THURSDAY, 17 OCTOBER, 1957.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. A. R. Fletcher, Cunningham) took the chair at 11 a.m.

QUESTIONS.

OBJECTIONS TO VALUATIONS OF VALUER-GENERAL.

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) asked the Minister for Public Works and Local Government—

"1. Has his attention been drawn to a letter recently published in 'The Courier-Mail' regarding a delay of eight months in the hearing of an objection by the Valuer-General?"

"2. What is the total number of objections received by the Valuer-General against valuations in the City of Brisbane, also the date the first objection was received?"

Hon. J. A. HEADING (Marodian) replied—

"(1) Yes."

"(2) The total number of objections received by the Valuer-General against valuations in the City of Brisbane was 2,102 which represents 1.43 per cent. of the number of rateable valuations. The first objection was received on July 17, 1956. Notices of Valuation were issued progressively from July 9, 1956, for 147,511 rateable properties in the City of Brisbane Area and the final date for lodging objections in the last Division issued was August 1, 1957. It was not considered expedient to arrange the hearing of any objections until objections against valuations in all Divisions had been received. Arrangements have been made to commence the hearing of these objections on November 11 next, and respective objectors will be advised to this effect at an early date."

ISSUE OF DOCKETS BY RETAIL BUTCHERS.

Mr. WOOD (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Attorney-General—

"1. Is he aware that the legal requirement that dockets be issued to meat purchasers is being flouted by retail butchers in both metropolitan and country districts?"

"2. If so, will he give the House an assurance that steps will be taken immediately to enforce the docket system so that consumers will be protected from possible exploitation?"

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong) replied—

"(1) No. There is no information before me to indicate that these legal requirements are being flouted. Action is being taken to see that the law is enforced. I do, however, realise that the problem of retail meat dockets is one of the many legacies of trouble left to us by the previous Government, and that the complete enforcement of this requirement presents practical difficulties."

"(2) I am advised by the Prices Commissioner that consistent with available staff, retail butchers will be systematically checked. Thirty-one persons were prosecuted for failure to issue dockets during the period January 1, 1957, and August 13, 1957, and there were fourteen prosecutions during the period August 13, 1957 to September 30, 1957. Any specific complaints will be immediately investigated, and where breaches of the law are established prosecution proceedings will be instituted. In this, as in all other matters, the policy of the Government is, as far as reasonably practicable, to protect not only consumers, but all other sections of the people, from any form of exploitation."

RAILWAY REFRESHMENT ROOMS.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) asked the Minister for Transport—

"1. Is he aware that—(a) Railway Refreshment Rooms holding a liquor licence are now open for the same hours as hotels, i.e., 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., and the tendered rental paid by the lessee is based on those over-all trading hours, and (b) the Commissioner for Railways claims that as owner of the premises he is not responsible for the provision of lavatory accommodation at such refreshment rooms, as his responsibility in this direction begins and ends with the provision of such accommodation on trains and at railway stations for train passengers only?"

"2. If he is aware of these things, does he agree with the contention of the Commissioner for Railways that the provision of such accommodation at refreshment rooms is the responsibility of the lessees?"
Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer) replied—

"(1) (a) Yes. (b) There is lavatory accommodation at all Railway Stations at which Refreshment Rooms are located."

"(2) See answer to No. (1)."

ALL-WEATHER ROAD, TOWNSVILLE TO AYR.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) asked the Premier and Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads—

"1. Has his attention been drawn to an article in ‘The Sunday-Mail’ of 13 October, headlined ‘Big Improvements on Roads to the Beach. Beach-bound motorists heading for the North Coast and South Coast will have their best-ever roads this Christmas?’"

"2. If so, is the article based on fact?"

"3. Can he give any indication when an all-weather road will be completed between Townsville and Ayr?"

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani) replied—

"(1) Yes."

"(2) Yes; some of the roads referred to were previously rough and dangerous. The same comparable standard of road construction will be built into the road from Giru to Townsville and other yet unconstructed sections of the Northern Highway."

"(3) No. Survey has been completed for the coastal route. The first section is under construction. Plans for the remaining sections are being prepared. The inland route via Woodstock has been bitumen-surfaced except for a length of about 10 miles, half of which is now under construction. Plans for the remaining half are being prepared. Work will proceed as soon as the plans are completed."

CLOSURE OF RAILWAY TARPALIN REPAIR SECTION, ROCKHAMPTON.

Mr. GARDNER (Rockhampton) asked the Minister for Transport—

"(1) Will he state the reasons for the closure of the Railway Tarpaulin Repair Section at Rockhampton?"

"(2) For how long has the work of tarpaulin repairs been carried out at the Rockhampton section and how many employees were engaged on this class of work?

"(3) At what centre is it proposed to carry out the tarpaulin repairs of the Central Division, and will it be more economical?"

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer) replied—

"(1) The reason for closing the tarpaulin repair section at Rockhampton is because of the large number of new tarpaulins now in service throughout the State and the consequent falling off in repair work."

"(2) This work has been carried out at Rockhampton for many years. The earliest record which can be traced is in the year 1907. Two men were employed at Rockhampton at the time of discontinuing this work there. They have been transferred to other positions."

"(3) As adequate modern machinery for carrying out this work exists in the tarpaulin shop at Ipswich, the work will be done there in future at a considerable saving to the Department. It is not considered an economical arrangement to continue the expense of having duplicate facilities at Rockhampton."

OIL CONTRACT, C. C. WAKEFIELD & CO. PTY. LTD. AND TOOWOOMBA CITY COUNCIL.

Mr. GARDNER (Rockhampton) asked the Premier for Public Works and Local Government—

"(1) Has the Toowoomba City Council yet submitted to him the facts relating to the recent letting by the Council of a contract to C. C. Wakefield and Co. Pty. Ltd., for the supply of lubricating oil to the Council?"

"(2) If so, what questions were directed to him by the Council in the matter?"

"(3) Has he caused the matter to be investigated, and if so, what is the result of that investigation?"

"(4) Does the investigation disclose any evidence of any breach of the Local Government Acts or any other Acts by the hon. member for Toowoomba in his capacity as Mayor of the City of Toowoomba?"

Hon. J. A. HEADING (Marodian) replied—

"(1) Yes."

"(2) The Council directed the following questions to me:—

Question (A)—Would the Mayor in accordance with the provisions of Section 14 (4) of the Act be considered to have a pecuniary interest in a contract let to C. C. Wakefield & Co. Ltd. by virtue of the controlling interest in Austral Distributors by Western Transport Pty. Ltd.?

Question (B)—Would the contract with C. C. Wakefield & Co. Ltd. be a valid contract if the Mayor had voted for the acceptance of the tender of C. C. Wakefield Pty. Ltd.?

Question (C)—Was the general notice given by the Mayor in accordance with Section 14 (4) (iv.) of the Act a sufficient notice?"

"(3) The matter was investigated by the Director of Local Government and the advice of the Solicitor-General sought in the matter. The following answers have been furnished to the Council on the questions directed by it to me:
Question (A)—I understand the Mayor is not a member of the Company of C. C. Wakefield & Co. Ltd. As the contract is not with him, he has no direct pecuniary interest in it. As he is not a member of the said Company, he has no indirect interest in it and the said Section 14 (4) is not applicable.

Question (B)—For the reasons stated, the answer is yes.

Question (C)—In my opinion, the notice is not necessary as the Mayor did not have a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the contract.

I understand that the terms on which the Council considers it accepted the tender are the prices ex Brisbane store, plus the freight differential applicable to Toowoomba.

The tender reads as follows:—Delivery:
The prices quoted cover delivery ex our Brisbane store. The freight differential applicable to Toowoomba has not been included and at the time of this tender is:—Lubricating oils, 9½d. a gallon; Greases, 1½d. lb. It would seem to me that what the Council accepted were the prices ex Brisbane store, plus the freight differential.''

'(4) No.''

LONG SERVICE LEAVE, WAGES EMPLOYEES, QUEENSLAND HOUSING COMMISSION.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

'What decision has been reached in relation to the long service leave entitlements of employees of the day labour organisation of the Queensland Housing Commission who were dismissed in March of this year, and who have since been re-employed?'

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo) replied—

'On April 17, 1957, the then Cabinet determined not to vary the provisions of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Acts where a breach of over three months in employment has occurred.''

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO IPSWICH TERMINATING BUILDING SOCIETIES.

Mr. DONALD (Bremer) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

'Is it the intention of the Government to assist the Ipswich co-operative terminating building societies, which have rendered valuable service to home seekers in the Ipswich and West Moreton District, to the same extent as the societies mentioned in a recent Press statement?'

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo) replied—

''There are no co-operative terminating building societies in Ipswich. The Honourable Member’s reference is probably to terminating building societies registered under the Building Societies Acts, 1886 to 1956. In New South Wales and Victoria, loans to terminating building societies have not been guaranteed by the Governments. In those States the guarantee applies to loans to co-operative building or housing societies. In Queensland it is not intended to guarantee loans to terminating building societies for the reasons such societies would probably not be prepared to accept conditions of guarantee restricting the rate of interest that they may charge borrowers and restricting the use of loans to housing. Terminating building societies in Queensland are permitted to make advances on freehold security for purposes other than housing. Any terminating society registered under the Building Societies Acts in Queensland could extend its operations by establishing a separate co-operative housing society in which case loans to the co-operative society could be guaranteed. In my Press statement I have already invited both existing and new societies to take advantage of this opportunity.''

DISMISSAL OF MINERS, MARYBOROUGH DISTRICT.

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) asked the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads—

''In view of the threatened dismissal of approximately twenty-seven miners this week and more later from the coal mines in the Maryborough Electorate, will he give urgent consideration to requesting representatives of the Coal Board to visit these mines immediately, in order to thoroughly investigate the reasons for these contemplated dismissals?''

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani) replied—

''I am advised that orders for coal held at present by the three Maryborough colliery proprietors total 487 tons per day and labour personnel is 260, some of whom, until recently, were on Long Service Leave and others were employed on forward development work which has now ceased. I understand also that orders of certain seasonal industries have been reduced owing to adverse weather conditions and that other purchasers who previously accepted deliveries of coal in excess of orders are not prepared to do so any longer on account of high stockpiles. I am informed that the mine owners consider that in view of present and anticipated orders their existing labour strength is too high to achieve an economic output per manshift worked. In such circumstances I can see no purpose at this stage in members of the Coal Board visiting the
field on the matter, as no further information would be available there than is known here. However, the position is being carefully watched by the Board and all possibilities of extra orders are being investigated.''

SUPPLY OF COAL TO WIDE BAY AND BURNETT ELECTRICITY REGIONAL BOARD.

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) asked the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads—

"In view of the unstable nature of the market for coal produced in the Maryborough Electorate will he do whatever is necessary to have the right to supply electricity to the City of Gympie and the country areas immediately surrounding Gympie transferred from the Southern Electric Authority to the Wide Bay and Burnett Electricity Regional Board?"

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani) replied—

"The possibility of utilising generating capacity in the Howard power station of the Wide Bay-Burnett Regional Electricity Board in conjunction with the South-Eastern Queensland system has already been included in the terms of reference of an investigating committee on generating facilities for South-Eastern Queensland established by the State Electricity Commission."

COAL IMPORTED BY TOWNSVILLE INDUSTRIES.

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) asked the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads—

"Does any industry in Townsville import coal from New South Wales coalfields? If so, which industry and how many tons per week?"

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani) replied—

"The only Townsville coal user which imports coal from New South Wales coalfields is the Townsville Gas and Coke Company Limited. During the present year to October 5, this company purchased 4,662 tons of New South Wales coal in three shipments and in addition purchased 1,037 tons of coking coal from the Bowen field."

OVERTIME PAID IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

RETURN TO ORDER.

The following paper was laid on the table—

Return to an Order made by the House on 29 August last, on the motion of Mr. Hanlon, (a) showing the amount of overtime paid in each Government department (all funds) in 1956-1957; (b) showing the amount paid in each Government department (all funds) in July, 1957.

PAPERS.

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


The following papers were laid on the table—

Order in Council under the Traffic Acts, 1949 to 1957.

Regulations under the Traffic Acts, 1949 to 1957.

Order in Council under the Supreme Court Act of 1921.

Order in Council under the Profiteering Prevention Acts, 1948 to 1954.

INTEREST RATES ON HOUSING LOANS.

Mr. BAXTER (Norman) (11.20 a.m.): It is with pleasure that I move—

"That in the interests of all sections of the community and the security and contentment of the family, it is desirable that the State and Commonwealth Governments should immediately investigate the social and economic problems associated with the present slump in the rate of home building in Queensland with the objective of reducing interest rates on housing loans."

