

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 2 SEPTEMBER 1958

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

QUESTIONS.

QUEENSLAND, A CLAIMANT STATE UNDER STATES GRANTS COMMISSION.

Mr. DUGGAN (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Premier—

“In view of the Commonwealth Government’s refusal to entertain the State Government’s request to allow Queensland to become a claimant State under the States Grants Commission, and his statement published in ‘The Telegraph’ of April 5, 1958, that the decline in the State’s financial position was causing the Government concern, will he inform Parliament whether his Government is taking or proposes to take any further action in this matter following the Prime Minister’s announcement on August 26 that the existing claimant States, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania, are to receive £20,750,000 in special grants during the current financial year?”

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry), for **Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN** (Landsborough), replied—

“The Leader of the Opposition has been misinformed. The Commonwealth Government has not refused to allow Queensland to become a claimant State.”

NUMBER OF RAILWAY EMPLOYEES.

Mr. DUGGAN (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Minister for Transport—

“In regard to the State departmental employment figures tabled by the Premier in the House on August 26, 1958, and showing that employees in the Railways Department had decreased by 1,016 in the last financial year, will he inform the House how many employees in each of the administrative, traffic, locomotive workshops, locomotive running, maintenance, construction and other sections contributed to the overall decrease of 1,016 employees in the Department?”

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

“Reductions in Railway Department employees occasioned during the last financial year through resignations, retirements or other defections were as follows:—Administrative, 9; Traffic, 236; Locomotive Workshops, 16; Locomotive Running, 242; Maintenance, 139; Chief Engineer’s Branch, 15; Construction and Loan, 334; Advertising, Stores and Railway Refreshment Rooms, 25; Total 1,016.

For the information of the Honourable Member let me point out that not one permanent Railway employee has been retrenched during the period."

TROUTS ROAD HOUSING COMMISSION ESTATE.

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

"(1) How many allotments of unimproved land within the area of the Trouts Road Housing Commission estate have been sold during the past twelve months to private individuals who are not applicants for housing loans under the Commonwealth-States Housing Agreement?"

"(2) Is he aware that the work of day-labour employed on this project has been slowed up because of the failure of the Housing Commission to expedite approval for additional home building?"

"(3) What is the reason for the delay in giving approval for the construction of new groups of homes in this area?"

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo) replied—

"(1) None."

"(2 and 3) Sufficient approvals have always been obtained to keep employees in full production. There has been no delay in obtaining approvals. Approvals granted from June 30, 1956, were—
November 1, 1956, 10 dwellings;
November 22, 1956, 31 dwellings;
January 10, 1957, 6 dwellings; July 18, 1957, 13 dwellings; July 17, 1958, 4 dwellings; July 17, 1958, 6 twin-unit flats. For 1955-1956, 64 houses were completed, and at June 30, 1956, 30 were under construction and 34 were approved not started. For 1956-1957, 43 houses were completed, and at June 30, 1957, 59 were under construction and 9 were approved not started. For 1957-1958, 66 houses were completed, and at June 30, 1958, 15 were under construction."

ASSIMILATION AND CONTROL OF ABORIGINALS.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs—

"(1) How many Queensland aboriginals have received exemption from the provisions of the Aborigines Act and have been assimilated without re-control during the past five years?"

"(2) What has been the increase or decrease in the number of aboriginals controlled by the Director of Native Affairs during the same period?"

Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga) replied—

"(1) 1,073."

"(2) 586 increase."

BREWERY-OWNED OR CONTROLLED HOTELS.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) asked the Minister for Justice—

"(1) Of the sixty-three completely rebuilt and new hotels completed during the past two years in Queensland, how many of these hotels were brewery-owned or controlled?"

"(2) How many have been completed during the twelve months ending June 30 last?"

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong) replied—

"(1) Of the nine Metropolitan hotels, new, rebuilt or extended, five are Brewery owned. Of the fifty-five Country hotels, new, rebuilt or extended, two are Brewery owned."

