation's problems. A Government that have failed as lamentably as this one should resign. A Government that have lost the confidence of the nation have lost all moral right to continue in office. What has happened since the defeat of that referendum was foretold in no uncertain manner by every

Labour speaker who took the platform during the referendum campaign and was mentioned in every Labour publication either in periodical or pamphlet form. Everything we said would happen has happened, and the people themselves must accept the blame.

The Labour Party believes that the Federal Government's taxation policy throws undue and unfair burdens on wage-and-salary earners, and suggests that, if the present crisis is to be abated and not to be further aggravated, it is imperative that the Federal Government should apply control over capital issues, prices, profits and interest. If the Commonwealth Parliament is found to lack the power to exercise these functions, the Labour Party will readily support a move to amend the Commonwealth Constitution to obtain such powers by referendum at the earliest possible moment. The Labour Party is also convinced that the effective exercise of such economic controls will stabilise all sections of the economy.

Under the present conditions, those in receipt of wages and salaries, and those on fixed incomes, are called upon to bear the whole burden of the Commonwealth Government's bungling and gross mismanagement of the nation's finances. The freezing of wage rates by a denial of cost-of-living increases to those working under Federal awards and the denial of just increases in payment of margins have deprived half of the workers of Australia of wage justice.

Whilst Australia's internal position has rapidly deteriorated over the past five years, our overseas trade position has also grown alarmingly worse. Desperate and indiscriminate measures by way of import restrictions have been adopted without achieving their avowed purpose, and are so devised and administered as to sacrifice small business interests in favour of large business interests, as represented by monopolies and combines which operate to the detriment of the great majority of the people. The growing hardships being experienced by so many wage-and-salary workers, and the increasing rate of unemployment so noticeable in certain sections of industry, and likely to spread to other sections are evidence of the effect of the Commonwealth Government's actions on the wealth-producing section of the Australian community. The extent to which inflation has eaten up the earnings and savings of the people of this country is revealed by official statistics which show that since 1938-1939 retail prices have risen 178 per cent. compared with 154 per cent. in Britain, 104 per cent. in New Zealand, 90 per cent. in the United States, and 80 per cent. in Canada. It should be remembered, and everybody remembers that until the defeat of the Labour Federal Government in 1949 retail prices in Australia and New Zealand were lower than those of any country in the British Commonwealth, and also lower than those then operating in the United States. And so we



have a practical example of the ineffectiveness and inefficiency of anti-Labour Administration in the Federal Parliament, and the efficient, wise and beneficial legislation and administration of a Labour Government in the same Parliament.

One thing that has been noticeable throughout the speeches made by the hon. members of the Opposition during this debate is their criticism of the Treasurer because he had to report a deficit on the year's work. When those hon. members who are today condemning the Treasurer for recording a deficit in the State's finances saw surpluses being reported year after year, they did not give the Government any credit for their wise administration. They were so annoyed, or so reluctant to praise the Government, that they said the surpluses were the result of generous help from the Commonwealth Government. Was that not the argument put forward by hon. members opposite? Let us be logical. If it was because of the Commonwealth Government's generosity that this State recorded a surplus, the deficit must be due to the unfair treatment they are now meting out to us.

**Mr. Pizzey:** What about the loss on the railways?

**Mr. DONALD:** The railways have come in for a good deal of criticism by hon. members opposite, criticism both unkind and unfair. This State's railway system is in no worse financial position than any other in the world. As a matter of fact, it is the most solvent in the Commonwealth. For example, let us compare our railway system, with its 6,000-odd miles of line running through sparsely populated areas, with that of Victoria, a pocket State that is highly industrialised and has a concentrated population. Victoria's railway system financially is much worse than ours.

Whilst hon. members opposite complain about the recent increase in railway fares and freights, they forget that it was the first for many years. The reluctance of this Government to increase rail freights and fares was an honest attempt by them to keep down transport costs, and therefore, the cost of living. Ultimately, however, there was no alternative but to increase fares and freights.

Expenditure by the Railway Department last year exceeded the estimate by £1,002,145, due mainly to increased wages rates awarded during the year. The overall position of the railways for the year was that running costs increased by £2,862,170 compared with the previous year, while the income earned decreased by £400,475, giving an adverse movement, compared with the previous year, of £3,262,645. With railway expenditure at £33,065,445 and railway receipts at £30,404,083, the result was a loss of £2,661,362, to which must be added £2,900,491 interest on the reduced capital indebtedness of the railways and £564,904 expended from the Post-war Reconstruction and Development

Trust Fund on railway maintenance normally charged to Consolidated Revenue, a total charge of £6,131,132. In each of the two previous years railway receipts exceeded running costs by approximately £500,000, thus making some provisions towards interest payments.

That was the reason for the increase in railway fares and freights. Has the Railway Department acted any differently from air, shipping and road transport systems? When hon. members opposite criticise the railways, they should not forget that air and shipping companies get generous subsidies, in some cases from both the Commonwealth and the State Governments. They do not say that those transport systems are inefficient because they have to be subsidised. However, they seize on every opportunity to attack a State enterprise that is giving excellent service to the community, and that is necessary to the State's economy.

Year after year the Treasurer, just as his predecessors did, has warned hon. members that Queensland could not draw indefinitely on reserve funds to meet the gap between Commonwealth grants and State requirements. The warning has not been heeded by hon. members opposite and by the Commonwealth Government and we have a deficit because we tried to keep the State solvent and maintain full employment. That appears on page 12 of the Financial Statement in these words—

“Owing to the depletion of its funds, the Government is not in a position to supplement Loan Fund expenditure to the same extent as in previous years but every endeavour has been made to maintain the highest level of capital and developmental works.”

Some States have become claimant States because of certain conditions. Queensland has not yet applied and I do not know if the Government intend to apply but the same grounds exist here for receiving the generous treatment given claimant States.

**Mr. Pizzey:** If North Queensland were a separate State it would have a good case.

**Mr. DONALD:** I am not talking about separate States or additional States. It is hard enough to manage with the existing States. I am pointing out that conditions in Queensland more than justify a claim.

The conditions for special grants are explained thus by the Commonwealth Grants Commission—

“Special grants are justified when a State through financial stress from any cause is unable efficiently to discharge its functions as a member of the Federation, and should be determined by the amount of help found necessary to make it possible for that State, by reasonable effort to function at a standard not appreciably below that of other States.”

**Mr. Pizzey:** Has Queensland ever made any effort to become a claimant State?

**Mr. DONALD:** Perhaps we have been too proud to seek aid. The Treasurer says at page 16 of his Financial Statement—

“To date Queensland has refrained from applying for a grant although its conditions are, in many ways, similar to those of the claimant States. This is apparently recognised by the Commonwealth Grants Commission as when the claimant States sought to include factors such as sparsity of population the Commission reported that—

‘The task before the Commission is to form a judgment on the basis of all the statistical evidence which is available, as to the extent to which the claimant States are faced with greater difficulties or greater disadvantages than are experienced in the non-claimant States. In this connection, it is, of course, evident that one of the non-claimant States, namely Queensland, suffers from “natural” factors in much the same way as the claimant States.’”

For obvious reasons we have refrained from applying. Apart from individuality and pride, we were able to govern the State successfully until the introduction of a system by which we did not get a fair share of tax collections. The interest payments by the States to the Commonwealth are something of importance and make very interesting reading. It is a pity that the public generally would not take the advantage of reading in “Hansard” just how this operates to the disadvantage of the States.

Under the headings of tax reimbursement grants, loan moneys and Commonwealth grants commission grants, we find that Tasmania for 1955-1956 received £38 8s. 2d. more than Queensland on a per capita basis. Western Australia received £24 16s. 5d., South Australia £22 6s. 10d., New South Wales £2 11s. 3d., and Victoria £2 9s. 10d. more than Queensland. That is a complete answer to the Government's claim that we are not getting fair treatment from the Commonwealth Government. The difference in the amounts granted to Queensland and Tasmania is greater than the amount actually received by Queensland, and if that is not a complete answer to the allegations of the Queensland Government about unfair treatment meted out by the Commonwealth, then I do not know what it is.

The Commonwealth is extracting some £218,000,000 of receipts per annum in excess of its revenue requirements and the amount granted to the States. What does this do? It enables the Commonwealth, with its surplus funds, to—

“1. Determine the State's loan borrowing programmes and consequent works programmes, in accordance with the amount of assistance it is prepared to render from surplus revenue;

“2. Finance its own works programme from surplus revenue, without interest or

sinking fund contribution and without limits which would apply under the provisions of the Financial Agreement;

“3. Lend surplus revenue to the States at full interest rates.”

I emphasise that last point. Some hon. members opposite have said during the course of the debate that this was not true. It cannot be disputed that money extracted from the citizens of Queensland by way of income tax not only goes to finance Commonwealth works programmes but it is farmed back to the States and they have to pay interest on it. Because they have been able to extract £218,000,000 more than is needed to meet their revenue requirements and the amount granted to the States they have been able to lend the surplus revenue to the States, their own money, at full interest rates—a very profitable undertaking. Is it any wonder they show a substantial surplus? It is one of the reasons why we end up with a deficit.