It cannot be denied that the housing problem is a difficult one for all Governments. One often wonders what the crux of the problem is. Is it a matter of just housing the people or is it a matter of providing homes at a cost commensurate with their incomes? It is important to consider the families and the varying number of children in each, the proportion of married couples and aged people, because each group requires a different size of dwelling. The income of some parents with large families is not enough to pay for a suitable and desirable home. We must also remember that people who are prosperous today may not be prosperous tomorrow. All these matters should be taken into consideration in arriving at a solution of the housing problem. Environment must be taken into consideration too. Each home should give the family an opportunity of living together so that parents may have the best chance of developing a good outlook in their children. If we can do this we can congratulate ourselves on our sound judgment and our humanitarian approach to a difficult problem. One essential is to give the people a feeling of security and if we do this, contentment will follow. It is essential that all workers should be assured of full employment in useful occupations and therein lie the security and contentment of the family.
That applies particularly to those in the building industry, one so vital to the life of the people. It caters for the most intimate needs of the people—housing, hospitals, schools, public buildings, industrial and commercial undertakings, and so on. Virtually no goods or services can be provided without the employment of building workers, but under the present policy of allowing big business to dominate the political and economic life of Australia, the building industry is languishing and the workers in it are threatened with unemployment. I shall deal later with unemployment.

Many people have no homes; some are forced to live with others under crowded conditions which adversely affect the social and economic lives of all the peoples involved still more. The number of homes varies according to certain factors including the standard of social life. If a different policy had been adopted by the present Federal Government Australia, and Queensland in particular, would not be in the sad position of having so many unfinished homes and so many members of the building industry and allied trades unemployed. Their policy is to allocate little money at high interest rates. The position is bound to become worse rather than improve.

The number of homes built in 1956 was 47,087, 10 per cent less than those built in 1955, the respective figures being 69,909 and 78,289. That dominant trend will probably destroy the gains made over the last 12 years. The 1956 Commonwealth-States Housing Agreement imposed by the Menzies-Fadden Government on the States proves it so.

Mr. Aikens: Do you not believe that the migrant intake has a direct effect on the housing shortage?

Mr. BAXTER: I shall answer that question later on when I deal comprehensively with the housing situation when I shall explain the relative effects that the migrant intake has on the housing shortage.

I suggest that a conference be called of all sections interested in or affected by the housing shortage. I know that all members of trade unions connected with the building of houses are very interested and think this would be a positive approach. The conference could aim at developing organisations in the community with a fuller and deeper appreciation of the housing problem and its social consequences. Greater community consciousness will ensure a more vigorous and united effort and so achieve a solution of the problem not only in Queensland but throughout Australia.

I draw attention to the original agreement of 1945, with which the political parties and the trade unions were in accord. It covered Government-sponsored rental projects. The Commonwealth Government were to provide the money. It provided for a rental rebate system, the rent to be not in excess of one-fifth of the family income and home purchasers were not required to pay a high rate of interest. That was the beginning of the Commonwealth-States Housing Agreement, and the principles were very worthy ones.

Today we have the position where interest rates are rising, loans are being reduced and the Australian Labour Party had to fight the Federal Coalition Liberal-Country Party Government in Canberra early last year very hard in an endeavour to secure a few extra pounds to keep building workers employed so that homes might be provided for the people. All requests for financial assistance fell on deaf ears and this is applicable not to Queensland alone. The time has come when everyone interested in the building of homes should consider what it all means to Queensland and the nation.

The following enlightening table has been prepared from the Statistician's report:

| TABLE SHOWING VALUE OF ALL BUILDING OPERATIONS IN THE STATE OF QUEENSLAND. |
| Commercial Building . . . | 7,283 | (22-8) | 10,066 | (29-6) | 12,594 | (34-1) |
| Dwelling . . . | 18,630 | (58-4) | 18,252 | (53-7) | 17,924 | (48-6) |

There has been a serious decline in the number of homes built both by the Government and private enterprise. We know that private enterprise will not build homes.

The 1947 census was the most complete ever taken in Australia on housing needs. The Commonwealth Statistician's Report shows that in 1947 more than 175,000 people were living in other than private dwellings, that 47,087 were sharing a private house or living in part of a private house, 35,889 were living in flats, 15,814 were living in tenements, 76,342 were living in rented dwellings, and 3,372 were living in wagons, vans or camping out. On an average family unit of five—which would be higher than the statistical average—it meant that at least 35,000 homes were needed at that time. Let
me make a comparison with the position today. Between 1 July, 1947, and 30 June, 1955, 86,446 homes were built in Queensland. During that same period, 81,517 couples were married in Queensland; the vast majority of whom would no doubt desire a home or housing accommodation. I have said that 86,446 homes were built and 81,517 couples were married. In the same period 85,272 migrants have come to Queensland. The hon. member for Mundaring has left the Chamber, so he will have to search the pages of "Hansard" for the information that he was so anxious to get by interjection. Again taking five as the average family unit, that means that approximately 17,000 homes are required for those migrants.

Taking the 35,000 homes that we needed in June, 1947, and adding the 81,517 couples married since that time and the 17,000 migrant families who have come here, we find that in all 139,517 homes are needed to give the family the privacy of their own home. In the period in question only 86,446 homes were built, so we are 47,071 short of our basic requirements. Although the number of homes built exceeded the number of marriages, it certainly was insufficient to also meet the needs of migrants. It certainly was not sufficient to make any impact on the serious plight of the 35,000 families who have needed homes since 1947.

We still have the great social problem of people needing adequate housing, housing in their own homes, and the problem of exorbitant rents. Those problems will be accentuated by the building force being switched to commercial building. People are unable to live contented family lives because of these problems, and, in fact, the standard of living of the nation is being interfered with. We are descended from British stock, and it is inherent in the British way of life that a man's home is his castle. We believe that every man should have his own home. If our children live with us in our homes, problems can be discussed in the family circle and we can work in the garden and do all the other chores about the home together. By building a closer family unit we get away from the possibility of child delinquency. If the children and the parents are close, there is little possibility of the children becoming delinquents.

There are many ways of overcoming the housing shortage, and I shall deal with those more fully later. I read a magazine article in the Parliamentary Library the other day that dealt with a method that has been adopted in Sweden and America. As hon. members know, Sweden is socialistic in its outlook, and in Sweden they are building multiple flats containing four, five, and six rooms. So successful has that scheme been that moves are now being made to introduce it to America. That article brought to my mind the remarks of the Treasurer and Minister for Housing when he spoke of providing flats in Queensland to eliminate the housing shortage. In Sweden the flats are built round parks and playing areas for children.

They are given all the amenities that the family normally desires. What struck me very forcibly was the system of fixing rent. In the first place the money to build the flats came from the Government but as soon as they were completed the capital cost was forgiven and, taking into account maintenance costs and the cost of providing amenities, they arrived at a rental of 6 per cent. of the basic wage. That contrasts strongly with the rental payable in Queensland today which is about 33½ per cent. of the basic wage. The plan could well be studied as an avenue for helping those who do not wish to own homes who prefer the fiat life and those who have to live in almost slum conditions. They would readily move to flats of that type in preference to paying £6 10s. to £7 a week for a bedroom, kitchen and dining-room combined with a few amenities. The plan would remove hardship, improve their living standard and give them a sense of security.

The housing shortage is not confined to Queensland. I have with me a bulletin issued by the Building Workers' Union which says this about the position in New South Wales—"While the latest Statistician's figures show a slight improvement in the building industry, the current level of building activity falls far short of that in 1954, and a long way short of meeting the building needs of the people of N.S.W." For the year ending June, 1957, there was a 15 per cent. drop in the number of completed housing units, from 28,900 in 1954 to 24,700 in 1956.

The reduction in home building in comparison with other types of building is shown by the fact that whereas housing was responsible for 34 per cent. of the value of total buildings in 1949, last year it was only 50 per cent.

The flow of finance away from housing is shown by the fact that whereas in 1952 housing obtained 13 per cent. of the total bank advances, last year it was down to 11 per cent. The effect of the drive for profits is shown by the fact that housing costs have increased by 145 per cent. since 1947 while the building workers' wages have, in that period, only increased by approximately 100 per cent."

I shall draw further comparisons of that type later. However, the New South Wales Government are facing the same problems as we are only because the Commonwealth Government are not giving them sufficient money for housing. The Commonwealth Government are prepared to hold a balance of about £100,000,000 in their funds and not plough some of it back to the States to help with housing to give the social contentment and security that our way of life demands.

A large amount of money has been spent by the Commonwealth Government on defence but I will deal with that later on.
The loss of employment in the building trade has had a serious effect on industries manufacturing articles for the home—timber, bricks, home equipment and so on. Once home building ceases the bad effects snowball through the various associated industries. The latest figures issued by the Commonwealth Statistician show that fewer building workers are employed on new buildings, less materials being produced, houses completed are the lowest for seven years, and that in seven years the population has increased by one-sixth. At June 1957, 117,000 building workers were employed on new buildings in Australia or 3,000 fewer than the number engaged on new buildings at June 1956, and 8,000 fewer than the number at September 1951 which was 156,500. During the year ended June 1957, 128,600 building workers completed new buildings valued at £150,000,000, and in the year ended June 1957, 117,000 workers completed new buildings worth £360,000,000.

The decline and unbalance in the building industry are also reflected in the supply of materials. During the year ended June 1957, only 806,000,000 clay bricks were produced, or 36,000,000 fewer than in the previous year. In the same year the production of cement building sheets dropped by over 2,000,000 square yards.

All these things go to prove that people who should have been employed were out of work merely because the Federal Government failed to appreciate the need to allocate the necessary money to the States. The Statistician's figures also revealed that the output of terra-cotta roofing tiles dropped in 1956-1957. In 1955-1956, 64,700,600 tiles were produced and in 1956-1957 only 58,000,000, a drop of 6,700,000 in one year.

The manufacture of bath heaters, electric stoves and many other things suffered from the loss of employment in the building trade. Here are more interesting figures. For the year ended 30 June, 1952, 8,335 new houses were commenced in Queensland, but for the financial year ending 30 June, 1857, there were only 6,006, a drop of 2,329. For the same years the figures for the whole of Australia were 11,995 and 7,572, a drop of 4,423.

All this has a bearing upon the economic security and contentment of family life. Because of the lag in home building thousands of people are thrown out of work. They could have been kept in employment if the Federal Government had accepted their responsibility.

The number of houses completed in Queensland in 1952 was 8,056, and in 1957 the number was 5,649, showing a decrease of 2,407. The number of houses built by owner-builders in 1953 was 3,747 and in 1957 it was 1,967 or a decrease of 1,780. Those figures are very disquieting. Dealing with the matter of housing costs, I wish to quote the following statements made by two very eminent housing experts. Nathan Straus, a former administrator of the United States Housing Authority and Sir E. D. Simon, former mayor of Manchester and Parliamentary Secretary to the United Kingdom Ministry of Health, in a book entitled "Rebuilding Britain—a 20 Year Plan," by Sir Earnest Simon—

"1. The most important single factor in determining the rent of houses is the rate of interest which has to be paid on the capital."

"2. . . . in order of importance, cost of capital comes first, cost of building materials is next, and the cost of building labour is a comparatively small factor. The wage question should come last, not first, in a rational analysis of housing costs."

"3. There can be no doubt whatever that the prevention of any increase in the rate of interest, and if possible a progressive reduction, is the most important single service the Government can render towards ensuring the success of the housing programme."

The article goes on to give a few examples of the amounts for interest on different sums. The figures are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan.</th>
<th>Interest</th>
<th>Repayment</th>
<th>Interest Paid.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£2,500</td>
<td>5½ %</td>
<td>30 years</td>
<td>£2,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£3,000</td>
<td>5½ %</td>
<td>30 years</td>
<td>£3,191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£3,100</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>30 years</td>
<td>£3,306</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Taking the house costing £3,100 on an average materials overhead and profit would cost £2,380 and labour costs £750. Where the £3,100 is borrowed at 5½ per cent. over 30 years the prospective homeowner would finally pay £5,398 for the house.

Weekly repayments would be £4 2s. per week made up of 30c. 6d. for materials, profit and overhead; 42s. 3d. interest repayments and 9s. 3d. labour costs.

These figures show the danger of excessive interest rates. Early in the session I asked the Minister for Housing a question on housing costs and he told me that on a purchase price of £3,508, including £400 for land, with a deposit of £250 and repayments over 30 years at 5½ per cent. interest, the monthly payments would be £17 18s. 9d., and over 45 years £15 14s. 11d. a month. On the basis of £25 deposit and 30 years interest at 5½ per cent., the repayment would be £19 4s. 7d. for 30 years and £16 16s. 8d. for 45 years. The position is worse under the latest Commonwealth-States Housing Agreement in comparison with the Agreement between the Commonwealth and States of 1945 because of the higher interest rates. With a period of 30 years, deposit of £250 and interest at 5½ per cent. the repayments are £17 19s. 9d. a month, the total cost of the home being £6,725. By subtracting from that the original cost of the home and land of £3,508 the interest on the transaction works out at £3,217, which almost equals the original cost.
With a period of 45 years, the repayments are £15 1s. 11d. and the final cost £8,753, or interest of £5,945. These amounts have to be provided by the unfortunate worker in order to secure accommodation for himself and his family.

Take the position with a deposit of only £25. It was mentioned quite freely during the last election campaign.

Mr. Hanlon: We have not heard about it since.

Mr. BAXTER: No.

Over a period of 30 years, and interest at 5½ per cent., the repayments are £19 4s. 7d. a month, the total cost being £6,948, and interest £3,440. Over a period of 45 years on the same deposit, the repayments are £16 16s. 8d. a month. The total cost is £9,115, including interest of £5,607.