"(2) Of the sixty-four hotels, new rebuilt or extended in the last two years, twenty-two were completed in the year ended June 30, 1958."

LIBERAL PARTY CONVENTION AND PRICE CONTROL.

Mr. HANLON (Ithaca) asked the Minister for Justice—

"(1) Is it a fact that at a Liberal Party Convention held this year a motion for the abolition of price control was carried with only one dissident?"

"(2) Was that dissident himself?"

"(3) Did he make a strong appeal to the convention to consider the need for retaining price control?"

"(4) As his remarks on that occasion are reported to have been in direct contradiction of his remarks to the House on August 27, defending the Government's action in further relaxing necessary controls, will he make available to Honourable Members a copy of his address to the Liberal Party Convention so that we may ascertain his actual feelings on this matter?"

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong) replied—

"(1 to 4) At the Liberal Party Convention held in June, 1958, a resolution was passed stating that Convention considered that Price Control as constituted in Queensland had retarded the progress and development of the State, and that Convention recommended its abolition. It is quite untrue to suggest that the motion was passed with only one dissident. It would however be correct to say that there was complete and general agreement by all speakers that Price Control, as administered by the Labour Government in Queensland prior to August 12, 1957, did have a very marked effect in retarding the development of the State. The resolution referred to must be considered in conjunction with the Platform of the Queensland Division of the Party, a summary of which (as adopted by the Liberal Party Convention

of 1956) includes the following:—

3. Long-term stabilisation schemes for primary industries, where approved by producers in the particular industry.

22. The encouragement of new industries, and of business enterprise.

24. The effective regulation and supervision of monopolies and trade combinations inimical to the public interest. To assist the hon. member in seeing this matter in its proper perspective, I would remind him that the question of Price Control was specifically dealt with in the July, 1957, Policy Speech of the Parliamentary Leaders of the Country and Liberal Parties in the following terms:—

‘One of the great fallacies of Labour policy is the idea that prices of commodities can be directed and controlled merely by issuing Orders in Council and Regulations. Nothing could be further from the truth. Price fixing Orders can temporarily control prices but in their long term effect they just as often aggravate the evil. Prices ultimately find a level controlled by the facilities for and costs of production. In normal circumstances free competition and individual enterprise provide the most effective control of prices. Nevertheless we recognise that in unusual times and in unusual circumstances Price Control can fulfil a useful purpose. This applies particularly in the necessity for the effective regulation and supervision of monopolies or trade combinations inimical to the public interest.’

The policy of the Country-Liberal Government is as indicated in the Policy Statement of July, 1957, which I have just quoted. That policy has my personal support and is in close general conformity with the long term objectives as set out in the platforms of the Country and Liberal Parties. I regret that there is no record available of my short extempore remarks at the Liberal Party Convention. However, for the information of the hon. member, I may assure him that I have on all appropriate occasions advocated and supported Liberal principles as deduced from the Party Creed and Platform and, while I remain a member of this Country-Liberal Government, I will be prepared at all times and in all places to support, and if necessary to defend, the implementation of our Government policy. The hon. member may therefore be assured that there has been no contradiction, and that his question is not based on sound premises.”

WORK ON RIVER WHARVES, MARYBOROUGH.

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

“(1) On what date did work on the river wharves in Maryborough commence?”

“(2) (a) Was £15,000 the amount set aside for this work, and on what date was

the particular sum given Government approval? (b) Approximately how much of the money has been spent, and how much work remains to be done?”

“(3) At the completion of work on the wharves will his Department remove the old wharves including the piles between the new wharf and the Sailing Club pavilion?”

“(4) When the piles are removed will the Department store same for use as soon as possible in strengthening the waterfront in this area against flood erosion?”

“(5) Does his Department control the waterfront above high tide? If not, what body is in control of the waterfront between high-water mark and the high cliff-bank?”

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo) replied—

“(1) July 11, 1957.”