I have already mentioned that Queensland was the low-cost State and not the low-wage State and in confirmation of that statement the Treasurer said—

“The average of the ‘C’ Series Index for Queensland during 1955-56 was 2,264 or 3.2 per cent. above the average for the previous year, but the June quarter 1956, was 4.14 per cent. above the June quarter, 1955, due to the increases in the March and June quarters. The increase in the index for Queensland, since the year 1938-39, is lower than in any other State.”

Because of its effectiveness and efficiency the non-Labour Premier of South Australia paid a glowing tribute to Queensland's price control legislation.

From the primary schools to the University the education of Queensland's children has not been neglected but encouraged. It has been encouraged to the fullest extent possible with the money available. It is important that our technical education should be stepped up. In passing, I compliment the hon. member for Burdekin on his contribution to the subject. Because of that, I shall not enlarge on it. However, with the coming of automation, it is necessary that our apprentices should be given technical education to fit them for these new methods.

Attention is drawn here to our railway construction programme and the quadruplication and electrification of our suburban railways. Whatever else is delayed, I hope that the work of quadruplication and electrification of the line between Brisbane and Ipswich is not delayed. I make this plea on behalf of the members of the public who travel to and from their work each day on this line. I think it is impossible to run trains efficiently and on time all the time under existing conditions. Night after night scores of Ipswich people miss their connection with busses and have to walk two or more miles because of the late arrival of trains at the Ipswich station. The staff at the station cannot be blamed for that. In fact,

I do not know how the officials and workers at the station deal with all the traffic there as efficiently as they do. In spite of increases in the numbers of passengers and goods, we still have only one station to cope with the increased traffic. As a result, unnecessary inconvenience is caused to the travelling public, and it would be a shame if quadruplication and electrification were not proceeded with quickly. In my opinion, it is the only solution of the problem.

Work on the new workshops at Redbank appears to be progressing rapidly, and anyone travelling by train or road between Ipswich and Brisbane can see the progress that is being made. The completion of those workshops should relieve the present congestion in the Ipswich railway workshops.

I cannot let this opportunity pass without referring to the disadvantages of the States under the Federal Constitution. The unfair burden carried by the States because of the interpretation by the Privy Council of Section 92 makes it imperative that the constitution be reviewed. In the case relating to the nationalisation of banks, the Privy Council ruled that the Act was invalid because it restricted, not merely regulated, the trade of companies. A similar decision was given on Section 92 in the Transport case. Although that road transport legislation had operated for years, it was declared invalid because it restricted, not merely regulated, the operation of transport companies.

The hon. member for Cooroora pointed out very vigorously, conscientiously and convincingly in his speech on the Address in Reply the hardships suffered by local authorities because of this interpretation. He spoke not only as a Parliamentarian but as a prominent member of a local authority. He knows personally the effect of this ruling on local authorities. What local authorities are experiencing is nothing to what the State as a whole is experiencing and nothing to what local authorities in some of the other States are experiencing. To recapitulate his arguments would only be a waste of time. Coming from a member of the Opposition, an argument in favour of amending the Federal Constitution to give the States some protection against semi-trailers and lorries using our roads, travelling at excessive speeds, and tearing them up without contributing anything towards their upkeep, may carry more weight. I think it is sheer folly that our Constitution is such that these people are able to use the roads and no Government can extract one penny from them for the damage that they cause. The people who are complaining are in some cases aiding and abetting them.

This Government have been criticised again and again for not having built roads throughout the State. I point out that for the year 1956-1957 the expenditure on roads is expected to be over £1,000,000 greater than at £11,486,612 for last year, while advances to local authorities will probably increase by over £600,000 to £1,666,582.

Under the progressive policy pursued by this Government over the years much road work has been carried out. If we had not inaugurated a Main Roads Board we would have had thousands of miles of bad road whereas now we have excellent bitumen all-weather roads. It is due to the progressive and farsighted policy of the administrators of the Labour Government over the years that our roads are as good as they are.

A policy of port development has been followed which makes adequate provision not only for the present but for future expansion. A pool of dredging plant, established to attend to all maintenance work and new work as required, has been strengthened by the addition of three new diesel-powered hopper barges. I sincerely trust that the addition to our dredging plant will enable something to be done at the 17-Mile Rocks in the Brisbane River on the Brisbane side of Goodna. The Bremer River and the Brisbane River are not publicised or used sufficiently. The Brisbane and the Bremer Rivers provide a means for much transport, but until the obstruction at the 17-Mile Rocks is removed the transport will continue to be retarded. There is an increasing amount of traffic on the river. There are many coal barges from the collieries which are floating their whole output down the river to Brisbane, but it requires a certain tide to get over the obstruction at the 17-Mile Rocks. They have to wait there for a suitable tide for as long as it takes them to come from the colliery. Not only is coal transport handicapped but other commodities such as gravel and sand. I do hope that the addition to our dredging plant will enable something to be done in regard to the 17-Mile Rocks.

Our school children have been provided with the necessary school accommodation. Anyone who looks at our new school buildings must be impressed and pleased with the development in that direction.

Dealing with housing, provision has been made in the Estimates for a total expenditure under all schemes during 1956-1957 of £7,425,384 excluding £550,000 which will be advanced to building societies and approved institutions.

While I am not going to pretend that that is going to aid building in Queensland, because I am firmly of the belief that the money could be put to better advantage in providing more and better homes by the Queensland Housing Commission, I draw attention to the work of the building societies in Ipswich. Over the years those societies have done a splendid job. They are non-profit-making co-operative societies. Workmen band together to give their services free, their only objective being to provide homes. The money is made available at a low rate of interest and does not provide profits for officers or shareholders. These societies have built quite a number of homes in Ipswich and Rosewood and a few

in other districts. I should like to see those societies getting a very generous share in the allocation of this money, so that it will not be available to profit-seeking building societies.

In the few minutes left at my disposal I express again my pleasure at the success of the State Government Insurance Office and emphasise the value of this institution to the people of Queensland. We cannot find any instance of private enterprise retailing a commodity or service to the public at a rate cheaper than the rate for that commodity or service in 1917, but that has resulted from the putting into operation of one of the planks of the Australian Labour Party platform, the establishment of the State Government Insurance Office. The insurance that cost £1 per £100 in 1917 was reduced in one year because of the operations of the State Government Insurance Office to 13s. 4d. By 1925 it had dropped to 12s., by 1938 to 8s., and to-day the same amount of insurance coverage that cost £1 in 1917 costs 5s. 4d., despite the depreciation of the pound and the effects of the great inflationary trend. That is a monument to the people who pioneered the State Government Insurance Office in Queensland, the pioneers of the Labour movement, because they established this institution despite strenuous resistance from the Opposition. Let me read this record in respect of the State Government Insurance Office—

“The Life Department of the State Government Insurance Office again set new records for its operations during 1955-1956 when new business written totalled 9,897 policies assuring £8,983,251. The increase in the Life Fund of £1,473,860, to reach £14,487,857, is another record.

“During the year ended 30th June, 1956, the State Government Insurance Office made available to Local Authorities and other public bodies by way of debenture loans, the sum of £3,094,254. The total amount invested is £25,841,562, comprising £16,927,837 lent to Local Bodies and £8,913,725 invested in Commonwealth Government Inscribed Stock.”

That is another indication of the advantages enjoyed by the people of Queensland through the establishment of the State Government Insurance Office. It can truly be said that it is a wonderful asset.

The people who complain that this Government is miserable in its treatment of local authorities should direct their criticism in the right quarter. The Government have made available to local authorities free of interest tens of thousands of pounds to help them in the provision of essential services such as sewerage and water, while the Loan Council has reduced the borrowing programme of local authorities by £10,000,000.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. H. R. GARDNER** (Rockhampton) (12.10 p.m.): I take the opportunity of congratulating the Treasurer on the presentation of such a splendid Financial Statement.

It is a realistic approach to the problems that confront Queensland today. I do not think there are many in this Chamber who can feel altogether pleased with some of the statements by the Treasurer. He has presented a realistic view of the position in Queensland, and after reading his Statement hon. members must arrive at a certain conclusion. If we study the Statement closely we realise that there is something radically wrong in the allocation of money to the State. The time has arrived when a very serious view must be taken of the position, when something must be done to the Commonwealth Constitution so that the States of Australia may receive their just dues. It is true that Queensland under a Labour Government, has been very fortunate in having only two deficits in the last 18 years. When I heard an Opposition member interject so impertinently during the speech of the hon. member for Bremer I thought that if he had closely studied the financial relationship between the Commonwealth and the State he would not have interjected as he did. The very fact that we have only had two deficits in the last 18 years is a complete answer to him. It shows good management by a Labour Government.

The Financial Statement reveals that it is the intention of the Government to deal with the economy of the State. A close study of primary and secondary industries of the State shows that production still continues to soar, that the wealth of the State is at a high level.

Looking back over the political history of Queensland since the first Labour Government took office in 1915 it is staggering to read the opinions expressed by the Opposition when they told the people of Queensland, and Australia, for that matter, that a Labour Government in Queensland were doomed to failure. They said that it would be a calamity to elect Labour to the Treasury benches. We might say that they expressed those opinions in all seriousness, but if we study the economy of the State we come to the conclusion that our standard of living, the wages paid to employees and the conditions generally of the people are high. Queensland workers have a greater purchasing power than workers in other States. That itself is the answer to the pessimism expressed in 1915 and in subsequent years by the opponents of Labour.