How can a worker on the basic wage carry those obligations? The rental of £4-odd, or £3½ per cent. of the basic wage, is far in excess of the figure used in the C Series index. If that amount of rental represented the figure used in the C Series index, the basic wage would have to be £30-odd a week.

That position has been brought about by the heavy interest charges. Interest is the factor that defeats home purchasers and will in the end defeat private enterprise, because the public will not be able to buy the product of private enterprise.

The Brisbane Permanent Bank, a leech drawing in some of the money allocated by the Federal Government to Queensland, charges 5½ per cent. interest. Those loans are only for 11 years. In that period on a loan of £2,250 the total repayments amount to £3,000, or interest of £750. The Commonwealth Bank charges 5 per cent. over the next 30 years, plus land for £300.

Mr. BAXTER: I thank the hon. member for Cairns and the House for its indulgence. I now refer to the Commonwealth Bank Housing Loan system. The total amount paid over 22 years on a £2,250 loan would be £5,564, giving interest at £1,514. By way of comparison I related that loan to 4 per cent. and it shows a reduction of £1 17s. 6d. in the monthly repayments—from £13 10s. to £11 12s. 6d. The total amount to be repaid would be £2,909 compared with £3,564. The saving to the purchaser would be approximately £500 and hon. members can see what a difference one per cent makes. Those figures show how vital it is that we provide the money at an interest rate that can be borne by those in receipt of the basic wage. Everyone should have the opportunity to buy a home.

I come now to private enterprise. The Darling Downs Building Society on a loan of £3,800 with interest at 6½ per cent. the repayments would be £364 per year which is equal to approximately £6 per week. How can the little man, the working man, on the basic wage of £12 per week own a home under those conditions? He is required to pay approximately £6 a week for his home and live on the remaining £6. That shows just how interest runs away with his money. Let us get together and have a heart-to-heart discussion on the rate of interest for housing loans.

I have an article dealing with co-operative societies which explains how interest rates in Australia may be reduced, how we can give people homes at a reasonable cost. Finland has tackled the problem of credit and interest rates in a realistic manner. Lending institutions make available from 30 per cent. to 50 per cent. of the price, at 8 per cent.—the State lends the difference up to 90 per cent. at 1 per cent. repayable over 45 years.

No capital repayment is made in the first year, and only one per cent. capital repayment is made over the next four years. After that capital repayments are made over 40 years at the rate of 2½ per cent. If one country can introduce a scheme of that sort, I suggest that other countries ought to be able to introduce similar schemes. It gives the worker, the little man who buys his home on a deposit, a chance. He has stinted himself to save enough money to pay a deposit. In the first 12 months he has a chance of saving enough to enable him to buy the necessary furniture and equipment for his home. After the next four years he pays only one per cent. interest, which gives him a further chance of getting on his feet, and he then pays only 2½ per cent. over the next 40 years. Interest in the killer, and we must take those matters into consideration.

I have here a statement from the "Sydney Morning Herald" which says—

"Housing loans by the Australian trading banks fell by a further £7.4 million in the six months ending December 31st last, according to figures issued yesterday by the Acting Commonwealth Statistician, Mr. S. R. Carver." Why have they fallen? In the same newspaper Mr. Landa, Minister for Housing in the New South Wales Government gives the answer to that question—

"It seemed extraordinary that councils could not go on the loan market for housing loans when hire-purchase companies, by offering up to 10 per cent. interest, could raise almost unlimited finance for the purchase of less essential goods. Hire-purchase companies were absorbing money from the savings banks and other sources which might otherwise go into housing."
That shows where the money is going, when we should be using it and getting the benefit from it.

In a recent issue of "Pix" I read an article entitled "No deposit homes." It was written about a family in South Australia and the system of unit building. I was reading through that article and enjoying it when I came upon this phrase—from it.

I was reading through that article and the Australian National Australia and the system of unit building. was written about a family in South

"When he submitted his plan to the

Savings Bank of South Australia...£108,842,362 £108,780,556

Commonwealth Savings Bank...

£31,879,710 £33,589,514

I have a photostat copy of the South Australian "Worker" of 20 September, 1957, supplied by our Parliamentary Library which is doing a very good job in this respect. It reads—

"£2,310,132 in Loans for Homes.

"The Bank's policy of assisting depository to acquire their own homes was continued, and 1,019 loans for a total of £2,310,132 (including rural loans) were made. In the 10 year period ended 30th June, 1957, a total of £28,657,000 has been advanced to 17,147 borrowers, including rural loans amounting to £3,338,000."

It is a system that should be thoroughly explored. It shows that the people of South Australia really appreciate their State bank. They know that the money they deposit is returned to the State. Money is allocated from the Commonwealth Government to the South Australian Government for the building of homes and it is paid into the Building Trust Fund of the South Australian Bank.

The people secure the benefit of the loan from the Federal Government as well as the money deposited by the workers in their own State bank. Workers are assisting fellow-workers under such a system.

Deposits in the State Savings Bank in South Australia have always been far in excess of those in the Commonwealth Savings Bank and that is shown in the following table:

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>March, 1956</td>
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<td>June, 1956</td>
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Obviously the people realise the outstanding advantages of a State Savings Bank.
That is something to which we must give very careful consideration. The time is ripe to have our own savings banks where the people can deposit their savings instead of going to the private banks who reap exorbitant profits. The money in our own State savings bank could be advanced to people who wish to build or buy houses. The worker who is building up his deposit is at the same time providing the necessary loan for some other worker who wishes to get a home. Our interest rate could be 2 per cent. or 3 per cent. if we worked on the principle in operation in Finland, and to which I have referred. Interest is a very serious matter. It must be given every incentive to acquire their own homes. After all, the money they borrow from the State Housing Commission is money taken from them in Commonwealth taxation. It is the people's money but they have to pay interest on it. The building of multiple flats, mentioned by the Treasurer, could be accelerated if they were built free of interest with money taken in taxation from the people, some of whom will occupy them. That is the humane way of approaching the subject of rents. Should they not be able to get living accommodation by the payment of 6 per cent. of the basic wage? The money that they save could be used to provide amenities such as refrigerators and hot-water systems to which they are entitled. We must discuss this matter fully without delay. The Federal Government could do it in every State. The Commonwealth Government could double the amounts allocated to the State Governments and charge half the present rate of interest, and still be on the right side of the ledger.

Last year's appropriation for defence was not expended, and this year a further appropriation of £118,000,000 has been made for this purpose. The unexpended sum last year, £90,000,000, could be distributed to the States for housing purposes.

Hon. members will recall that the hon. member for Haughton as Minister for Housing and the hon. member for South Brisbane, the ex-Premier, went to the Federal Government and fought for the allocation of £300,000 to meet and listen to trade union leaders, the men working in the industry, the employers, employees and manufacturers. People are living under conditions that should not be tolerated in a modern age. There are some heart-rending cases in Bulimba. It is an absolute disgrace coming perhaps from poor electoral representa-

Was it a political use or were they not interested enough in the worker? They would rather ask the trading banks to institute a policy of want, knowing full well what it meant. That is why the Commonwealth Government refused the application for £278,000.

I have figures to prove conclusively that the rental factor in the C-Series Index in 1920 and today represents a totally different percentage of the basic wage, because of the high interest charges on housing loans.

This is the report in the "Telegraph" of 21 August, 1957, of a statement by Professor Towndrow:

"If homes were constructed in the form of flats, duplex buildings, and groupings of two or three homes, the result will be more compact appearance and greater economy in the supply of sewerage, gas, electricity and water."

Many suggestions are given on how to economise in the supply of sewerage, gas, electricity and water, but no suggestion ever about a reduction in interest rates or implementation of the original agreement with low interest, and rental of not more than one-fifth of the family income, and rental rebates for people unfortunately stricken through illness or unemployment who are without income for a certain time. Those principles were not included in the 1956 agreement.

I hope my remarks have stimulated some useful thoughts in the minds of hon. members.

(Time expired).

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba) (12.30 p.m.): I have much pleasure in seconding the motion. I congratulate the hon. member for Norman on his splendid case.

No hon. member could have put forward a better one. He has left me with very little more to say. However, I should like to draw attention to that part of the motion that says—

"It is desirable that the State and Commonwealth Government should immediately investigate."

That is significant. More compliance with the motion will not fully cover the field. It would be a simple matter for representatives of State and Federal Governments to ask for a report from their departmental heads. It would be the typical Government report. There has been a shortage of housing and bad housing conditions for many years; and recommendations by departmental heads are not sufficient now. The Government should go outside their departmental heads to meet and listen to trade union leaders, the men working in the industry, the employers, employees and manufacturers. People are living under conditions that should not be tolerated in a modern age.

There are some heart-rending cases in Bulimba. It is an absolute disgrace coming perhaps from poor electoral representa-
tion in the past or bad administration. In that electorate I point to 10 people living in one home with little prospect of relief from such conditions. We must face the facts. The hon. member for Norman said there was a young family sharing a home and no hon. member would deny it. It affects the employee seriously—when his work ceases, his income ceases, he cannot buy anything. When goods cannot be purchased they are no longer required and so the evil begins to snowball. In the last depression we started off with a reduction in employment and before we knew where we were the position had got out of control and that is likely to happen again but I think we can hold it back—there is a solution to the problem.

Young people who have no home to look after have to share accommodation with others. In some cases it is successful but in others, husbands and wives have separated because of it. The sharing of accommodation brings about family troubles perhaps because of the smallness of the home. Perhaps bedroom facilities are not available to the young wife and she is required to sleep in one room with her sister. One or two of such instances in an area in our modern age are one or two too many. Many young couples live with their in-laws. As people get older they cannot tolerate young children round the house. I do not mean that they do not love them; they love them and cherish them; but the tantrums of young children make it very difficult for the older people to tolerate them.

Another difficulty is interference by the in-laws. I think hon. members have all heard young women complaining that young Johnnie gets away with this or that because his grandmother or his grandfather does not want him reprimanded. At present rented homes are allocated on a priority system which does not make provision for people who are sharing homes, but their problem is acute.

The hon. member for Norman suggested that the construction of flats might partly solve the housing problem. I agree with him, but I think that his suggestion should be qualified. The building of flats would provide more homes than we could build on separate allotments, because an eight-unit block of flats would cost much less than eight separate houses. Taking into consideration the money available, it is possible to get more housing by using that method; but I think there is grave danger in it. It is the Australian way of life to have open spaces and to have our children playing in their own backyards. That has been going on from generation to generation. Playing areas are very good, but parents can exercise better supervision over their children if they are playing in their own backyards or in neighbouring backyards.

I think it would be wrong to try to force families with young children into these flat units who are required to share a home. On the other hand, I think flats would be suitable for people who have reared their families and whose original homes are too big for them. If the hon. members look at the advertisements in the newspapers they will see that many older people are offering large homes for sale because they wish to move into more compact homes. No elaborate priority system would be necessary, because if the older people went into the flats their homes would become available for the young couples.

The hon. member for Norman also mentioned the effect of a State Bank. I do not say that is the only answer to this problem, but it is an answer. I think that lack of finance is the main reason why we have insufficient houses. It seems ridiculous to me that people will deposit £200 or £300 in a bank and at the same time buy an article on hire purchase.

They will not use the £200 or £300 they have to buy the article but will hold it in reserve. There is nothing very wrong with that but it seems ridiculous that they put the money in the bank at 2½ per cent. interest and immediately go across the road and buy an article, really bought with their own money and pay 8 to 10 per cent interest. It does not make sense but our economy demands it. If the money were deposited in a State bank it would develop the State. If people were encouraged to transfer their money from private banks to a State bank it could be made available at a reasonable rate of interest, certainly much lower than that charged today. I shall deal with the effect of that later. People would gladly make the transfer so that the money could be used for home building. It could, of course, be used for other purposes, but the main need today is housing. We have the materials and the man-power; apparently all that we lack is the money.

A reduction in interest rate naturally means a reduction in the total payment but the immediate result is a reduction in the weekly or the monthly repayments so that the people would have that much more money for their immediate requirements. No worker today has all that he wants. It is against human nature. No matter how much he has, he still wants more. If the interest rate is reduced, more money will be available for the purchase of other commodities. It would have a snow-balling effect. The more goods that are purchased, the more that must be produced, so that other industries would be developed.

Both types of home—rental and purchase—are required. The ideal is home purchase, for only by owning or paying off homes can a pride in home ownership be developed. Newspapers run contests and award prizes for the best home fronts and gardens and they are very popular. Given the right conditions, most people will take a pride in their homes and gardens and they are most likely to do it when they own their own homes or when they are working to that end. It is the natural instinct of a home-owner to keep his
place respectable and tidy. We all like to be told, "Your place looks very nice." So we must build homes for purchase.

The hon. member for Norman showed the effect of high interest rates and long-term loans.

He has shown the effect of private companies building in the interests of the people. I do not think he mentioned the effect on children. When children know that mum and dad are happy in their surroundings and prepared to work in the yard and garden, they themselves will endeavour to foster the growing of plants. That sense of achieving something is not developed in a flat. In a flat children have only the walls they live within to consider but in their own home and yard they have a wide scope for development.