**Mr. Chalk:** Things look dim in Rockhampton at the moment.

**Mr. H. R. GARDNER:** I shall deal with that later. The financial relations between the Commonwealth and the State are rather illuminating, particularly to me as one who has been a member of this Assembly for only a short time. At the time of Federation the Constitution provided that not more than one-quarter of customs and excise duties was to be retained for the Commonwealth, the balance to be returned to the States. The revenue for 1955-1956 from

customs and excise duties amounted to £255,771,344, but the amount paid to the States under the Financial Agreement was only £11,895,178 or a mere 4.6 per cent. Had the States been paid as was intended by Section 105A of the Commonwealth Constitution, they would have received £50,000,000. The Commonwealth Government have progressively increased their share from 25 per cent. to 95 per cent., whilst the States' proportion has progressively diminished from 75 per cent to less than 5 per cent.

In 1900 prior to Federation, Queensland's net revenue from customs and excise duties was equivalent to £2 17s. 1d. per head of population. In 1956, however, it was equal to only £1 4s. 1d. That makes us wonder whether we are facing up to the problem that confronts us. Surely no-one on the other side of the Chamber will assert that that is a correct distribution? I heard what the hon. member for Toowong had to say on the motion seeking amendments to the Commonwealth Constitution, and I agree with many of his remarks. He realises that amendments to the Commonwealth Constitution are badly needed to give the States a more equitable distribution of the available moneys. Take, for example, the income tax reimbursement grants. Despite increased costs and the increase in population, Queensland's grant has gradually decreased since 1952, as is revealed in the Treasurer's Financial Statement. In 1951-1952 our allocation was £33,576,954, whereas in 1955-1956 it was £15,347,739, a decrease on the previous year of £4,554,268. The percentage increase in wages and population over the previous year was 8.88 per cent., and if we had been treated on the same basis as in 1951-1952 our just allocation would have been £39,689,000.

There is no set formula for the allocation of income tax reimbursement grants. They are decided arbitrarily by the Commonwealth Government, which makes the problem all the more serious. The Commonwealth Government fail to recognise the requirements of a State such as Queensland, which has the greatest potential of any State in Australia and therefore needs the greatest development and the greatest help from the Commonwealth.

Strange to relate, with the exception of Queensland every State budgeted for a deficit this year. Queensland is using its reserve funds to avoid a deficit, but they will soon be expended. Contrast the deficits of all the States, which amounted to £16,400,000, with the Commonwealth's disclosed surplus of £61,613,000!

They showed that surplus after spending from Revenue £101.9 million on capital works and after redeeming from Revenue £3.2 million in War Savings Certificates. Note the gross injustice of the Commonwealth Government in using Revenue for capital expenditure while depriving the States of money and having the temerity to

charge them interest on money to which they are entitled under the legal formula of the Constitution.

I view seriously this statement by the Treasurer on tax reimbursement—

“In an endeavour to justify the adequacy of the Tax Reimbursement Grant for 1955-56 the Prime Minister said, *inter alia*, at the Premiers' Conference in June, 1955—

‘The three States of South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania enjoy the benevolent operations or, as they might prefer to say, the just operations of the Commonwealth Grants Commission, and in the result their budgetary problems—if I may say so to them—are not very difficult in the normal way as compared with those of the other States.’

“The Commonwealth Grants Commission is the development of a further form of federal grants emanating from the provision in the Constitution designed to deal with disabilities of States under federation. Such special grants are made to Western Australia, Tasmania and South Australia. The Commission, which was established in 1933, has expressed the fundamental principle developed by it as—

‘Special grants are justified when a State through financial stress from any cause is unable efficiently to discharge its functions as a member of the Federation, and should be determined by the amount of help found necessary to make it possible for that State, by reasonable effort, to function as a standard not appreciably below that of other States.’

“To date Queensland has refrained from applying for a grant although its conditions are, in many ways, similar to those of the claimant States. This is apparently recognised by the Commonwealth Grants Commission as when the claimant States sought to include factors such as sparsity of population the Commission reported that—

‘The task before the Commission is to form a judgment on the basis of all the statistical evidence which is available, as to the extent to which the claimant States are faced with greater difficulties or greater disadvantages than are experienced in the non-claimant States. In this connection, it is, of course, evident that one of the non-claimant States, namely Queensland, suffers from “natural” factors in much the same way as the claimant States.’

Statements by the Treasurer published in the Press since the Financial Statement was presented, show the seriousness of the position. It should not be treated lightly.

**Mr. Chalk** interjected.

**Mr. H. R. GARDNER:** I will deal with the railways and I shall tell the hon. member where he gets on and where he gets off, too.

Queensland, with 14.6 per cent. of the nation's population contributed 20.2 per cent. of Australia's exports during 1954-1955. Queensland has a great potential. When I read what appeared in "The Telegraph" on 21 September, 1956, my interjector might find out from them how they are going to solve the railway problem. The article said—

"The State Treasurer (Mr. Walsh) prepared a forceful argument in this year's State Budget.

"He said Queensland, with 1,372,000 people, or 14.6 per cent. of the nation's population, contributed 20.2 per cent. of Australia's exports during 1954-1955.

"Queensland, therefore, is earning a large and vital portion of Australia's export income. Continued development of this export potential is essential to the Commonwealth's economic future.

"There must be no niggardly financial treatment of Queensland by the Federal money-holders. The rest of Australia has a vital stake in our development."

That did not come from the Labour Party, but it is very true. The point I make is contained in the last paragraph—the Federal money-holders must not be niggardly in their financial treatment of Queensland; the rest of Australia has a vital stake in our development.

Queensland's exports of beef, butter, sugar, wool, and silver lead totalled £128.8 million in 1954-1955, or 83 per cent. of the State's exports. It also represented 16.8 per cent. of Australia's total exports.

There is something radically wrong with financial disbursements when we consider this phase of our economy. Why should money be loaned back to the States at interest rates, money that we are justly entitled to under the Constitution? Why should local authorities be in the same boat in having to pay interest on money to which they are justly entitled? Their capacity to pay must eventually reach saturation point. No Treasurer can be expected to pass money on to local authorities if he has not got it. There must be some constitutional change to overcome the difficulty.

The Commonwealth Government collected £218,000,000 in excess of their revenue requirements and the amount allocated to States. No member of the Opposition can refute those figures. We admit that the Commonwealth Government have great difficulties and problems but can any hon. member opposite justify what has happened—extracting £218,000,000 in excess of revenue requirements and the amount allotted to the States? In 1949, under the Chifley Labour Government, taxation amounted to £504,000,000, and remember the cry from the Opposition parties. This year, in a period of peace, Sir Arthur Fadden, is budgeting for twice that amount. Judging from the remarks of hon. members opposite we are to sit down and, as Queenslanders, say we are quite satisfied to allow it to continue without objection or even

expressing any view. I want to express my view. I think that alterations to the financial agreement are necessary; a new formula is necessary.

If we do not act in this Parliament and in the other State Parliaments of Australia, the States will ultimately be mere vassals, begging for meagre handouts to carry on. The development of this State must continue. Just as you develop your property by spending money on it and by ploughing profits back into your business, so you must develop a State by spending money. We have to get money from the Commonwealth Government. If we are not getting a fair deal, it is our responsibility to say so, and to say so unanimously, I suggest. If we hide our light under a bushel and say it is sound that the Commonwealth should get £218,000,000 from the people without returning some of it to the States, we are not doing our job. I hope that an early attempt will be made to deal with these problems.

The people of Australia have been sadly neglected. They have been gulled and misled for a long time by statements by the Menzies-Fadden Government. I offer no apology for my comments and criticism when I say that only recently an attempt was made to prove to the people of Australia by collating information and bringing representatives of the States together that they were seriously tackling the problem of improving the economic standard by adjusting the cost of living. Not many sincere Australians would deep down in their hearts believe that the mere pegging of wages would end the spiral of inflation. The Menzies-Fadden Government have had golden opportunities of learning—if they really want to deal with this problem—that they cannot do it by dealing with only one factor. They must deal with it in a comprehensive way. They must deal with wages and all things pertaining to wages. They must deal with profits, and they must control prices. Having got to the root of the trouble, basic wage and cost-of-living adjustments will soon decrease.

Where are we going? Nobody in this Parliament is happy about the economic position, because we know that only disaster can result from our present approach to the problem. Just to remind those people who are so critical of the Labour movement and who say that the Labour Party and Labour Governments have failed in their mission, let us look at a country on the other side of the world that is not administered by a Labour Government. In "The Sunday Mail" of 30 September an article appeared under the heading "Dwindling dollar is big worry to Ike." I refer particularly to this portion of it—

"Stastics can be boring, but not these prices: Butter, 6s. 8d. a lb.; eggs, 7s. 7½d. a dozen; sugar, 10d. a lb.; coffee, 8s. 9d. a lb. and more; roast beef, 9s. 6d. a lb.; chicken, 4s. 4½d. a lb.; tea, 7s. 2d. a lb.;

beef steaks, 13s. a lb.; leg of lamb, 6s. 8d. a lb.; ham, 5s. 7d. a lb.; bacon, 5s. 3d. a lb.; pork chops, 7s. 11d. a lb."

**Mr. Chalk:** Relate them to wages.

**Mr. H. R. GARDNER:** Those prices have been brought about in America not by Labour administration but by a class of people similar to that represented by hon. members opposite. That is the answer to it. We should make a determined effort to try and arrest this downward trend because if we do not solve the problem we will get down to the basic state. The hon. member for Bremer referred to port development and the hon. member for Burdekin mentioned it the other day. I think the time is opportune to say something about it and its effect on secondary industries. In 1952 Senator McLeay and Mr. Casey came to Rockhampton and both said in statements published throughout the Press of Queensland that they were very interested in port development and that there was a large fund available for the purpose.

**Mr. Walsh:** Nobody has ever been able to find it.

**Mr. H. R. GARDNER:** That is true. At Rockhampton Mr. John Ross, Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, convened a meeting of all organisations in that city in 1952 to consider the proposal of a road to Port Alma and for port development. All organisations unanimously supported a proposal that we approach the Federal Government for a grant of £125,000. This was done and to our amazement the application was rejected, much to the dismay of local enthusiasts. Later on an effort was made to obtain assistance to build a road to Port Alma, which is a very sound proposition. Despite the fact the Menzies-Fadden Government gave £241,000 as a special grant for an improved road to the Callide coalfield, our application was rejected. We do not object because of what they did for Gladstone; we only asked for the same fair and equitable treatment. We asked the State Government to approach the Federal Government, but the Federal Government will not play ball. The Premier has promised that when funds are available he will give serious consideration to this matter. (Opposition interjections.) Hon. members opposite do not know their own policy. When the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha and the Leader of the Opposition came to Rockhampton they supported the proposal in their pamphlets. The hon. member for Port Curtis can speak for himself. The construction of this road is very important for port development. After all, we in Central Queensland are entitled to some consideration in the matter of port development. The road would be a great advantage to Central Queensland. There are no engineering problems and it could be constructed if finance was available. Whether the people accept it or not, it is essential to the development of secondary industries. Just as no tourist would go to an island resort

unless he knew that accommodation and facilities were available, private enterprise will not establish industries in an area unless the facilities are adequate. That has always been the argument against Rockhampton, that it has not a suitable exit. The position can be compared with that at Launceston, where there is a bitumen road 38 miles long from Beauty Point to the loading centre.

Despite their promises, the Federal Government referred the scheme back to the local organisation and it in turn made representations to the State Government. While I am in this Chamber I shall bring this to the notice of the Minister in the hope that we can get similar assistance to that given to other parts of Queensland. I know it is not easy, in view of the financial position, but at some time in the future the Federal Government may be more lenient and view this scheme with favour. They should give this assistance for the development of ports such as Rockhampton and Bowen. This Government stand for decentralisation, and the development of secondary industries throughout the State is essential to the proper development of Queensland. There is a little industry now on the railway line at Port Alma, extracting salt. At present we buy 75 per cent. of this commodity outside Queensland. This industry has bright prospects; it could be linked with a chemical industry.

**Mr. Coburn:** Salt is being produced at Bowen today.

**Mr. H. R. GARDNER:** That is true.

If an access road was built, we could export and utilise a larger amount of pyrites now being produced at Mt. Morgan for the manufacture of fertiliser. Private enterprise must play an important part in development. I am trying to instil into the minds of the people I represent that private enterprise should avail itself of the secondary industries assistance provided by this Government. We do not want development in Central Queensland to be neglected merely because a road may cost £400,000. The public, and private enterprise, have to face up to the difficulties. At Port Alma there is no difficulty about a swinging basin or adequate depth of water. There is 28 feet of water at the wharf and the swinging basin is adequate. Dredging would not be necessary.

The hon. member for Burdekin spoke about the chilled beef trade and the export of meat from Bowen. The meat industry is a very important one to Central Queensland. It provides employment for many people. Last year harbour dues at Port Alma amounted to £40,900, excluding the river trade.

A long range policy must be adopted in regard to the railways of this State. Hon. members opposite continually cry, "Why don't you make the railways pay?" I ask them whether that is fair and reasonable when we find that 130,284 bales of wool were railed through Rockhampton and Gladstone to Brisbane. If correct values were paid on

the railways, they would pay. Hon. members opposite want all the concessions and at the same time talk about railway mismanagement.

**Mr. Chalk:** Do not talk about wool.

**Mr. H. R. GARDNER:** The hon. member has his hands full and so have I.

**Mr. Walsh:** Why cannot they have wool sales in Rockhampton?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. H. R. GARDNER:** I strongly urge an improvement in the port problem. I know it is not an easy one from the financial viewpoint. Surely the Commonwealth Government can offer the State some portion of the £218,000,000 that they take from the States under the Constitution. They should give Queensland more money so that it can in turn give more to districts like Rockhampton to enable ports to be developed.

**Mr. Coburn:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. H. R. GARDNER:** Opposition members do not understand the financial position of the railways. Credit must be given for concessions. Cash balances are not the only things to be considered in the development of a State. The department is in a period of transition from the old steam locomotive to dieselisation. Possibly in 10 years' time, because of the vigorous policy of the Minister for Transport the true position will be revealed. Capital is not the only determining factor. The State will not be able to do without the railways despite competition by air service and modern motor transportation. People should get down to basic facts before criticising a department that is doing such a good job in the interests of Queensland. Our political opponents have been most critical of increases in rail fares and freights and we hear the criticism from day to day. They say that the increases will crucify the primary producer. But what about the ordinary man who travels on the railways? Increases in rail freights and fares alone will not solve the economic problem of the railways, but some attempt has to be made.

**Mr. Chalk:** You are offside now.

**Mr. H. R. GARDNER:** I am not offside. It is the hon. member for Lockyer who is offside. He refuses to acknowledge the benefits the State gets from the Railway Department.

I hope that the new Rockhampton railway station, which was promised in 1952, will be built in the near future. I know that when funds are available my representations will receive sympathetic consideration from the Minister for Transport. The new railway workshops at Rockhampton are another important job. The amount originally allocated for this financial year was £81,000, but following the Federal Government's

action it has been reduced to £8,000. That is not very good news for any Central Queenslander.

Before I complete my term in this Parliament, I hope that it will be possible to travel from Rockhampton to Brisbane in an air-conditioned train.

I shall deal now with regional electricity development, which again gives us an opportunity of replying to our critics. The legislation that introduced the regional electricity development scheme over 10 years ago was severely criticised, but let us analyse its results. Electricity reticulation has spread to many rural areas and country towns, resulting in a marked improvement in living conditions and the establishment of more industries. In 1955-1956 regional electricity boards were subsidised to the extent of £1,400,000, the total subsidies granted since 1946 being £5,000,000. The subsidies have been the backbone of the scheme. The total amount expended so far in the development of electricity has been £78,000,000, the expenditure for 1955-1956 being £13,500,000.

Public undertakings have had to keep pace with the development of the State, and private companies and local authorities that were previously responsible for generating electricity supplies have had to make way for the new era. In 1955-1956 work in progress and planned by public undertakings was estimated to cost £68,500,000. It is expected that the Tully Falls hydro-electric project will begin to supply electricity next year.

When the Capricornia Regional Electricity Board's new powerhouse was opened in 1952, the demand for electricity in that area increased immediately. It has continued to increase, and is now 300 per cent. greater than it was 10 years ago. In addition, the unit output has increased by 450 per cent. and coal consumption by 300 per cent. The number of consumers has increased from 10,000 to 20,000, and the revenue from £200,000 to £800,000 a year. In the area are 1,200 route miles of high-voltage and low-tension lines.

Regional board tariffs are often criticised. An analysis of charges for domestic units by the Cairns, Townsville, Capricornia and Wide Bay Boards and by the Southern Electric Authority shows that they are fair and reasonable. The base rates are—

	Per unit. d.
Cairns City and Mulgrave Shire	9.8
Townsville .. .. .	12.5
Capricornia .. .. .	9.75
Wide Bay .. .. .	11.5
Southern Electric Authority ..	9.5

The ratio is preserved right through industrial power, commercial lighting and farm use, with slight increases in some areas.



The following comparison of charges for industrial power, for 50,000 units a month, shows the value of regional electricity development:—

	£	s.	d.
Cairns .. ..	404	3	4
Townsville .. ..	428	2	6
Capricornia .. ..	389	6	6
Wide Bay .. ..	440	12	6
Southern Electric Authority .. ..	394	10	6
Sydney County Council	651	16	6

It has meant more employment for Rockhampton and it has given an impetus to coal-mining. Power is generated at Rockhampton for Mt. Morgan Ltd., the gold-mining company 24 miles away, C.Q.M.E. meatworks, Swift's at Gladstone, Port Curtis Co-operative Dairy Association Ltd., Gladstone and Rockhampton, Rockhampton City Council Waterworks and the Railway Department—all because of the foresight of the Labour Government who twelve years ago embarked on the scheme despite severe criticism from hon. members opposite.

**Mr. PLUNKETT** (Darlington) (2.15 p.m.): I did not intend to say very much but I was reminded by the hon. member for Rockhampton of all the disabilities in his area. Everything seems to be wrong up there. It seemed to me to be a rather extraordinary condemnation of his own Government.