Everybody will agree that a child can learn much by having its own pet. Whether it is a cat, a dog or a bird, a child can be taught to look after a pet. As the child grows older the parents can use the pet to teach the facts of life in a nice clean manner. Every child is entitled to a pet. It is the responsibility of parents to provide pets but not many flat-owners like a puppy, a kitten or a bird on the premises.

Economic circumstances have brought about the need for the rented home. Young people today are getting married at a younger age than previously. We should not try to stop them; if they wish to get married young it is their business. But once having decided to enter into the responsibilities of marriage it is wrong that young people should have to be thrown back into their parents' home. Because they have married young they probably have not much money; the basic wage is small, and they are forced to look for accommodation other than by home purchase. The hon. member for Norman said that rent was calculated on the basis of weekly repayments of the cost of a home. That is wrong. What will happen after the normal repayment time? Will the rent be reduced or will the owner be showing a high margin of profit, something which we have criticised in any industry? We are certainly justified in criticising it in State enterprises.

Rental homes are not available today. It has reached the stage where people cannot even get into housing camps. I do not know where it is all going to finish. The housing camps should be moved gradually, but not if the occupants have to live under worse conditions. The Government should see that these people are not forced out without suitable alternate accommodation. If people cannot get things through proper channels they will go to any lengths to get them. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr. DEWAR (Chermside) (12.51 p.m.): First, I wish to refer to the two points—the present slump and the reduction of interest rates on housing loans. It makes me wonder if this motion is not based on wrong premises. I have not noticed any lessening of demand, by young people in particular, to buy homes at present interest rates. I am pleased that the hon. member for Bulimba agrees with our policy of providing homes for purchase. It is the policy of the Country-Liberal Party to encourage home-ownership. I may be pardoned for thinking that the policy of the Labour Party in the past has tended towards the rental-homes scheme. We stated in our policy speech that we would carry on with the building of rental homes for people who require them but that we also would do our utmost to encourage home-ownership.

To what is this alleged slump due? People who were prepared to invest money in rental homes were forced out of business by Labour Governments, whether dominated by Q.L.P. or A.L.P. Their actions caused investors to look elsewhere for investment. When we examine the matter we find that a fantastic state of affairs exists. According to the recent Commonwealth Year Book 9,647 homes were unoccupied in Queensland in 1947. That was bad enough, but by 1954, the date of the last census, the figure had skyrocketed to 21,473, a large percentage being allowed to remain empty because of the rent-control policy of successive Labour Governments.

Mr. Lloyd: They are holiday homes.

Mr. DEWAR: The long, involved legal process for repossession of a home has caused many people to refuse absolutely to rent their homes. Even if half that number were holiday homes, there were still 10,000 unoccupied homes throughout the State. There were 3,800 empty homes in the country and 17,500 in the cities. If half the latter were let by the owners for periods up to six months, that would go a long way towards wiping out the problem for many families, but owners, knowing the difficulty of regaining possession, will not let their homes.

I have personal knowledge of a case in my electorate. A young couple with two children, and expecting a third, applied to the Housing Commission for a home. The house they occupied has been bought recently by another young couple with two children who are expecting a third child. The purchasers are living in two rooms and want their home, but because of the Queensland Housing Commission policy formulated over the years by Labour Governments, although their need is great, they cannot get possession of it. The Treasurer is giving sympathetic consideration to a change in policy.

In order to get possession, the owner is forced to get a court order against the occupants, after giving them 30 days notice to quit. The occupants can then get a three-months' extension, and the Queensland Housing Commission expect them after that time to apply for a further 30 days' extension. The Court will grant it. People are not prepared to let homes for short periods when
they know it will be five months before they can regain possession. That aspect alone discourages letting for short periods.

The increase in population is another cause of the housing shortage. In 1947 the population of Queensland was 1,106,000 and in 1954, 1,218,000. Is it not reasonable to assume that the increase of 212,000 in that time would create a housing shortage? Many factors affect the position.

My next point was mentioned by the hon. member for Bulimba, the tendency of people with money in the bank earning 2½ per cent. interest to buy motor-cars, washing-machines, household appliances and other consumer goods on time payment at an extortionate rate of interest. If they did not do that, they could invest their money in their own homes and so reduce the interest burden.

The failure of successive Labour Governments to co-operate with building societies by guaranteeing savings bank loans to them is another cause of the housing shortage. No money was received from this source, whereas in New South Wales, £118,000,000 was obtained.

At 2.15 p.m.

In accordance with Sessional Order, the House proceeded with Government business.

SUPPLY.

COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Taylor, Clayfield, in the chair.)

Debate resumed from 15 October (see p. 507) on Mr. Hiley’s motion—

‘That there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1957-1958, a sum not exceeding £1,131,753 to defray the salary of the Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor.’

Mr. CONNOLLY (Kurilpa): I desire to congratulate the Treasurer on the speed with which he has assimilated the many and varied difficulties connected with his portfolio so as to bring down such an excellent Budget. In common with most members of my profession, I do not profess to know much about figures and I do not propose to assist him in examining his Financial Statement but I shall exercise my privilege of examining a couple of the papers presented by command to this House.

I propose, first of all, to look at the Annual Report of the Licensing Commission for the year ended 30 June, 1957. The period of the report indicates clearly that it is a report over a period when that Commission was functioning under the previous Administration. It was one of the first papers tabled by the Attorney-General who administers that department and it is plain that it must have been drafted and printed prior to the general election the happy result of which was known a couple of months ago. The report was prepared under the auspices of the last Administration because it abounds in statements which are the sort of eye-wash which would have been popular with those under whose administration it was prepared. Before I support that remark, which is not a very polite one, I congratulate the Ministry, particularly the Attorney-General, on the statement that the Licensing Commission is to be reconstituted. It may be hoped, when it is reconstituted, that it will not again put before this Chamber the sort of report we have today. Contained in it are two statements to which I take exception, one in particular is that in respect of ownership of hotels and the other the accommodation provided by hotels. The Commission sets out to establish this basis: ‘‘It is not true’’—and I am quoting from the report—that breweries have a monopoly of the hotel trade in Queensland.’’ The fact relied upon by the Commission to establish that proposition is that the freehold ownership of hotels in Queensland by breweries does not exceed 15.84 per cent. It is very important to note that the Commission sets out to establish that proposition. Under the heading of ‘‘Ownership of Hotels’’ on page 4 the chairman of the Commission who signed the report says—

‘‘Newspapers have referred to ‘brewery barons’ and ‘beer monopolies’ leaving the inference that breweries have a monopoly ownership of hotels.’’

I pause to state that those who make such remarks about the breweries of this State do not by any means seek to imply that breweries have a monopoly of the ownership of hotels. But they do seek to establish that breweries have an altogether disproportionate influence and control over the retail sale of the commodity that they manufacture.

The report goes on—

‘‘There are four (4) breweries in Queensland and 1,199 hotels, of which 190 are owned by breweries. Thus 15.84 per cent. of the freeholds of this State’s hotels are brewery-owned. Eight (8) registered spirit merchants own 77 hotel freeholds, or 6.42 per cent. of all freeholds.

‘‘Generally, breweries do not have any financial interest in hotels other than their own freeholds.’’

I take very strong exception to the last sentence, because, as far as I am aware, since Labour Governments took office in 1932—and hon. members opposite are just as much responsible for the history of their party as are the hon. members on the cross Opposition benches, who are notable by their absence—it has not been necessary for any disclosure to be made to the Licensing Commission of the interests they have in hotels other than the ownership of the freeholds. Where Mr. F. T. Byrne, the Chairman of the Licensing Commission, got the necessary facts on which he thought it proper to make such a statement in a report submitted to
this Chamber is beyond me. Again I quote from the report of the Licensing Commission—

"From the above, it will be seen therefore that it is not true to state that breweries have a monopoly of the hotel trade in Queensland."

It is perfectly plain that the Licensing Commission is setting out to convince this House, and through this House the people of Queensland, that the breweries of Queensland do not exercise a monopoly or even a disproportionate influence over the retail sale of their commodity. That is either a piece of erasure ineptitude on the part of the Commission or a deliberate attempt to have this Chamber believe something which is simply not the fact and of which the contrary is notorious in the State of Queensland.

The tying of houses and the tied-house system are common expressions used in regard to this matter. All political parties profess not to believe in the tied-house system, and I believe that the party to which I belong is genuine in its belief that that is an undesirable system. I will be corrected by hon. members opposite if I am wrong, but I think the Labour-in-Politics Convention has expressed itself very strongly on this subject from time to time.

Mr. Lloyd: That is the right place to get your authority from when you speak about the Labour Party.

Mr. Connolly: I accept that completely. It is my belief—again I ask to be corrected if I am wrong—that the Labour-in-Politics Convention has passed resolutions on this subject.

Mr. Lloyd: That is true.

Mr. Connolly: In this Chamber in the old, happy days when members of the A.I.P. and Q.I.P. were playing together as happily as sandboys, from time to time, former Premiers of this State, in my respectful submission, had the effrontery to introduce legislation and say it was intended to do away with tied houses. Ministers of the Crown did the same thing, and I intend developing my argument on that subject.

Mr. Mann: We had Wadley here helping to draft the Bill.

Mr. Connolly: I ask hon. members opposite not to get excited. In 1946 an Act was brought down and a subsequent Premier of the State described it as the first legislation intended to untie the hotels from the breweries. The "Hansard" reference is page 467 of the 1945-46 volume. It appears at the top of column 2. That was a piece of outrageous cynicism characteristic of hon. members opposite and those who used to be their cohorts.

Mr. Lloyd interjected.

Mr. Connolly: Our arms are open over here.

There are at least three ways in which a hotel can be tied to the brewery that manufactures the product it sells. The obvious one, and the most expensive, is to buy the hotel. In the simple, innocent days when the barons of the breweries had not learned the devices that they subsequently learned under so-called Labour administration, that is what they used to do, and for a while after 1932 they invested heavily, as I shall demonstrate with figures, in the purchase of hotel freeholds.

There are two other methods well known to those who administered the State for so long. One is the head-lease system. The brewery buys a lease from the freeholder and grants a sub-lease back to the licensee. In that sub-lease it inserts all the restrictive provisions that it likes ensuring that the licensee will sell only one brand of liquor. I said that was well known. When the 1946 legislation was introduced the Attorney-General, the late Mr. Gledson, referred to the head-lease system. The Government knew all about it.

The third system is that of advancing money to a licensee to buy his way into a hotel, securing the loan of the money on mortgage—which is a perfectly proper thing to do, naturally—and inserting in the mortgage covenants restricting the mortgagor, the borrower of the money and the man running the hotel, to selling only one type of liquor. That is a device that has been used so long that in Section 69 of the Act of 1912 there was a special provision that securities of that character, embodying restrictive tied-house provisions, had to be put before the Licensing Court and that they were not valid unless they were approved by the Licensing Court. What happened in 1932 when so-called Labour took office in Queensland? Some hon. members may not remember this but it is the history of it. Since 1932 the Labour Party has just opened the door to the tying of houses in the State and it cannot deny it.

Mr. Akens: The breweries used to write Labour's legislation up for them.
Mr. CONNOLLY: I see that my learned junior has arrived.

In 1932, in the first session of Parliament after Labour achieved office at the end of the Moore Government, the Labour Party, with consummate cynicism, repealed Section 69 of the old Liquor Act of 1912 which made it necessary for securities with restrictive provisions in them to be approved by the Licensing Court. It was not long before the Licensing Court was no more, and before the whole business was conducted in camera, hush-hush, sub rosa, and any other such expression that one may use. The light of day has not seen the liquor trade of the State very well since Labour took office in 1932. Since 1932 we have seen the omelette so effectively set out in the report is not at all edifying.

I refer to the 1946 legislation. In that year the Liquor Acts were amended in various particulars. The Attorney-General, the late Mr. Gledson, when introducing the Bill which contained Section 47A, which is to be found at pages 271 and 272 of the 1945-46 sessional volume of "Hansard" said: "This is a very important section because it strikes a blow at the tied houses."

This is the effect of the provision inserted to strike a blow at the tied houses: that it should be a ground for forfeiture if the licensee did not provide liquor of various types which was in demand in the area. If he was selling Castlemaine beer and people wanted the other brand, that one should be a ground for forfeiture that the licensee did not provide this liquor in demand. This was very good. It sounded like a firm step taken by the workers' Government. The only exception they made was the little exception that a brewery-owned hotel would not have to sell any beer but the one it manufactured. There were to be no tied houses except houses tied by the brewery. I have not heard that anybody except the breweries wanted tied houses in large numbers. I realise that other small monopolies set out to own hotels. But it is a problem of the manufacturer who wants to create a monopoly for the outlet of his product which is our main concern. Everybody in politics is paying lip-service to the notion that tied houses are a bad thing. The Labour-in-Politics Convention passed a classic resolution that nobody could take exception to, but what happens, nothing at all.

Mr. Alkens: I was Charlie Wanstall's junior when that Bill went through and we did a magnificent job.