**Mr. Walsh:** He acknowledged the powerhouse and the beautiful new public building.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** All hon. members on the Government side are blaming the Commonwealth Government but look at the cuts in expenditure the Queensland Government are making. It is remarkable that there should be so many disabilities round Rockhampton seeing that we have had a member of the Labour Government and a Minister of the Crown representing the area for donkey's years. Despite that, the hon. member for Rockhampton speaks of disabilities and it would seem that the Labour Government—

**A Government Member:** Made a mess of everything!

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** I did not say that. He sang his swan song about all the disabilities, and he blamed the Commonwealth Government. That is a weakness of Labour—they blame the other fellow for everything but never blame themselves for anything. The Commonwealth Government are not the only Government that err in matters that affect the financial position of Australia. The Treasurer's Budget discloses a deficit, as do budgets in many of the other States. It is remarkable that hon. members on the Government side always want to congratulate the Treasurer on his Budget. When he shows a deficit he does not deserve any congratulations at all. It must be Labour's policy to congratulate him. I do not know what they would do if there had been a surplus.

**Mr. Walsh:** I think you have received more than your share of loan money in your area.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** It surprises me to know that we are getting any.

I am very interested in some parts of the Treasurer's Statement and there are one or two parts that I agree with. He said—

“One of Australia's principal economic problems is still to achieve a favourable overseas trade balance without the necessity of drastic import restrictions. This can be attained by a substantial increase in the total value of exports by greater volume, higher prices, or a combination of both.”

We all agree on that, but the Treasurer and his Government are doing their best to destroy the increased production for export. After all, our exports come from production from the land and I draw attention to land valuations which apply to only about 5 or 5½ per cent. of the State. The Treasurer suggested that one means of eliminating the deficit was by imposing further taxation and increased land tax.

**Mr. Walsh:** Who said that?

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** It was reported in the paper that the hon. gentleman said it.

**Mr. Walsh:** No.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** I read it, and I took it to heart, too. I agree that more capital is required for export industries and for public works to assist export production. How can that be achieved when the Government fix prices below cost of production? How can producers be expected to increase their exports when prices are kept so low?

**Mr. Power:** Name one of the products.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** Milk.

**Mr. Power:** A survey up to date discloses that an increase is not warranted.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** I will give the Attorney-General some figures.

**Mr. Power:** Give them to the Prices Commissioner; he will be happy to have them.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** It is easier for me to give them to the Attorney-General.

**Mr. Power:** If you give them to me, I will give them to the Commissioner.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** I know an inquiry into the cost of producing milk is going on, and I do not wish to say anything that might influence the inquiry. I shall have something to say about it later.

The Treasurer said that the State Government have always been willing to co-operate with other States in assisting the Commonwealth. He did not say that the Government were ready to co-operate with the Commonwealth Government. I do not see how he

could say that. Government members condemn the Commonwealth Government so much that I do not see how they can associate with them at all. Although the Treasurer says the State Government are prepared to co-operate with the other State Governments, it appears to me that he means they are prepared to gang up with the other States against the Commonwealth Government. That will be of no benefit to the country. Unless State governments get down to a reasonable approach instead of playing politics, the country will suffer.

The Government are asking producers to increase the volume of exports, but they are not assisting them to do it. We all know that the more tax a person pays, the less he has to spend. When other people spend your money for you, they are inclined to be a bit extravagant with it. Not only governments but local authorities are extravagant with other people's money, and very often they do not get value for it. In 1938 taxes took 18 per cent. of all income; in 1954-1955 it had increased to 27 per cent. No attempt is made by governments or local authorities to spend money economically. I know many demands are made on governments and local authorities for all sorts of things. Governments and councils are inclined to overspend; that is why we have either to increase taxation or do without something. During my lifetime there were many things that I wanted that I had to do without because I could not afford them, and I do not think I am any worse off on that account. In 1938-1939 taxation was £52 per capita and in 1954-1955 it was £119. In 1938-1939 direct taxation was £18 and in 1954-1955 it was £62. Secondary industries have shown great progress. Australia is a great primary-producing country, but in some instances primary production is declining and secondary industries are increasing. We like to see secondary industries increasing, but if we sacrifice primary production to further their development we will find in 10 or 20 years' time that there will be great difficulty in providing food for our increased population.

**Mr. Walsh:** You make a general statement but you do not instance where we have fixed the price below cost.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** I am coming to that. Does the hon. gentleman want me to give it to him in writing.

Land tax affects primary production to a great extent. The new land valuations had the object of bringing about uniform taxation on unimproved value, but after eight or 10 years the anomalies still exist. The Treasurer is getting more money from land tax now, and it appears as though that was the purpose of the legislation. Under the new valuations he gets more money than the local authorities got to build roads and bridges and do other work. In 1950 the new valuations increased from 100 to 200 per cent. over the local authority valuations. In 1949 the unimproved value of my property was fixed at £1,652.

Rates were £88 13s. and land tax £18 13s. 4d. The new valuation fixed the unimproved value at £3,140, which, on appeal, was reduced by £240, making it £2,900. The shire rates were fixed at £159 and land tax at £85. In 1955 the valuation was increased to £5,796, an increase of nearly 100 per cent. Although I appealed, I did not get a reduction in the valuation. In the meantime the shire rates were increased to £217 and land tax to £106 and in respect of that farm next year the shire rates will be £270, an expenditure over which I have no control. There is provision for valuation every five years. I understand that is the reason given for the valuation twice of 26 local authorities, once of 51 local authorities and no valuation at all of 57 local authorities. I appealed and appeared before a representative of the department. I mentioned that my property had been valued previously at £3,140 and that on appeal it was reduced by £240. I asked what had happened in the five years to double the value of the property, when the produce of the property was being sold at a lower price.

**Mr. Walsh:** It appears that they should have made your new valuation retrospective for 10 years because you have been getting away with too much.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** If anybody can get away with anything while the Treasurer is here, he will be very clever. I am a farmer and I know the difficulties of farmers. They do not know what valuations are going to be placed on their properties in 1960. To date valuations have been almost doubled. Now that the Premier has arrived in the Chamber I appeal to him to see that the Treasurer does not take money from farmers who cannot afford to pay this tax. We have not the slightest idea what the valuations will be like next year or what the local authorities will do.

**Mr. Walsh:** Do you realise that on primary production last year of £241,250,000 less than £600,000 was paid in land tax, or about .24 per cent. of the total value?

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** I am dealing with land tax. I shall deal later with succession and probate duties. I ask the Treasurer not to anticipate my speech. These taxes are being levied and some of them paid during flush seasons, but I ask the Treasurer to consider what will happen if we experience drought or floods?

**Mr. Gaven:** There is a drought now.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** Yes, or three-day sickness and that sort of thing. How are we going to pay these taxes? I say that most farmers will not be able to pay. If there is another increase in valuation the farmers will be financially embarrassed and this will interfere with production. If the Government are sincere in their statement that they want increased production for export, there is only one way to get it and that is to formulate

a different basis. Today, even if the land produces nothing, land tax has to be paid. The tax is sectional and wrong. The Federal Government in their wisdom abolished land tax in order to achieve increased production, but this Government have increased it, and there is no guarantee against a further increase.

There is another unfair aspect of valuations. The Government insist that an appeal by a person whose property is valued at more than £3,000 must be to the Supreme Court. It is not fair. Some members of the Government party have an idea of what it costs to appeal to the Supreme Court. Very few farmers can afford that. Why not let things be as they were in the early days. After all it is only a question of the difference between one person's opinion and the valuer's as to the value of the land. Surely Magistrates Courts could be held in the areas where appeals arise; those courts should be able to settle questions on evidence before them. The fact that people have to appeal to the Supreme Court of Queensland prevents appeals.

**Mr. Foley:** What type of farmer are you talking about?

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** The ordinary farmer. Some of them might have irrigation.

**Mr. Foley:** What income?

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** Generally speaking, the farms I am speaking of would not be returning more than £3,000 a year.

**Mr. Foley:** Would not the great majority of small farmers be exempt?

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** Not with increased valuations. I really hope the Government will have another look at this question of forcing people to the Supreme Court. It is getting beyond their limits. What is wrong with appeals to a Magistrates Court? These courts deal with more serious cases than differences of opinion as to land valuation.

**Mr. Hilton:** If the valuation is under £3,000 they can go to the Magistrates Court.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** Yes, but the hon. gentleman would be surprised if he saw the number over £3,000.

**Mr. Hilton:** Very few.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** A few be hanged.

**Mr. Graham:** What is the objection to the Supreme Court?

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** I am asking, in all seriousness, that these people be allowed to appeal to the Magistrates Court.

**Mr. Graham:** They have a right of appeal.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** Why force them to the Supreme Court?

**Mr. Graham:** Only the wealthy ones.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** If the Government will not be fair and do what I suggest, they are preventing farmers from having their land values adjusted. If the Government say that their valuations are all right and can produce evidence in court to substantiate them, what are they afraid of?

**Mr. Graham:** Why don't they appeal if they think their valuations are wrong?

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** When all is said and done land tax is only applicable to 5½ per cent. of the land in Queensland. Much of the land has not been valued. I have mentioned that 51 local authority areas have been valued only once and 57 not at all—

**Mr. Hilton:** Mainly in the West.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** But there must be freehold land somewhere. Now that the Minister has raised the question—

**Mr. Graham:** You raised it.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** Well, I raised it by saying that of the 5½ per cent. of the land to which land tax is applicable, much of it is in the towns and cities—some in the country.

**Mr. Walsh:** The whole of the 5½ per cent. would not be subject to land tax.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** Some of it would be. That is no reason why the Government should make others pay more than their just dues, but that is just what they are doing. The farmer is quite different from the business man in the city, who can absorb land tax in his overhead expenses. The farmer has to get back from his soil every penny that he pays out. It is much easier to add land tax to overhead expenses than to get it from the soil.

**Mr. Hilton:** The New South Wales farms adjoining Queensland farms in your electorate are valued twice as high as those in Queensland.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** The New South Wales farmers can afford it. They get 4s. 2d. a gallon for their milk, whereas Queensland dairy farmers get only 3s. 1d. for six months and 3s. 4d. for the other six months. If I got 4s. 2d. a gallon for my milk I would not be growling as much as I am.

**Mr. Hilton:** But you are saying that your valuations are too high.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** There is no comparison between the Queensland farmer and the one in New South Wales. The New South Wales Government, although Labour, help the producers much more than do this Government. For example, they paid out £190,000 for the destruction of diseased stock, whereas this Government paid virtually nothing.

**Mr. Hilton:** You will admit that valuations in New South Wales are twice as high as in Queensland?

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** I cannot admit that, because I do not know. However, I do know that farmers in New South Wales get more out of dairying than we do.

Life on a farm is altogether different from that in a city. Farmers do not enjoy a 40-hour week, nor do they ever get a free week-end. Wet or dry, they work 60 or 70 hours a week and seven days a week. The Government want them to produce more to build up the nation's exports, but how can they produce more when the Government puts absurd taxes on their lands? They also tax their stock and everything they do. The small farmers in Queensland are penalised to a greater extent than any other section of the community, although they work harder and longer. You will see a light in any farm house at 4 o'clock in the morning.

**Mr. Power:** You will also see a light in any tramway man's or railway man's home at 4 o'clock in the morning.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** That may be so, but those people do not work 60 or 70 hours a week, nor do they have to trust to Providence for a return from the soil. The farmer has to take all the risks in the world.

**Mr. Power:** Not all the risks.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** He takes more risks than anybody else and gets less for it. Moreover, he gets less sympathy from the Government than anyone else.

**Mr. Graham:** As a Government we are more sympathetic to the farmers than anyone else.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** What sort of farm has the hon. member for Mackay? The Government farm the farmers. If the farmers did not work 60 hours and more a week the workers would not be enjoying a 40-hour week.

I ask the Treasurer if he thinks it fair that 26 local authorities should be valued twice, and their valuations increased, while 57 have not been valued at all.

**Mr. Walsh:** You mean 26 local authorities have been valued a second time by the Valuer-General?

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** Twenty-six have been valued twice; 51 have been valued once, and 57 not at all.

**Mr. Walsh:** They put their own valuers on. The Act provides that the land shall be valued every five years.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** If it is impossible for the Valuer-General, through shortage of valuers or any other reason, to value the whole of the State after all these years, those who have been valued should stay put.

**Mr. Walsh:** They are valuing their own lands.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** Who?

**Mr. Walsh:** The local authority appoints its own valuer.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** Where?

**Mr. Walsh:** Anywhere in Queensland.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** Anywhere the Government valuer has not been?

**Mr. Walsh:** Yes.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** Is that why they are let go? Why should the valuation of land in one section be increased while others are not valued at all?

**Mr. Hilton:** So that reductions can be made where they are warranted.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** It is not equitable. Those that have been valued should be left alone until all are valued. Will the Treasurer see what that is done?

**Mr. Walsh:** The local authorities would be in a lovely mess then.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** No, they would not. They would merely charge the same rate.

**Mr. Walsh:** You do not realise that the local authorities are getting the main benefit from these valuations.

**Mr. Low:** Not on your life!

**Mr. Walsh:** Of course they are.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** I can give the hon. gentleman some figures on that. The annual report of the Commissioner of Land Tax, Mr. Deacon, shows that during 1955-1956, 23,690 people paid land tax and the Government collected £1,370,580 from them. The councils did not get that money. There were 3,688 more taxpayers in 1955-1956 than in the previous year and the increase in amount of tax collected was £95,158. I think the collection of tax should be reviewed because it costs £6 10s. to collect every £100 and doubtless most assessments are paid by cheque or money order.

**Mr. Walsh:** What was the total amount of land tax paid by the dairying industry last year?

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** I do not know.

**Mr. Walsh:** I will tell you. It was £22,101 and the value of production was £36,715,000.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** The Minister has not told us why they should pay any.

Land valuation works other injustices. If my land is valued at higher than its real value I am prevented from appealing because I cannot afford to go to the Supreme Court. Injustice is worked, too, on the man who has to pay succession and probate duties.

It is an injustice when people pay gift duty. There are three injustices. If this continues it will mean a depreciation in the value of land. There will be no enthusiasm or incentive to the farmer to work his land and maintain the desired volume for export.

**Mr. Foley:** Sales of land in various districts would be a factor in high values.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** It has created alarm amongst farmers. It is like appealing from Caesar to Caesar. The only appeal is to the Valuer-General and in 99 cases out of 100 he does what the Treasurer does—he sticks to his officers. Very few get any reduction at all.

**Mr. Walsh:** If you read the figures I have put on record you would be ashamed of yourself for making such a speech.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** I am not ashamed of myself. I have never been more serious in my life because I can see the damage that will be done to Queensland's production.

Land valuation affects land tax, succession and probate duty and gift duty. In 1955-1956 land tax amounted to £1,386,451, succession and probate duties £2,947,743, gift duties £183,739, a total of £4,517,933. The Treasurer would have to put up some figures to contradict that! The land owners have to pay on the basis of the valuations. Quite a number of them feel that they are frustrated in their appeals and they do not know where they are going.

To encourage the prompt payment of rates local authorities grant a discount of 10 per cent. With one council the arrears in 1955 were £3,625; in 1956, a good season, £6,718 5s. 6d. Nobody can tell me that any farmer would hesitate to pay promptly when he has the chance of gaining something, unless he is financially embarrassed. In another shire the arrears in 1955 were £2,600 and in 1956, £5,840. Some people think that farmers are rolling in wealth, that they should be subject to taxation and should sell their product below cost, but the figures indicate the position they are in. That is why I am trying to create more interest in land valuations. The Government should take another look at what is likely to happen. Nobody knows how much valuations will go up at the end of the next five-year period.

I shall have little to say about milk. As I said before, producers are being asked to sell milk below cost! Take the figures for my own farm, to ensure that they are accurate. I have a farm 8 miles from the factory. It is on a bitumen road, and the cost of transporting the milk from the farm to the factory, chilling, grading and testing it at the factory, and transporting it from there to Brisbane is 5d. a gallon. Factory charges are regulated by distance, as we know, and milk comes to

the factory from farms 24 miles away. Those farmers would be paying a good deal more than 5d. a gallon. The producer has to meet all costs. If he does not receive a reasonable return for his product, how can he keep going? How can he pay land tax? How can he pay shire rates? Never have producers been in such a difficult position as they are today, and I say that quite seriously.

**Mr. Foley:** In your own case, you are getting a living out of it as well as the man who is working the property. Two of you are getting a cut out of the farm.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** The hon. member ought to know how difficult it is. He has a farm at Kuraby.

**Mr. Foley:** All the returns go to the one person. In your case, they go to yourself and the other man.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** I have a share-farmer on that farm. There are 100 cows on it, I supply the tractors, the house and everything else, and I give him £1 for rearing calves to six months. He received £2,141 as his share for the year and I received £1,741. After I had paid for the upkeep of the machinery, how much did I have? I took the responsibility for all the calves and all the cattle that died. The share-farmer received more money than I did and was better off than I was. I think I will go out and run the farm myself. I might do that if I did not think the Government would come along and tax me. I thought I owned this farm at one time; I find now that I do not.

Exemptions for land tax were increased in 1951 and 1952 as follows—

General exemption . . . £300 to £700  
(equal to 133 per cent).

Land used for agricultural, dairying and grazing purposes £1,500 to £1,900  
(equal to 27 per cent).

In the case of land in towns and cities, the increase in the exemption was about equal to the increase in valuations, that is, 133 per cent. and 135 per cent. respectively. In the case of lands used mainly for agricultural purposes, the increase in the exemption was only 27 per cent. compared with an increase of about 154 per cent. in first valuations.

The result of this lopsided and unfair treatment of primary producers is disclosed in the startling contrast by the following figures taken from the reports of the Commissioner of Land Tax:—

	1951-1952.	1952-1953.	1953-1954.	1954-1955.	1955-1956.
Number of Taxpayers—					
Town lands .. .. .	9,661	9,809	9,762	10,754	12,658
Country lands .. .. .	5,778	6,330	7,964	9,248	11,032

From 1951-1952 to 1955-1956 the number of taxpayers increased by 2,997 in town lands, an increase of 13 per cent., and for country lands 5,254 or 90.9 per cent. The tax

assessed increased for town lands £98,619 or 14.5 per cent. and for country lands £340,107, or 136.4 per cent. Anyone can see the way we are heading, yet much is said about the

desirability of settling people on the land. There is no doubt if this continues the Government will "settle" those who are on the land. The proportion of tax is as set out in the following table:—

	1951-1952.	1955-1956.
	Per cent.	Per cent.
Town lands	73.2	57
Country lands	26.8	43

I am very concerned about the position. The other day I was discussing the matter of pastures with another farmer and I said to him, "Are you going to put any in?" He said, "No, because if you do when the valuer comes down he puts up your value." It is important that that state of affairs should be remedied. Nobody can tell whether in five years he will not have to pay 100 per cent. more.