Mr. CONNOLLY: He certainly did. If hon. members look at the amendment moved by Mr. Wanstall and which is to be found in "Hansard" for 1945-1946, page 474, they will realise that if anybody wanted to do anything about tying houses they would have accepted it. If that had been done we would have a different position.

Mr. Thackeray: When are you going to introduce it?
Mr. Connolly: Address yourself to the Government.

Mr. Thackeray: The hon. member is a member of the Government.

Mr. Connolly: I am a private member. Hon. members opposite and their predecessors have made such a mess that heaven alone knows what can be done. I speak seriously. It is no use taking up a demagogue's attitude. I do not know what the answer is. I do not think any hon. member opposite knows either. Hon. members opposite have left it there so long and acquiesced in the attitude of the government's representatives. I do not know what the decisions dictated by the heads of the government officials have made such a mess that heaven alone knows what has been done. Hon. members opposite know either. Hon. members opposite have left it there so long and the gentlemen who are now sitting on the cross benches. The matter that brought me to my feet is this and it is a fair question: What sort of an administration have we had for so many years when the Licensing Commission can present such a report to this House?

An Opposition Member: When was it presented?

Mr. Connolly: It was drafted for the year ended 30 June, 1957, under the old administration. It was tabled by the Minister. My remarks seem to be exciting comment with a small voice. Someone said, 'I am only a little boy with a small voice.' (Laughter.) I do not think hon. members on either set of benches of the House will welcome any inquiry as to the source of that fund, but many hon. members with nasty minds like mine will venture to guess where those funds came from.

I am asked what we can do.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. Connolly: I am only a little boy with a small voice.

Mr. Hilton: And a small mind.

Mr. Connolly: That may be right, but hon. members will have a chance to decide whether that is so or not. You cannot do anything about a matter like this until you know the truth. What is the truth? It is not contained in the annual report of the Licensing Commission for the year ended 30 June, 1957.

As to the ownership of hotels and the brewery interests in hotels, I do not know the position and I do not think hon. members opposite know the position. Hon. members on the cross benches of the Opposition may be in a more favourable position, but I do not think they know the exact position. I take it that the information is known only to the boards of directors. I have the balance sheets for the two major breweries in Queensland, but I certainly cannot get the information from them.

In the good old days before the so-called Labour Governments took office in this State, the Licensing Court used to know, but it does not know now. The Licensing Commission only has information on the ownership of the freeholds. It is not known to the Commission officially whether breweries have head leases over every hotel or have lent money to every hotel under mortgages containing restrictive covenants. All I suggest is that before the next report of the Commission, or whatever board takes its place, if another one does, some arrangement be made for that important statutory body to have access to the necessary information, so that it will be able to tell hon. members the facts.

The unworthy suspicions that I harbour may be entirely incorrect, but I share those suspicions, worthy or unworthy, with many other people, and it is my belief that such a report as the one I am criticising should never again be tabled in this Chamber.

I have dealt with the ownership of hotels. In another part of the report we have what I am led to believe by persons who know is an old chestnut of the Licensing Commission, a statement about the accommodation provided in hotels. The report contains a bit of a square-off for licensees on accommodation. The report states that licensees report considerable annual losses on the house side of their businesses and that many of them complain that it is an onerous service to have to provide for the public.

My complaint is not so much against the licensees as against those who derive the real profit. Liquor provides an enormous profit, and if some of it is not used to subsidise proper service to the public in the provision of accommodation, we are not going to achieve the standard the Minister for Labour and Industry who is interested in the tourist trade wants to see so that the tourist trade will be one of the big industries of the State.

I see by Press reports that the Minister has had something to say about the standard of hotel accommodation in the central and northern districts. Anyone who has travelled with circuit courts as I have knows perfectly well that the standard of the hotel accommodation outside Brisbane is very poor. Why does the Licensing Commission find it necessary to square off on the subject? I suggest there are two answers. The first is to provide a ready-made answer in case somebody writes in and says that such-and-such hotels provide shocking accommodation, and the other is—and I commend this to the attention of the Attorney-General and the Minister for Labour and Industry who is concerned with encouraging the tourist trade—that I am credibly informed, and do not propose...
to give the source of the information, but it can be checked, that the Licensing Commission has granted permits to various hotels, breweries and other people to reconstruct and rebuild but finishing up with less bed accommodation than before. And this, in a time when the population is expanding and the number of licences has been reduced. Individual licensees are being permitted to reduce accommodation.

An Opposition Member: What about beer gardens?

Mr. CONNOLLY: It may be that there is an innocent explanation. I am not sitting in the middle of the source of information but looking on from the outside as most of us do. I am wondering, and most of the people are wondering. I commend to the Minister an examination of this situation if he has the time. The major profit from hotels naturally is derived from the sale of liquor. As the Commission has said, we can see a great deal of money being spent on hotels. Where is it being spent? It is being spent at the tap, where the beer pours out and as an hon. member said, in beer gardens. They are improving the sale of the beer, attracting the moth into the parlour to the bright lights—attracting the man who buys the beer. Little is spent on accommodation; surely some should be spent on accommodation. It may be that having examined all this, the appropriate Minister will tell me that I am mistaken. My information is that the Commission has been permitting a steady reduction of bed accommodation in hotels. It will do nobody any good.

Before I depart from the ramifications of the liquor trade I want to comment on a couple of other matters. Hon. members opposite speak about the work of the former Government, the so-called workers' Government. Why is it when Evans Deakin's men wanted to have counter-lunches at the pub under the Story Bridge the Government invoked the plague regulations against them? I interjected the other day when the hon. member for South Brisbane was speaking in connection with the University, that Queensland was the only place where a certain provision existed. He replied that there were many things which only existed in Queensland. You can say that again. Is there anywhere else where a Labour Government, a workers' Government prevents a working man having a counter-lunch, which the publican is prepared to provide for him, by invoking the plague regulations?

Mr. Gair: You would not have a counter lunch, surely.

Mr. CONNOLLY: I would have one, and so would many other people. I do not think the hon. member for South Brisbane has had occasion to have one for many years, because the amenities of ministerial office are such that he did not have to go into a bar. I am a man who has had a beer in hotels for many years, and in New South Wales and Victoria, which are not completely dominated by the brewery interests, I have had many a counter lunch and I have been delighted to have it.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. CONNOLLY: I do not know why my observations are exciting such comment, but they appear to be.

Mr. Burrows: What about the cockroaches?

Mr. CONNOLLY: As far as the cockroaches are concerned, everyone agrees that if you are going to serve food, not only in a bar but also anywhere else, it has to be done in accordance with the Health Regulations; it has to be done cleanly and hygienically. But why was it that as soon as the licensee of the Story Bridge Hotel did something that might have set a standard which would force the brewery-owned hotels to follow suit and give a similar service to the working man, this so-called workers' government about Lent into action, were galvanised into action, as though they had been given a shock with a battery, and immediately brought in special regulations under the Liquor Acts to prevent it from being done. They made such a mess of it that they passed one regulation in December—and it was such a stupid regulation that not even a peanut could have been sold over the bar under it—and they had to pass another regulation in January, all at the behest of their lords and masters. That shows what sort of people they were.

Mr. Mann: Tell us something about the slush fund, before you go on.

Mr. CONNOLLY: Hon. gentlemen opposite know much more about the slush fund than I do. If desired, I shall direct a question to the hon. member for Brisbane about the slush fund. I do not know anything about it, but he might be able to answer my question.

Mr. Aikens: They used to get £250 out of it at each election.

Mr. Burrows: Somebody has been getting my mail, then.

Mr. CONNOLLY: There is one other matter that has occurred to me and which I desire to bring to the notice of the Committee and of the Ministry. I cannot think what ought to be done to meet this situation.

Mr. Mann: Ask the member for South Brisbane; he can tell you.

Mr. CONNOLLY: Hon. gentlemen opposite are very free with their advice.

Mr. Burrows: We are trying to help you.

Mr. CONNOLLY: I know hon. members opposite are, but I do not accept all the help that is offered to me. I have found in my
profession that it is not always wise. As a socialistic colleague of hon. gentlemen opposite said—I refer to Mr. Arthur Calwell—"We will rush in and socialise everything because it does not matter very much about changes of government; you cannot unscramble the omelette."

A Government Member: You cannot unplug the fowl.

Mr. CONNOLLY: That is true enough. I do not know how it can be done. What I desire to commend to the Minister is that at some time during the term of office of this Parliament a determined effort be made, either through the Licensing Commission or through some other body, to find out the real facts of the ramifications of the brewing industry and its control of the hotels of the State, whether by means of the ownership of freeholds, the taking of head leases and re-granting subleases under restrictive covenants, or the taking of securities for the loan of money to licensees, all of which devices, as is well known to every hon. member in the Chamber, are used in order to obtain for them the restrictions they desire over the marketing of their products.

The Literature Board of Review is a body set up under a Statute of the State to review the publication and distribution of literature in the State. It has furnished an Annual Report for the year ended 30 June, 1957. I suppose, like all Common Lawyers, I start—and it is an idea I commend to hon. members—with a deep-rooted suspicion of controls of this type. I realise that some modification is necessary but fundamentally it is not desirable to censor the material put before the public. The law has always recognised that some qualification is necessary. Obscene material has always been a special field in which the common law has imposed penalties and in which, later, Statutes have imposed penalties and the court has acted on them. But we have in the Annual Report a sort of statement of which I am profoundly suspicious.

Mr. Aikens: They have gone “bikini mad.”

Mr. CONNOLLY: My learned friend from Mundingburra says they have gone “bikini mad.” It may be that the personal philosophy of some of the members of the Board has carried them into an attitude of mind which I personally think is undesirable and which is unduly restrictive. I prefix my remarks by saying that, as far as I can see—and I have not seen all the material they have banned—it is all junk. I am not aware of their having banned a single publication that is of the slightest literary merit.

Mr. Mann: You agree with their performance?

Mr. CONNOLLY: I do not agree with it at all. I do not agree that because a thing is junk anybody has the right to say it must not be distributed. Hon. members opposite, or the hon. member who interjected, may think that, but I disagree entirely. The only ground for banning something is that its circulation to the public does profound harm. The fact that something is junk is no reason whatever for banning it.

I do not know all the members of the Board. I know at least three of them and I hold them in personal esteem. That does not mean I have to agree with what they say. The report is a piece of special pleading for the Board. It contains much analysis trying to sort out the judges who are with them and the judges who are against them and counting the heads of those with them and of those against them. They have banned certain material on which the courts have upheld them. As to that I have nothing to say. The courts have upheld them and it seems to me they had good grounds for doing what they did. But they banned many silly little love comics. I do not know the proper expression to describe them but they are silly stuff—"Real Love," "Romance Story," "New Romances," "Popular Romance," "Darling Romance." It is junk but it would not do anybody the slightest harm.

Mr. Hart interjected.

Mr. CONNOLLY: My learned friend, the hon. member for Mount Gravatt, does not agree with me. The High Court agrees with me.

Mr. Hart: By three judges to two.

Mr. CONNOLLY: The hon. member for Mount Gravatt may have drafted this report for all I know. He is adopting the attitude of the Board, counting heads. On my side I have the Chief Justice of Australia, a man who is famous for his detachment and impartiality in matters in this category. It is just nonsense. It does not matter whether it is on the streets or not, the banning of things is bad unless there is very good reason for it. I am informed that by an order dated 24 September, 1957, the Board has banned another publication indistinguishable from the ones the banning of which was upset by the Full Court and the High Court. It is just too silly for words. Establish a bureaucrat or a board with the right to exercise an opinion as to what you should or should not read, and what do we find? He is proved to be wrong somewhere but he will not accept it. He appeals as far as he can. After he finishes appealing he will still not accept the decision of the Court.

Mr. Burrows: You are not accepting their decision either.

Mr. CONNOLLY: I am accepting the decision of the courts. On 24 September, 1957, a publication titled "Harbour Love" was banned. It is hardly distinguishable from the publications referred to by the High Court as being just junk but publications that did not attract the operation of the
Act. I do not like the attitude of the Board in the following sentence taken from its Third Annual Report—

"Rightly or wrongly, the Board in dealing with literature of this class has understood the function committed to it by the legislature to be that it should act in the main as wise and prudent parents would act in relation to their children to ensure that the literature at large on the book-stalls of this State should be such as the normal parent would be willing to have available for his children."

I take strong exception to that because I do not see the slightest reason in the world why these gentlemen should have any jurisdiction over me as one of their children. If I want to read junk I will, if I do not want to read it I will not. It is not the function of the Board to set itself up as a parent to the community but merely to exercise its function under the Act.

Mr. Aikens: They are setting up a juvenile standard for adult reading.

Mr. Connolly: I agree entirely with that very proper phrase.

Mr. Gair: You have got a brief from journalists and publishers.

Mr. Connolly: The hon. member for South Brisbane has indicated that he can never approach any subject objectively. He always looks for something sinister. I have no brief from journalists or publishers. I have never engaged in this type of litigation. I should be happy to accept a brief from either side; I would do my best with it. If people with attitudes like the hon. member for South Brisbane have been relegated to the cross benches, at least the last elections have done some good.