**Mr. Walsh:** Did you hear of the potato farmer who made £100,000 this year in the Lockyer and set aside £45,000 for taxation?

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** I bet the Treasurer takes something out of that.

**Mr. Walsh:** Sir Arthur Fadden will get that £45,000.

**Mr. PLUNKETT:** I ask the Treasurer to take my remarks seriously. I am concerned at the valuing twice of some local authorities, once of other local authorities and no valuation at all of 57 local authorities. As the Act says that land must be valued every five years, I suggest to the Government, if they want to be fair, that until all local authorities are valued once they should suspend the valuations in local authorities that have been valued twice.

**Mr. ADAIR (Cook) (3.6 p.m.):** I join with Government members in congratulating the Treasurer on the excellent administration of his department and his sound handling of the finances of this State. The electors of Queensland can rest assured that the State's finances are in capable hands and that progress will continue throughout the State. Since my election to Parliament over three years ago, I have travelled fairly extensively in the electorates surrounding Brisbane and western areas. In all those places I saw progress and development. I noticed progress and development in the electorates represented by Opposition members. Opposition members cannot complain about the treatment of their electorates by the Government.

The Financial Statement proves conclusively that Queensland is getting a raw deal from the Federal Government. The Burdekin bridge is one instance that proves that contention. This Government have not received any assistance from the Federal Government to build that bridge.

**Mr. Pizzey:** Have the Government no responsibilities at all?

**Mr. Gair:** It has great defence value.

**Mr. ADAIR:** The cost of the erection of the Burdekin Bridge should have been the responsibility of the Federal Government. If ever a defence measure was warranted, it is the erection of the Burdekin Bridge. Those of us who lived in Cairns and the Far North during the last war know that thousands of tons of ammunition and military equipment were transported over this line due to the efficiency of the railways and railway employees. That effort helped us to win World War II.

The Commonwealth Government have been niggardly in regard to development of the North. By way of contrast they provide millions of pounds for developmental works in other States, such as the Snowy River scheme. Large developmental projects are being undertaken by this Government in North Queensland, despite the remarks of Opposition members about neglect of the North. In the area in which I live one can travel by car for 500 miles without getting off bitumen roads. That indicates that the Government are looking after the interests of the people of the North. Everyone knows the vast wealth that will be derived upon the fulfilment of the Burdekin scheme. Very few of the Opposition have ever seen the Tinaroo Falls dam scheme. All such schemes will be of vital importance to the Far North. The Tinaroo Falls dam scheme will help to irrigate land that would be useless without irrigation. There will be thousands of irrigated farms thus bringing further wealth to that part of the State. The Tully Falls hydro-electric project will supply much-needed electricity and will be of great help to the secondary industries which eventually must start in the Far North. The Government have given considerable aid to industry generally in that part. I heard the Premier mention recently in this Chamber the substantial financial assistance that the Government have given to industry. A copper refinery at a cost of over £5,000,000 is being erected in Townsville. The Government guaranteed £14,000 to the Tip Top Paint Company, and to the North Queensland Cement Company there was a guarantee of £481,000. That company last year produced 58,524 tons of cement and one can visualise the importance of that production to the North. The Government guaranteed the Mt. Isa Mines Co. £650,000 in its initial stages and we are all aware of the colossal turn-out of that company. It is producing thousands of tons of copper, lead and zinc and in the near future this enterprise will be the largest of its kind in the Commonwealth. The Mary Kathleen uranium deposits will prove to be of tremendous importance to the Far North. And what is more, a cannery is proposed for the Cairns area. I am making every effort in my power to see that we have a cannery at Cairns.

**Mr. Low:** Do you think the hopes are bright for the future?

**Mr. ADAIR:** I say they are. Cairns and surrounding district is the best pineapple-growing country in the Commonwealth and we can produce better pineapples there than can be grown in the South. We still require more industries in the North; I do not see why industries should be concentrated in the South. A cannery should be built at Cairns. I have put a proposal to the Government for a cannery to can beef and pineapples.

**Mr. Low:** You will have to get new machinery.

**Mr. ADAIR:** I place before hon. members the following information which has been supplied to me, and to the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock for submission to the Government:—

“The Cairns Meat Export Company Pty. Ltd. have stated that the type of beef cattle suitable for canning but unsuitable for killing as prime beef abounds on Cape York Peninsula, north of the 18th parallel of latitude. The bulk of canning beef killed at Cairns by this company has, in the past, been drawn from this area and shipped to Melbourne for canning by independent canners.”

At present, all that beef is being shipped to the South, thus involving unnecessary transport charges.

The statement continues—

“Because of the lack of canning facilities at Cairns the intake of canning beef has been limited, simply being incidental to mobs of prime cattle.

“The type of beef referred to is principally average scrubbers, old cow and bull beef. The following Table 1 sets out details of the Queerah Meatworks intake of canned beef between 24 April, 1954, and 4 August, 1956:—

Number of Cattle Killed.	Producing Quarts.	Type.	
			Lb.
10,200	43,721	Boneless	2,186,000
		Briskets	684,000
		Tongues	279,000
		Total	3,149,000”

If the canning of beef is combined with the canning of fruit it will mean a big thing for Cairns, and will help considerably in paying interest and redemption charges on the cannery.

The statement continues—

“It is claimed that there will continue to be an abundant supply of the required canning cattle available from the Peninsula. No cannery in the North has led to a limited market because of the low abattoir recovery combined with the application of the same handling costs prior to killing as would apply to prime beef. Consequently, the cattle have heretofore depleted pastures 1956—z

and water supplies which should have been available for prime cattle and have, in many cases, accumulated on the stations.

“The Cairns Meat Export Co. Pty. Ltd. contend that, if a cannery in the Cairns district were to can beef, it would be practicable for them to buy especially for canning and thereby considerably increase the turnover from northern properties.

“It is stated that a continuing supply of such beef will be available from aged breeders, bulls, etc.”

The capital required to combine the canning of beef and fruit would be very small. It is claimed that even with the machinery in the old cannery, the canning of beef could be started tomorrow.

I repeat that the Cairns district is more suited to pineapple-growing than any other district in Queensland. It is obvious that the cannery in Brisbane will eventually have to get its supplies of pineapples from the Far North.

**Mr. Nicklin:** Unfortunately, I do not think so. The world market for pineapples is not at all bright.

**Mr. ADAIR:** Nevertheless, we claim that the best pineapples in Australia are grown in North Queensland, and we are fighting for the establishment of a cannery in Cairns. The Government have also greatly helped the Marine Contracting and Towing Company in the sea transport of beef. In the Company's first year the Government gave a subsidy of £10,000 to the barge “Wewak,” the next year £8,500 and this year £8,200. This morning I received a letter from Mr. Johnston, the manager of the company in which he says—

“We received the communication from the Treasury addressed to your goodself relative to the granting of a subsidy of £8,200 for the year ending 30th June, 1956, to this company. Whilst our application was for a subsidy of £11,250, we are satisfied that the amount paid is very reasonable and would like to take the opportunity of thanking you for the interest you have taken in this matter.

“The ‘Wewak’ discharged 200 tons at Albatross Bay a fortnight ago, and during the same voyage unloaded a further 200 tons at various points along the Peninsula and at Thursday Island. She is this day at Port Stewart unloading 60 tons of supplies, and on each voyage south she brings cattle for the meatworks and other local butchers and coastal fattening graziers.

“The ‘Cora’ is still off the run, and at the request of Gulf clients, the ‘Wewak’ departs Cairns in about ten days time for Normanton via all Peninsula ports, Thursday Island and Albatross Bay. Included in this shipment is a further 100 tons for Albatross Bay. We call this place Albatross Bay and not Weipa Mission. We unload at two points at Albatross Bay,

namely Weipa Mission and Pera Head. There are no jetties, and without a landing barge, it would be very difficult indeed to land supplies for Enterprise Exploration who are very grateful for the service being given them by the 'Wewak.'

"On our last voyage south from Albatross Bay we brought a considerable quantity of bauxite in sample bags. From confidential information we have received it is fairly definite that the bauxite deposits will be developed in a very big way, and of course, this will mean progress for the Peninsula.

"Once again thanking you for your co-operation."

The "Cora" that he mentions is run by John Burke Ltd.

The "Wewak" has played a prominent part in the development of the Peninsula and I thank the Government for subsidising it and enabling it to carry on. It is as good as a railway to the people in the area because it can land anywhere on the beach and it transports stud cattle that could not be driven overland. The people are grateful for the service.