They are the two reports of statutory bodies I desired to bring before the Chamber. It seems to me that the Ministers would do well to scrutinise them. The Licensing Commission should report fully and objectively to Parliament without arguing a brief for any interest. If the facts are facts which excite comment or require action, that is the whole purpose of a report being made to Parliament. I am sure that hon. members will not think that I am speaking intemperately when I say that it is my impression that the Licensing Commission report set out to pull the wool over the eyes of the Chamber, something that the Chamber should not tolerate. I hope that in the ensuing 12 months the Ministry may be able to exercise a little influence in the right direction with the Licensing Commission and the Literature Board of Review.

Mr. Ramsden (Merthyr) (3.5 p.m.): I wish to draw the attention of the Committee to page 2 of the Treasurer's Financial Statement delivered on 26 September. I quote the following from that page:

"For some time I have doubted whether our form of presentation is sufficiently clear. The charging of capital works against revenue; the placing of some interest earnings direct to the credit of a reserve fund; the blending in the common Trust and Special Funds of moneys which are entirely the property of the State with moneys which the State holds only as a trustee for others—all of these things have tended to perpetuate distortions in our accounting presentation which I propose to correct."

I draw the Committee's renewed attention to those points made by the Treasurer because I believe they are very pregnant words. They are as welcome as a cleansing wind which will clean away from the affairs of the Government the cobwebs which Governments have left for so long to hide the true position of the State's finances from us. I congratulate the Treasurer on his forthright statements and his determination to see that the people get a true outline of the position. When the Treasurer presents his Budget next year we shall at least get the true picture as he promised. The Treasurer's promise that he will study further the Estimates and next year give his conclusions heralds a new era in Budget presentation in Queensland.

Mr. Hanlon: Have we to wait for 12 months?

Mr. Ramsden: The taxpayers—who include myself and the hon. member for Ipswich—want to know where their money is spent. They have a right to know. They want to know whether it is spent wisely and well. I wish respectfully to suggest certain things to the Treasurer as he probes the problem of the presentation of the Estimates. I make my suggestions as a layman in the hope that those who are experts on the matter will have due regard to them. I represent the vast majority—the ordinary people. The former presentation adopted by past Treasurers and on this occasion by the present Treasurer, are such that highly qualified accountants of many years' experience have found great difficulty in getting a clear picture of the real financial position of the State. I venture to say that if we ever had to take the present Estimates and present them in toto to three qualified accountants and ask them to work out the State's credit or debit balance and show what the position of our railways was, what we were losing or making per annum, I am sure we would get three different answers, each varying to the extent of some millions of pounds. If that is the case amongst those who are competent to discuss these matters, how much more confusing must it be to the ordinary man? I am an ordinary man,

Mr. Davies: They possibly would differ, in the same way as lawyers.

Mr. Ramsden: They may. They certainly would under this system. If the experts cannot agree, how on earth can ordinary parliamentarians and ordinary taxpayers understand the real position?
The Treasurer mentioned three aspects of Budget presentation he proposes to correct, the first was the charging of capital works against revenue, the second, the placing of some interest earnings direct to the credit of a reserve fund, and, third, the blending of moneys which are entirely the property of the State to deal with as it wishes, with the moneys which the State holds as a trustee for others, and which can only be used for specific purposes in the one trust and special fund account.

Attention to these matters would be most welcome, but I suggest to the Treasurer that there are many other aspects of budgetary presentation which it would be desirable to have simplified not only for the parliamentarian who is not a qualified accountant but more so for the average elector who, as I said previously, is entitled to know how his money is raised and spent. We live in a democracy governed by a parliamentary Government elected by the people of the State. For that reason it is not unreasonable to claim that every member of that democratically-elected Parliament and every elector is entitled to know just what the parliamentary system costs. He should be able to find this information which is vital to him by glancing at the appropriate page of the Estimates, but can he? I suppose he can get the information from the Estimates if he is prepared to spend hours of time in searching through it in odd corners; if he takes a sheaf of paper and jots down the many figures he will find and more important still, if he knows just where to look for them.

Let us assume this afternoon that John Taxpayer has a copy of the Estimates and has decided that he wants to know just how much Parliament is costing the State. At the moment he may have a particular interest in that subject, because every time he reads the daily paper he learns about the growing demand for new States, both in New England and in North Queensland. Without any special training in these matters and without anyone to help him to sort out his ideas and figures, help him sort out the special sort of timber he is looking for in this jungle of figures, he takes these Estimates and a sheaf of paper. Let us follow him in his search to find out what Parliament is costing and witness the trouble to which he has to go to find out the cost of government.

Mr. Davies: He would not have the time. He would be more interested in studying the relationship between the Commonwealth and the States.

Mr. Ramsden: Or the relationship between the hon. member and Bukowski.

If he turns to page 2, in Schedule B he will find the salaries of the Cabinet, the Speaker, the Chairman of Committees. On his sheaf of paper he jots down those figures, because they are intermingled with other figures such as the salaries of judges of the Supreme Court, members of the Land Court, the Commissioner for Railways, the Auditor-General, and so on.

Having jotted down those figures, he then turns to page 3, and there he finds the salaries of the ordinary rank and file Members of Parliament, along with the figure for the Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Fund. On the same page, for some reason best known to past Treasurers, those figures are mixed up with items such as the grant in aid of the banana industry, the annual subsidy to Grammar Schools, the Coal Mining Acts and similar matters which have no connection whatever except that they are printed on page 3 of the Estimates.

Having jotted down those figures, he then turns to page 7, where he finds the salaries and incidental expenses of the Clerk of the Executive Council and the Messenger of the Executive Council. There our searcher for knowledge finds a note that the principal salary of the Clerk of the Executive Council is provided as Assistant Under Secretary, Premier and Chief Secretary's Department, while the salary of the messenger is put under the Chief Officer section of the Premier and Chief Secretary's Department.

Having made more notes, he then turns to page 8, where he finds the salaries of the parliamentary House staff, including the Library staff, the salaries of the Chief and Deputy Chief Reporter and the incidental expenses of Parliament House and parliamentarians. The rest of the reporting staff are not shown there. We have to turn to page 13 to find them.

Mr. Davies: Actually what you want is more dissection and more tables?

Mr. Ramsden: Yes, a clear perspective so that one can see the position at a glance. It is not possible to do that.

Mr. Donald: You cannot get it any clearer than it is.

Mr. Gair: I think it will come to you.

Mr. Ramsden: It may be clear to the hon. member for South Brisbane who graced the Treasury benches for some time, but I am speaking of the man in the street. The position is not clear to him and not likely to be under the existing form of presentation.

Mr. Gair: You will see things in the various departments.

Mr. Ramsden: If the man in the street has the time and the inclination and the paper and the know-how he can get the information. I got it but only after a few hours research.

Mr. Hanlon: The same thing would apply to public company accounts if you wanted to get certain information.

Mr. Ramsden: I doubt it very much.

Mr. Baxter: The information is factual.
Mr. RANSDEN: I am not disputing that, but I am endeavouring to show how difficult it is for the man in the street to find out how much any particular department is making or losing.

Mr. Gair: You should get the Auditor-General's report and read them together.

Mr. Hanlon: Perhaps he can't read.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. RANSDEN: I made up my mind when I came to this Chamber not to indulge in personalities. I think I might have to change my tactics. However, we turn from page 8 to page 11 and then to pages 13 and 14 where under the heading of 'Miscellaneous Services' the seeker of information finds particulars relating to the secretarial help given to the Leader of the official Opposition and the Leader of the Queensland Labour Party. After he has done that he is really lost because he has to study in vain the Estimates in the following 65 pages. On page 80 more in sorrow than in anger he finds the payment to the Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Fund. If he is not too weary and can be sure he has not omitted some basic item—

Mr. Davies interjected.

Mr. RANSDEN: We would have to be unemployed to have the time to do it. He then finally adds up the figures and with a sigh of triumph he gets a figure which should reveal the information the taxpayer seeks as to what Parliament costs.

If hon. members have been following the basis of my reasoning they will know that the figures I have mentioned come under three main headings, the Schedules, Executive and Legislative and Premier and Chief Secretary. Why should not the information be grouped under the general heading of Parliament so that the humble citizen with as little brain power as I, can get the information he seeks? It is beyond me. The same system of apparently trying to avoid having the position made clear is followed throughout the past system of presenting the Estimates. Take a look at the Interest and Sinking Fund payments. Interest and sinking funds represent £12,500,000, a very substantial part of the total expenditure. If we look at pages 4 and 5 we see the interest payment and on page 3 the sinking fund contributions appear as an inconspicuous item at the foot of the Schedule. Apart from the interest on account of the South Brisbane-Kyogle-Grafton railway, there is virtually no indication of even the major capital assets which have required the expenditure of loan money on which this interest is being paid—£10,250,000 interest, and £2,250,000, sinking fund.

To illustrate that, it is not possible, as far as I can see, to find the amount allocated for interest for the current year in respect of the railways, even though Treasurer's Statements showed it for previous years. The one exception showing where loan money has gone is under 'Hospitals,' where an amount of over £1,000,000 is shown on page 20 for interest and redemption. I submit that at least the major items of capital expenditure on which interest is to be paid should be shown, together with the amount of capital expended and the amount of interest involved. Major additions in the current year should be clearly shown. It is not just idle curiosity which requires this information. Adequately presented, it will reveal the high cost in interest that has been paid on projects that take years to construct before any benefit is obtained from them. It would reveal, for example, the high cost in interest of the Burdekin high-level bridge project over the 10 years of its construction.

Mr. Aikens: It would not matter how much that cost, it would be worthwhile.

Mr. RANSDEN: I am not disputing that, but I am saying—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. gentleman must address the chair.

Mr. RANSDEN: I apologise, Mr. Taylor. I was trying to explain to the hon. member that the statement does not reveal the high cost in interest of the Burdekin high-level bridge during the 10 years of its construction. It is a simple matter to show that a £1,000,000 project that takes 10 years to complete could cost an additional £250,000 in interest before it is completed. That £250,000 in interest would be saved if that same project was completed in one year.

Mr. Davies: Do you think it could have been completed in one year?

Mr. RANSDEN: No, I am not saying it could. I am merely giving an illustration to assist me in making a point. The £250,000 saved would then be available for capital expenditure.

If the Treasurer can give us this additional information in future years, I am sure that Parliament will be better qualified to keep a watchful scrutiny to see that much waste is avoided. When he sets about clarifying the expenditure for our future use, I suggest that a grouping of items of expenditure in such a way that it is readily possible to find what the State is spending on particular types of service to the community is very desirable, and perhaps with respect to Parliament's own costs, I am already mentioned, and in the field of education and health the importance of such a grouping cannot be emphasised too much.

Mr. Aikens: The condensing of the Estimates was done at the suggestion of the present Government—did you know that?

Mr. RANSDEN: I did not know it.

Mr. Aikens: I clearly remember it.

Mr. RANSDEN: I am not old enough to remember that far back. As the Estimates have been presented by past Treasurers, they
could well have been designed merely to hide this very necessary information from the public rather than to divulge it.

Time will not allow me to pursue this subject as fully as I should like.

Mr. Davies: You must say that some of the tables are clear and easy to follow.

Mr. Ramsden: The hon. gentleman can have his say afterwards. Hon. members can see what I am driving at. I challenge them to take these Estimates in their spare time—they are very vociferous on this point—and try to find out as they are presented exactly what we are spending on Health and Home Affairs and Education. The process almost defies normal patience. Let us take a quick look at Health and Home Affairs, particularly health. Part of the information we are seeking is on pages 15 to 23. That is all right. It is quite clear. It is the Department of Health and Home Affairs for page after page—from page 15 to page 23. But information about the cost of the State's health is very much mixed up with other matters extraneous to health. For example, mixed up with the figures on those pages is the expenditure on aboriginals and fire brigades—nothing at all to do with health. I suggest that the mere re-grouping of health items with a sub-total would be a starting-point for simplification. Information about health is not confined to those pages. Pages 15 to 23 are devoted entirely to the Department of Health and Home Affairs, but on page 25, under the Department of Public Works and Local Government, we find "Repairs, painting, alterations, furniture, &c., to Government hospitals and mental hospitals."

Mr. Davies: You get your copy of each departmental report. You will get it all very clearly set out. The report of the Department of Health and Home Affairs will give you all the details relating to that department.

Mr. Ramsden: It may. I am very sorry that I am not able to make myself clear enough to be understood by hon. members opposite. My point is that to the man in the street this is a hopeless jumble of figures. It means nothing and cannot be followed.

Mr. Munn: It is the Treasurer's responsibility.

Mr. Ramsden: I have admitted that, but the previous Government followed this system for years past and the Treasurer has promised to change it.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. Ramsden: All I am trying to say, in spite of the vociferous interruptions, which, after all, are designed to waste my time and serve no other purpose, is that in the Summary of Estimates of Expenditure from Trust and Special Funds, on page 80, under the heading "Department of Health and Home Affairs," four of the six items relate to health. The other two, without any subdivision, concern fire brigades and aboriginals. There should be some subdivision and some reference in the original Consolidated Revenue section to those Trust and Special Funds. The ordinary taxpayer should not have to spend hours on research, as I have had to do to find these figures to present this very speech. He should not have to do that to come to the conclusions I have come to. The ordinary taxpayer should be able to find readily the cost of administration or the income of any one department.

A Government Member: You cannot find £35,000,000 worth of expenditure without looking for it.

Mr. Ramsden: Quite so, but similar items should be grouped together on the same pages. In the Summary of Estimates of Expenditure from the Loan Fund, page 101, under the heading "The Treasurer and Housing," there appears an item, "Loans to Hospitals Boards," which surely should have some reference made to it under "Health," but there is none as far as I can see.

Again, there is, in the detailed Estimates for the Department of Public Works and Local Government on page 102, an amount of just over £250,000 for Government hospital and mental hospital buildings. I repeat that each of these items of expenditure on health, expenditure from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, and expenditure from the Trust and Special Funds Account, and the Loan Fund, could and indeed should be more simply presented and isolated than under the present confusing system. As it is, it takes a trained accountancy investigator more hours than should be necessary to find out information which should be and must be available readily to the layman unskilled in the interpretation of Financial Statements.

As I still have some time available, let us for a short while study the Estimates as they affect the Department of Education. Ascertaining the State's expenditure on this department is even more complicated than in the case of the Department of Health and Home Affairs. The figures for the Department of Education include such items as the annual subsidy to grammar schools, page 3. It is interesting to note that the item does not cover the whole subsidy. It covers only part of the subsidy because on page 59 under Department of Education there is an additional endowment to Grammar schools. On page 11 we find an item of "Maintenance for the University," this time under the Co-ordinator-General of Works section of the Premier's Department. On page 23 there are some minor items under the Department of Health and Home Affairs relating to "Kindergarten Teacher for the State Children's Homes," and "Warder-teacher for the Westbrook Farm Home for Boys."
On turning to page 25 under the Department of Public Works we find ‘‘Repairs, Painting, Alterations, Furniture, etc.’’ for State schools, technical colleges, high and intermediate schools. We turn thence to pages 57-63 where we find, in the right place under the Department of Education, the bulk of the figures we require, or at least the obvious ones. But they are by no means complete and if we want to pursue the subject to its logical conclusion, we must continue our search through the Estimates to page 81 where we locate the Department of Education Trust Fund, page 82, the new University works and St. Lucia Bridge trust fund, under the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works, Premier’s Department, and further to page 102 where we again discover under the Department of Public Works ‘‘State School Buildings, Technical Colleges, State High and Primary Schools, Queensland Agricultural College and High School Buildings Loan Fund.’’ Turn to page 103 and we find ‘‘New University—Completion of Buildings and Approaches’’—once again under the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works in the Department of the Treasurer and Housing. In this item it would appear that the Co-ordinator-General has switched offices from the Department of the Premier and Chief Secretary to the Department of the Treasurer.

There are many other examples one could give, if limitless time was available. Even within the examples I have given I cannot guarantee that there are not some items I have missed in spite of my care, and thus I have failed to get a clear picture of the direction of Government expenditure.

It is estimated that a total of £59,750,000 will be expended from the Trust and Special Funds. It is not readily apparent what receipts will be received by these funds, whether the expenditure is more or less than it should be, either overall, or with respect to any particular fund, and whether any action can be taken to increase these receipts. On page 19 of the Tables relating to the Treasurer’s Financial Statement we see the receipts but there is no indication at all of their source. The Trust and Special Funds expenditure represents 35 per cent. of the total State expenditure. Under the present scheme Parliament has little or no opportunity to scrutinise the source of money which enables this expenditure to be made.

It has become customary to include as part of the Consolidated Revenue expenditure the whole of the working expenses of business undertakings, and as receipts the whole of the takings. This has had the tendency of increasing the cost of Government in the public mind. For example, this year railway expenditure (and railways are the major business undertaking) represents 40 per cent. of the Consolidated Revenue fund expenditure. There seems to be no good reason why separate accounts should not be shown for business undertakings, similar to the accounts of a subsidiary company, of a parent company. As a matter of fact, some effort has been made to apply this principle to hospitals on page 20, but it seems to be only an isolated instance in the Estimates.

Finally, I might say that having made the necessary and desirable revisions and regroupings of the items of revenue and expenditure, it would seem desirable that everything possible be done to present the information as clearly as possible. That would involve the use of the graph form of presentation so widely adopted with modern company accounts. The State Government of Queensland has an annual expenditure in the current year of over £172,000,000—more than any private business, many times more. It is the business of the Government to present clear and readily understandable accounts so that the vast bulk of the shareholders, the citizens of Queensland, will know what is being done in this huge and vital business. I recommend the suggestions I have made to the Treasurer for his earnest consideration. I hope that when we see the Estimates next year, after the hon. gentleman has given consideration to the reforms that should be made, the House will see a much clearer picture of the financial balances of the State. I thank the House for its courtesy and again commend the Treasurer for presenting a very difficult Budget at very short notice.

Mr. COBURNE (Burdekin) (3.37 p.m.): In 1936 the then Premier, the late E. M. Hanlon commissioned Mr. Harold Williams of Lecoton, to make a complete survey of Queensland for the purpose of making a report on the processing and canning of tropical fruits. As most hon. members know, Mr. Williams subsequently furnished to Mr. Hanlon a very comprehensive, instructive and helpful report. He made an enumerated survey of the whole of the coastal areas of Queensland, particularly those which offered possibilities for the production of pineapples. He spoke with the leaders of industries in all those areas and he looked at every aspect that would be associated with the establishment of successful canneries throughout the State of Queensland. After supporting the establishment of the cannery at Northgate—which is so successful now—he stated that it should be possible progressively to establish medium pineapple canneries throughout the State of Queensland. He listed in order of importance or economic grounds the following districts as having potential sites for such medium canning establishments. Priority was decided on a number of important factors which included those that offered the soundest combination of field supply areas and cannery establishments. The order of his preferences were: Townsville, Bundaberg, Ayr, Mackay, Bowen, Gympie, Rockhampton, Cairns, Innisfail and...
Maryborough. Townsville was given first priority because of the splendid field production areas within easy reach, moderate transport charges, on fresh products, absence of rail charges on the manufactured article, or on tinplate to the existing suitable establishment for making cans economically, while the general processing facilities by way of population electric power and water supply were favourable. There were many factors which Townsville boasted that were so favourable that the priority for Townsville was not only greater that all the other places but miles ahead of them, for the reasons I have stated. It is absolutely necessary that you have good production areas within easy reach of the centre where the cannery is established—and Townsville has that.

Mr. Williams said in his report that no time should be lost in giving effect to his recommendations. The only one carried out was the establishment of the cannery at Northgate. Regarding experiments to find out the possibility and cost of growing pineapples in commercial quantities in North Queensland, Ayr is suggested as the logical point for such an experiment.

Anyone who has seen the pineapples that are produced in Ayr will know how well-founded is Mr. Williams's suggestion. On one occasion a large pineapple-grower from Hawaii came to Ayr when pineapples were being grown there on a large scale, particularly in the Kalamia mill area. He said he had never seen pineapples of that standard anywhere else in the world. Anyone who has seen them and knows anything about pineapples would agree with his statement.

Mr. Williams in his report to the then Premier declared that he had endeavoured most earnestly to analyse almost every known factor relating to soil types, water supply, climatic conditions, rainfall, irrigation possibilities, pest control, continuity of operations in the factory, transport difficulties of raw materials and manufactured goods, population and labour supply, electric power, community outlook, shipping ports and potential field production. Those give an indication of the width of the field Mr. Williams explored. After this intensive investigation he gave Townsville easily the highest priority of any place in Queensland for the establishment of a cannery, but what did we find? When a cannery was to be established, the first was established at Rockhampton, Koongal, and the second is to be established at Cairns when in that area the growers can produce a certain tonnage of pineapples.

Mr. Alkens: A pure political stunt.

Mr. COBURN: A pure political stunt on the part of the Minister, whose electorate is adjacent to that area. He had no justification on any ground for selecting Cairns as the site for a cannery in preference to Townsville.

What is the use of our employing men we know to be skilled in reporting on these matters, and paying them highly for the work they do, if, after having received that report, we toss it aside and take no notice of it? We either have to dispense with the procedure of paying people for reports, or take some notice of the reports after they are furnished to us.

To induce the people of Cairns to grow pineapples certain concessions were given. They were allowed to send their pineapples to Northgate under most advantageous terms. If this Government will extend the same terms to growers in the production areas based on Townsville, I guarantee that those areas will produce ten times the tonnage of pineapples and of far better quality than can be produced in any other part of the State.

If those guarantees are given to the growers there, if they can send pineapples to Northgate under terms almost equal to those enjoyed by growers in the areas between Gympie and Brisbane, that production will be assured.

When I took up this matter through the "Townsville Bulletin" Mr. Collins said that there had been a diminution in the tonnage of pineapples produced in the Ayr district. There was a good reason for it. There was no market for the pineapples. It was not profitable to pay rail freight to the cannery. The growers went out of production simply because it was not profitable to remain in production. The ability to produce in areas based on Townsville has never been questioned by anybody and the soundness of the establishment of a cannery at Townsville from an economic point of view cannot be gainsaid.

When asked to give his order of priority for the establishment of a cannery Mr. Williams said—

"My definite and final conclusions are—First priority—Townsville, mainly because splendid field production areas exist within easy reach north, south and west, and transport charges are moderate on fresh products. There are no rail charges on the manufactured article or on tinplates; a suitable establishment exists for making cans economically; and the general processing facilities by way of population, electric power—and, I believe—water supply, are favourable."

Townsville was particularly mentioned by him, and anybody who makes a survey of the position must agree that Mr. Williams's findings were soundly based.

Mr. Thackeray: Unbiased.

Mr. COBURN: Unbiased. As a result, instead of the place which stood out as the centre for a cannery getting one, because of political bias, the cannery was to go to Cairns under certain conditions. Those conditions were not extended to the production areas based on Townsville. Cairns was in eighth priority; Ayr was in third priority. I could put up a better argument for the
establishment of a cannery at Ayr than anybody could for the establishment of a cannery at Cairns. Because of the overwhelming advantages possessed by Townsville it would be foolish for me to do so. I accept the findings of Mr. Williams because I know how soundly they are based. Not only do we produce pineapples—although they must remain the basic production for canning in any area—but we produce an unlimited number of tomatoes for juice and sauce. We can produce mangoes equal to the finest in the world. The mangoes grow only from Proserpine to Ingham. Beans, peas, beetroot and a lot of the canning vegetables and fruit are grown. Charters Towers has produced excellent citrus fruit. Ingham can produce pineapples and mangoes to assist in the canning process.

I have in my hand, Mr. Taylor, a jar of preserved mango—the Bowen special. It is the most delightful dessert anybody could enjoy. The Treasurer said that he would buy it but my suggestion is that this fruit be handed over to Cabinet for its members to sample as a dessert with a meal. I am sure they will be convinced that these mangoes would be an excellent adjunct to pineapples for preserving if we established a cannery at Townsville. Only in the areas based on Townsville can these mangoes be grown. The longer they are preserved the more palatable they become. I understand Mr. Melvin who preserved these had them for at least two years and he said the longer they are in the syrup the more palatable they become. I have sampled them and I can assure hon. members that they are more delicious than apricots, peaches or apples or any of the southern fruit. We could supplement our supplies to the cannery with mangoes when in season. They grow prolifically in the North and cartloads are taken away and dumped because they cannot be marketed.

Mr. Mann: But they take seven years to grow.

Mr. Coburn: We have not got to start to grow them because they are there in thousands and growing wild in places. I base my argument for the establishment of a cannery in Townsville on the report of Mr. Williams and on nothing else. The Government have already recognised the need for canneries in the North by agreeing to establish a cannery at Cairns. If the Government want to establish another cannery in the North and they want it to succeed, they must put it in a place that is centrally situated. The late E. M. Hanlon said to me when I came into Parliament, "If you want to put forward a case for the establishment of industries, always advocate their establishment where you have the raw materials in your own district or near at hand." We have the raw materials to supply the cannery, and I am sure this would be more in demand with the public when it became known to them than pineapple.

Mr. Harold Williams travelled right through the State. He started in Brisbane and finished in Mareeba and studied every aspect of the question. He dealt not only with the production but also with the handling of the product. Without any bias of any sort, he recommended that the cannery be established in Townsville.

Mr. Adair: It should be at Cairns.

Mr. Coburn: With all these centres in the North we have almost unlimited supplies. The only people who say it should be in Cairns are those who live in Cairns. The production centres for a cannery at Townsville would be Ayr, Home Hill, Bowen, Proserpine, and even Mackay.

Mr. Thackeray: When you get this cannery, you want a cannery that will process all the fruit grown in the district, not a cannery in name only.

Mr. Coburn: It might take in Tully, Innisfail, and even Cairns. Townsville is centrally situated. It has its own can-making factory. This means that no rail freight on tinned goods, which is three times the freight on the fruit itself, would be paid.