The Cook electorate has large timber reserves, both softwoods and hardwoods, and the Forestry Department is doing great work in building roads so that the timber may be taken to the mills. There are large areas of timber round Cooktown, Iron Range, Bailey's Creek and Bloomfield. At Poverty, outside Cooktown, on the east coast of the Peninsula, all types of timber are available, red cedar, oak, silky oak, candle nut, all sorts of secondary timbers, milky pine, etc. We must take care of this major industry. Some hon. members do not realise its importance. They do not realise the number of workers employed in all its ramifications. People are engaged building roads, cutters go in to cut, and then other workers haul the timber out to the mills. The timber mills are big employers of labour. After the timber is milled large numbers of men are employed by contractors building homes and business premises throughout the length and breadth of the State. The largest employer of labour in Cairns is a contractor with 300 workers. The industry has meant much to the Far North. It is essential that the Government continue their assistance in building roads to ensure that the timber can be got out. Bloomfield is a very isolated area and the Government have made a guarantee of £8,000 to the Masons for the purchase of a boat and installation of engines so that they can service the three mills at Bloomfield, Tribulation and Bailey's Creek. At the same time they will carry foodstuffs, mail, etc., for residents in the area.

Mining is a very important industry to Queensland. We are probably the biggest mining State in the Commonwealth. We have Mt. Isa Mines, Mt. Morgan, Tableland Dredging Company and the mines being worked and developed at Irvinebank and

Stannary Hill and other places throughout the Far North. The small miner lives a hard life in the remote portions of the State and the Government should assist him in every possible way.

I am very concerned about an insurance scheme to cover pensions to miners suffering from miner's phthisis, a lung ailment very prevalent in my electorate. Most of the whitespar mining was done on the Wolfram Camp fields, and the old-time miners worked with a hammer and drill and the old Gympie hammer. Many of those men contracted miner's phthisis, which I think is one of the worst diseases in the country. Because most of the employers of these men are now dead, I have had great difficulty in getting sufficient evidence to prove their eligibility for pensions. The Federal Government pay a pension to persons suffering from tuberculosis. Tuberculosis is curable, miner's phthisis is incurable, and I think it is up to the Federal Government to include in their pension schemes persons who have miner's phthisis.

A company has asked me to make representations on its behalf about taking over the wolfram battery at Wolfram Camp. The company is willing to purchase this battery and treat not only wolfram but molybdenite. If its application is successful, it will reconstruct the battery and put in a new flotation plant for the molybdenite. It will be processed on the spot. We are now importing over a hundred tons of molybdenite from overseas yearly and the company claims that it can treat the mineral there and produce sufficient to meet Queensland's requirements. I hope the Mines Department will give its approval to this proposal.

Throughout the Cooktown area alluvial mining and hydraulic sluicing are carried on. In the maiden scrub on the big tableland, which is 2,500 feet above sea level, 16 tons of tin a fortnight is produced by hydraulic sluicing. At Mt. Poverty, Jubilee, and on the Pascoe River hydraulic sluicing is carried out. The recent discovery of bauxite and other minerals on the Peninsula will really put the Peninsula on the map.

I am also informed that mining leases have been taken out for the beaches from Cooktown to Cape York and that samples taken have proved to be very valuable. It is hoped to start mining there for mineral sands in the near future. The future looks bright for that part of the country. There are millions of tons of bauxite in the Albatross Bay area, and the company are spending a large sum in developing the new find. Mr. Norman Larsen is spending thousands of pounds in developing a gold mine that had been worked by his father some years ago in the Wenloch area, and it is hoped that the mine will turn out to be a large producer again. In the Cooktown area farmers are taking up land for the purpose of growing tobacco. The sandy red loam in this area is very suitable for tobacco-growing. That was evidenced



last year when the crop from that area equalled the top prices brought at the Mareeba tobacco sales. The distance from Cooktown to Starcke Station is over 60 miles and the red soil in the area is equally as good as that on the Atherton Tableland. If tobacco-growing is as successful as I anticipate it will be, very large areas will be developed.

We recently heard news about the pearling industry. We know that the Commonwealth Government have given permission to Japanese divers to go to Queensland waters. They did this without referring the matter to the State Government for their opinion. We have been protecting this industry for the islanders who live in the area. There are thousands of these islanders, most of whom fought for us during the last war.

**Mr. Pizzey:** What do you mean by "Queensland waters"?

**Mr. ADAIR:** Waters in the vicinity of Thursday Island. These islanders look to the Queensland Government to protect this industry for them; and they have done so. Many of the islanders own pearling boats and many are wealthy. There are about 22 taxi-cabs on Thursday Island owned and run by the islanders, and if anybody requires one it is necessary to ring up 15 minutes before in order to make sure of getting one. The business people on Thursday Island are also doing very well.

When the question of allowing the Japanese pearling fleet to work in the waters adjacent to Australia was first considered by the Commonwealth Government in 1953 Queensland was given the assurance that the fleet would not be allowed to operate in those waters regarded as coming within the control of the Queensland pearling industry. Since 1953 the pearling fleet has operated off the coast of Western Australia and in Northern Territory waters. However, despite the assurance given to Queensland that the fleet would not come here, the Commonwealth Government have allowed it to operate in waters 40 miles west of Thursday Island, that is on a reef between Goode Island and Booby Island. The reef has always been regarded as portion of the Queensland pearling grounds and has been worked by Queensland pearling luggers. The permission by the Commonwealth Government to the Japanese fleet to enter Queensland waters was issued without any opportunity being given to the State Government to enter a protest against such incursion, and, despite any protest that the State Government could make to the Commonwealth Government, the fleet arrived off Cape York Peninsula on 20 September. This Japanese fleet comprising 21 boats is permitted to work in waters ranging from 15 fathoms upwards. I have been told that none of the water around Goode Island

is over 30 fathoms deep, and it is not considered on Thursday Island by the islanders who pearl in these waters that that is an exceptional depth. Good divers on Thursday Island can dive up to 30 fathoms.

**Mr. Hiley:** Does that depth affect their eyes?

**Mr. ADAIR:** Yes. Actually, it is too deep. The tender on these boats has to be a very efficient man. At that depth different temperatures are experienced and the tender when hauling up these men has to know the rate at which to haul them and the different depth at which to stage them. If they are not staged properly, the divers get paralysis and probably die. The fleet produced in approximately one week six tons of shell, that is, among the 21 boats, which was well below the reasonable production figure, and has returned to the Northern Territory waters from which it came. I am informed that one Japanese diver of this fleet died or was drowned. It is wrong to say that Japanese are not frightened of depth, as was thought in years gone by. The graveyard on Thursday Island contains the graves of many Japanese divers. In the 15 acres of that cemetery can be seen the graves of dozens of Japanese divers. In those days they did not care whether they lived or died. I am informed that they now place more value on their lives and do not take the risks they did in former years.

It is quite evident that the Japanese divers on this fleet were unwilling to or incapable of working deeper waters of 25 fathoms and upwards in the areas allocated to them. What the Commonwealth Government is going to do now with this fleet is not known. It is not known also whether the fleet will return to Queensland waters and work in an area of water shallower than that allocated to them. It would be quite wrong to allow them to work in water of 9, 10, and 15 fathoms where the islanders are getting their living. It is very important that the islanders should be able to get a living from this area. The waters around Darnley Island are 30 and 40 fathoms deep. That is considered to be the richest pearling bed in the world, and it is in the spew-over from this deep water to the shallow water that the islanders are pearling at present. If the Federal Government want the Japanese fleet to work there, operations should be restricted to deep water of 40 and 50 fathoms. I have already mentioned that most of the islanders fought in World War II. and are returned soldiers. The mere fact that a diver is a Japanese does not indicate that he is a good diver, and the Government is adamant that the Torres Strait islander can improve his technique as a diver year by year without the problematical assistance of tutors from Japan. The presence of the Japanese fleet in Queensland waters is sufficient justification for the Government's action in refusing to allow Japanese to enter

the Queensland-controlled pearling industry. The Island Industries Board is still pursuing the possibility of the establishment of training facilities for the Torres Strait islanders in deep-water diving. Contact has been made with a firm in Melbourne that will supply equipment and a tutor to go to Thursday Island in the very near future to train the Torres Strait islanders. The Queensland Government will financially support this scheme immediately it can be established. Already the Commonwealth Government have definitely refused to contribute anything towards a training school for island divers.

The Queensland Government argues that trained Torres Strait islanders can produce pearl shell and will continue to produce it as the years go by as efficiently as the Japanese. All the islanders want is what the Queensland Government are giving them, encouragement and practical tuition. Unfortunately the Commonwealth Government do not appear to be willing to co-operate in any way in Queensland's determination to train its Torres Strait islanders. Every one of these men who provide the labour now for the pearling fleets is an ex-service man and he is being given the encouragement and assistance which his cause deserves. That is very important to that part of the State. The Government have protected these islanders and will continue to do so, but it is regrettable to know that the Commonwealth Government have brought Japanese divers in to break down the living conditions of the Torres Strait islanders who are getting a living off the pearl beds on the reefs in the Far North.

I should like, in conclusion, to bring forward another matter which I claim is of importance. I am making representations to the Government for a central killing works at Cairns. The object is to have an abattoirs that will supply the whole of the Cairns area from Mossman to Gordonvale. It is essential to have an abattoirs in that area. Cairns has a population of 25,000 and that fact alone warrants the establishment of an abattoir. I have little information on the matter at present but at a future date I shall bring it up. I do not know the exact number of cattle killed in the area. I hope I can do something in the matter in the near future.

Progress reported.

#### SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

**Hon. V. C. GAIR** (South Brisbane—Premier) I move—

“That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Tuesday next.”

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 3.51 p.m.