Mr. Williams made this recommendation; I did not make it. I agree entirely with his report. If a cannery is to be established, it must be established where it will succeed. You therefore establish it where it must be economically sound. In this case, that is at Townsville. Mr. Harold Williams was appointed by the late Mr. E. M. Hanlon to make a report and no better report was ever made by anybody commissioned to make a report. We do not believe in centralisation. We want the industries taken to the country areas. This is the first thing we need in North Queensland for development. If the Government think that Townsville is growing too big, Ayr was third on the list and we should be glad to have the cannery established at Ayr, although I cannot argue that Ayr would be as suitable as Townsville.

Another matter that is of great importance to the electors whom I represent is the damming of the Burdekin River. In 1951 a report was made by the Burdekin River Authority. The members of that authority were Sir John Kemp, the then Co-ordinator-General of Public Works, the present Co-ordinator-General of Public Works, who was then an engineer on the project, Mr. Petersen, the Under Secretary of the Treasury, who was the Secretary, Mr. Nimmo, who was the Irrigation Commissioner and Mr. Neil Smith, Electricity Commissioner. They claimed that the great multiple purpose Burdekin River Irrigation, Hydro-Electric and Flood Mitigation Project for utilising the water resources of the Burdekin River and its tributaries had been planned in three main stages. So far only one of the stages has been completed and apparently it is 80 per cent to be completed. Moreover, it is one of the minor parts of the scheme. Unless we can
get the big dam built at the 99-mile site just below the Burdekin Falls, the Burdekin scheme as originally envisaged will not be brought to fruition. Only a very small part of it has been brought into operation by the opening up of the lands at Clare, Millaroo and Dalbeg. A dam has been built on the Burdekin River at the Leichhardt Range. It is only about 27 feet high. It was built to store enough water to be let through and pumped out of the river into drains to water the crops at Clare, Millaroo and Dalbeg. It was suggested by the Burdekin River Authority that, concurrently with the building of the dam, there should have been a larger and much more important dam built at the falls or just below the falls, first of all to a height of 75 feet and ultimately to a height of 150 feet. The Burdekin River Authority had no doubts whatever about the economics of the whole scheme. It worked out the costs and the value of agricultural, horticultural and other production and of the electricity that would be generated. In their report to the Government, these eminent men of the State, occupying the highest positions in their department, suggested that the whole scheme should be brought to fruition as soon as possible. It was suggested that the Federal Government should contribute largely to the scheme because of its national importance. With that I could not agree more. The late Hon. E. M. Hanlon was so enamoured of the scheme that he said, "Whether the Federal Government help us or not, we will proceed with it."

Mr. Mann: He had to say that.

Mr. COBURN: Why did he have to say it? He believed it!

Mr. Mann: He had to say it because the Commonwealth Government would not help him.

Mr. COBURN: He did not say that because the Commonwealth Government would not help him. He said it because he realised the value of the completed scheme to Queensland. Whether the Federal Government help us or not, is the scheme of sufficient national importance to warrant our going on with it without their help?

Mr. Gair: It depends on how much money you have.

Mr. COBURN: Mr. Hanlon said it was and he did not qualify it. He did not say, "If we have the money." He said, "We will do it but we might be a little slower in the doing of it." I saw a report purporting to come from the Federal authority which said they opposed the Burdekin dam scheme because it would prove uneconomic and that it would have to justify itself in the production of hydro-electric energy. They said they could produce the electricity all right but they could not foresee sufficient industry in North Queensland to use the electric energy to the extent that the scheme would pay even interest and redemption on the money needed for the construction of the dam.

Mr. Davies: Whose opinion was that?

Mr. COBURN: I do not know whether it was an actual official report but it was given to me as a report that came from the Federal Government. That was their excuse for not becoming involved financially in the scheme. There have been huge changes in Queensland since the attitude was taken that quantities of bauxite have been discovered in the Cape York Peninsula. As the processing of bauxite is electrolytic I understand that huge quantities of electricity must be available. We are blessed with a bountiful supply of bauxite and if we give that natural resource to some other country to process we are doing a tremendous disservice to Queensland. It is ours, we have it, and we should make it possible to have all the bauxite processed until it becomes aluminium. We can do that only if we can turn to people who are interested in the development of the bauxite deposits and say, "Here is all the power you want. It is cheap because it has been generated by the Federal Government for you. If you will come from the Commonwealth or the State or we will not give you the right to work our bauxite deposits. We will give them to somebody else." We cannot do that if they can say, "Where is your electricity coming from, electricity that is cheap enough to compete with processing in Canada or some other country?"

The hon. member for Ithaca said that the Burdekin Valley scheme should be completed. Even in 1951, Sir John Kemp, Mr. Peterson, Mr. Nimmo and the others I mentioned, said that it was of such great national importance that there should be no delay in its completion. It has become much more nationally important because of the development since they made that report.

In reply to a question by the hon. member for Maryborough the Premier said that there would be a re-survey of the Burdekin Valley scheme. I suppose the object is to see what the economics of it are now. Possibly the cost has gone up, but so has the value of the produce. Cheap electricity will attract other industries to the area. We cannot expect them to come if conditions are not as advantageous as those in other areas. The Burdekin River drains an area as big as England, 50,000 square miles. The gorge which the Creator gave us just calls out to be dammed. It could store 16 times as much water as Sydney Harbour, much more than all the water that will be stored in the seven reservoirs when the Snowy River scheme is completed. There will be twice as much water as there will be in the Eildon Reservoir on the Goulburn River in Victoria.

In his report Mr. Neil Smith claimed that they could produce 80,000,000 kilowatts of electricity even in the driest year. In normal or good years they could produce 100,000,000 kilowatts. He said that they could link up in the grid with the Townsville Regional Electricity Board so that in dry years we could call on the thermal stations
but in good years the thermal stations would be rested and electricity generated by water would be used.

Another matter that is causing a good deal of concern at the present time to the farmers on the Lower Burdekin is the possibility of the underground water becoming exhausted. As hon. members know, we on the Lower Burdekin which is the best sugar-cane producing area in Australia, are in the dry belt, but we are blessed with an underground water supply which, up to now, has never failed us, although on one occasion it caused a good deal of concern to the farmers when we had a prolonged dry period and the water dropped so low on some of the farms in the coastal area that they were pumping salt water instead of fresh. Six hundred million gallons a day out of an underground supply in a period like this is some water. If the drought is too prolonged and there was an infiltration of salt water the underground supply might be destroyed. That is a fear. There has not been much investigation made of the underground water supply. I do not think anybody can pronounce with any certainty concerning the source of supply to the underground. There is nothing else like it anywhere in the world. It enables us to be the farming district that we are. Last year and again this year the value of the production in the Lower Burdekin will be £10,000,000—£10,000,000 for a population of 16,000 people. That is colossal. In seven years, if we lost that underground water supply, the sums of money lost from the production of sugar—not sugar cane; there is a difference between the worth of the sugar cane and the worth of the sugar—would be equal to the cost of providing that dam. If that dam were provided when we had a drought we could let the water through to keep the steady flow in the river so that there would be a replenishment of the underground water supply as this great demand was made on it. That is another aspect which must be given consideration by the Government when they are considering the construction of the great dam at this 90-mile site.

Mr. Davies: What do you suggest Sir Arthur Fadden thinks about it?

Mr. COBURN: I am not responsible for what Sir Arthur Fadden thinks or does; I am only responsible for what Arthur Coburn thinks and does; I am advocating the construction of this dam because I feel that it is fully justified, just as I advocated the establishment of the cannery at Townsville because there is no more suitable place than Townsville. If I thought that this dam was going to be a drag on the State of Queensland I would not have one word to say in favour of it. From the point of view of the development of the North, and knowing we want cheap power to promote industry and that bauxite processing necessitates tremendous quantities of electric power, it is essential that we have the water for the generation of electricity. There is this value about the Burdekin scheme: after the water has passed through the turbine it becomes available for the irrigation of crops and can be carried to the areas by gravitation after the dam reaches 150 feet.

Mr. AIKENS: That would replenish the underground supply.

Mr. COBURN: As the hon. member for Mundububba has mentioned, it would help considerably in the replenishment of the underground water supply, and would be a cheap source of water for irrigation in the whole Burdekin Valley.

It is stated that 350,000 acres of land could be irrigated from this source if the dam was built. Those are very important matters.

Mr. EWAN: Would there be any danger of raising the water table too high and causing swampy country.

Mr. COBURN: Every aspect of the scheme has been investigated. The 1951 report is very voluminous. It is available in the Parliamentary Library. All aspects were considered—the effect on the underground water supply, the mitigation of flooding and the inundation of lands that are occupied now. Some land would have to be reclaimed by the Government, but the area is infinitesimal. It is not closely settled, and is used only by pastoralists who have miles of country beyond it. They would appreciate the flooding of it because at times when the water was low they would have very fine pastures there and would be compensated in that way.

Last time I spoke I brought to the notice of the Minister for Labour and Industry, who seems to be bubbling over with enthusiasm to establish industries in this State, a source from which I thought money would be available for development in Queensland. I suggest that something similar to this Development Finance Company which operates in Great Britain could be established in Queensland by similar interests to those who established it in England, not for the development of countries within the British Commonwealth, although Queensland is in the British Commonwealth, but exclusive for the development of this State.

The company known as the Commonwealth Development and Finance Company was set up in 1953, as a new channel for the investment of private capital in the Commonwealth. It was to be invested in Commonwealth development schemes likely to benefit the sterling area’s balance of payments, and in particular those schemes for which adequate capital could not be raised from the ordinary sources. We have difficulties such as that in Queensland. There are prospects for the establishment of certain industries, but the brake on the wheel is the inability to get sufficient finance for the purpose. The capital of the Development and Finance Company has been subscribed by 91 business concerns in the United Kingdom. There is no reason why we could not get a number of business concerns in Queensland to do the same. Part
of the capital of that company is subscribed by the Bank of England. Perhaps we could get support from the Commonwealth Bank.

The authorised capital of the company is £15,000,000 and it is empowered to borrow up to twice that figure on the market, so that a very large amount of money is available for development from this source.

Its commitments at the end of March this year totalled approximately £14,500,000 in 12 projects in eight Commonwealth countries, but Australia does not figure among those eight. These include electricity supply undertakings, pulp manufacture, pipe lines for the transmission of natural gas, uranium mines and the production of agricultural fertilisers.

We have never made any claim on that company for any money to help develop industries in this State.

The Commonwealth countries in which this development is being carried out mainly are Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, and the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The attention of the company has been drawn to the importance Her Majesty's Government attach to its operations.

Mr. Gair: You understand that under the Commonwealth-States financial agreement the State Government has no power to borrow independently.

Mr. Coburn: I am not referring to the State Government.

Mr. Gair: You said that we have never taken advantage of borrowing from that company.

Mr. Coburn: No. I did not. I said "Queensland," not "we." I was referring to Queensland business men who want to establish businesses here.

Mr. Gair: When you mentioned Queensland, I took it you meant the Queensland Government.

Mr. Coburn: No. I was referring to Queenslanders. I know the Government could not apply for it. Every advance made from this fund has been made to a private concern. It is not the business of the Government to make applications for loans but it is the business of the Government to make known to people who do not already know that this particular source of supply of money for the establishment of industries in Queensland is available when money is not available from other sources. That is the point I am making. The United Kingdom Government has been assured that the company will continue and that Government went so far as to notify the company of the importance of their work and expressed appreciation for what they were doing. Our Government, although they cannot be a borrower can certainly direct attention to those interested in the establishment of industries to a source from which they may be able to get finance.

In February, 1953, the United Kingdom Government announced that they aimed to make up to £60,000,000 available over about six years for lending by the International Bank to Commonwealth countries in the sterling area. Under these arrangements the United Kingdom contributes out of its subscription to capital stock of the International Bank towards bank loans to these countries for development schemes which, among other things are adjudged likely to improve the sterling area's balance of payments. All Commonwealth countries in the sterling area which are members of the International Bank are eligible for bank loans financed by these contributions. Colonial territories are eligible through the United Kingdom's membership and with a guarantee by the United Kingdom Government. Contributions which have so far been approved and can become effective under the scheme although not so far fully disbursed, total about £45,000,000. This total is made up of approximately £18,000,000 towards loans to India for iron and steel production, electric power and railway development; about £9,000,000 towards loans for electric power and other projects in Pakistan; £10,000,000 towards Kariba hydro-electric scheme in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyassaland; and the balance towards a loan for railway development in South Africa. Thus a further £15,000,000 is so far uncommitted under this scheme and is available to those who can propose industries which will satisfy the company that the scheme in mind is sound and that it will be under a management efficient enough to guarantee sufficient remuneration on the investment.

We are told so often that money is the limiting factor and that some of our business people have schemes which are sound. If they made application to this fund I have no doubt that they would get help like that given to India, South Africa, Canada, Pakistan, and Nyassaland.

All the matters that I have brought before the House today deal with the development of the State; there is nothing more important for the State than development. Paramount amongst the three proposals is the colossal Burdekin River Dam, followed by a cannery at Townsville against which no argument can be levelled and then development generally by a call on finance from this Commonwealth Development Finance Company.

I congratulate the Treasurer on the presentation of his Budget and I am hopeful that much good will come from his occupancy of the office. We know how efficient he has been in all matters brought before the House, we know how he applies himself to his job, and we all have sufficient faith in him to know that his job will be well done. We wish him well in his office.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 4.22 p.m.