“(2) (a) Yes—£1,000 for the purchase of the wharf and site owned by Maryborough Wharves Pty. Limited; £13,125 for putting the structure in good order and providing a wharf shed, etc., for general cargo; £875 in providing a ‘lay-up’ wharf for Departmental vessels when the cargo wharf is in use. Advice of the approval of this expenditure was conveyed to you by the then Treasurer on May 17, 1956. (b) Expenditure to date is approximately £10,750. The wharf and the shed for use by general cargo vessels are complete. Work still to be carried out comprises the provision of toilet and showers, painting of the shed and installation of electric light, also the provision of the ‘lay-up’ wharf.”

“(3) It is intended on completion of the stone training wall at Bundaberg to use the Department’s stone punts to draw the piles from the old Railway Wharf.”

“(4) It is intended to examine all old piles with a view to using them again. The provision of water-front protection could be very costly and it is not proposed to protect the river bank with timber piles.”

“(5) Information as to the controlling authority (or authorities) of the area between high tide and the high cliff banks, which is not available at present, will be obtained.”

NEW FACTORIES IN QUEENSLAND.

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

“(1) How many new factories engaged in manufacturing commenced operations in Queensland during the last six months, and what would be the total number of employees in these factories?”

“(2) How many of the above factories employ twenty-five (25) or more workers?”

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mount Coot-tha) replied—

“(1 and 2) Records of registrations of factories are kept by local Inspectors of Factories and Shops at 16 centres throughout the State and figures for the whole State are available only annually as at January 31 each year. Therefore it is impossible at this stage to give the figures required for the last six months, as requested. This is quite distinct from Company registrations which are recorded at the office of the Justice Department and the nett increase or reduction is traceable at the end of each month. It was from these sources that I advised the House that there had been a nett increase of 578 in Company registrations in the first six months of 1958. Annual returns are received from factory occupiers and according to figures appearing in the Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories and Shops, which will be tabled shortly, there were 147 more factories registered throughout the State at January 31, 1958, than at the same date in the previous year.”

ALLEGED EVASION OF TAX BY ROAD OPERATORS.

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) asked the Minister for Transport—

“In view of the statement by Mr. Roy Rowe, the Australian Road Transport Federation's Secretary, as reported in ‘The Courier-Mail,’ dated August 28, 1958, that ‘Tax evasion by irresponsible road operators is rife,’ that ‘The States will not face up to policing it . . . States are allowing it to go by default’ and that ‘evasion of transport tax by truck owner-drivers was terrific and out of State Government's control;’ (1) Will he inform the House whether these statements apply to Queensland? (2) If so, will he admit that it indicates clearly that his administration of his Department is inefficient?”

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

“(1) The Government is fully aware of the attempts by some road operators to evade payment of State road tax by sheltering within the protection afforded to bona fide interstate operators by Section 92 of the Constitution. The Government is endeavouring to meet this challenge by causing the roads to be as actively policed as staff permits and prosecutions have been and are being launched in appropriate cases. Queensland is not allowing the position to go by default.”

“(2) No. However, if the hon. member considers that the administration of the Department of Transport is inefficient I invite him to set out his views in

writing and would also welcome from him practical suggestions as to what remedies should be applied.”

NUMBER AND COST OF CHILDREN IN ORPHANAGES.

Mr. GARDNER (Rockhampton) asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs—

“(1) How many children were being cared for in State Orphanages at June 30, 1958?”

“(2) What is the actual cost per head of maintaining children in State Orphanages?”

“(3) How many State children were being cared for in outside orphanages and approved Homes (not private homes) at June 30, 1958?”

“(4) What amount per head is paid by the Government for the maintenance of such children?”

Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga) replied—

“(1) There are no State Orphanages in Queensland. The only Institutions controlled by the State are the Receiving Depots in Brisbane, Rockhampton, and Townsville. With the exception of one Home, which takes a very small number, no outside Orphanages or approved Homes accept babes under the age of 9 months. One other Home accepts 9 months' old babes. All other Orphanages and Homes restrict admissions to children who have reached the toddler stage, approximately 2½ years of age. Therefore, admissions to State Receiving Depots are restricted to young babes and children of older years who have to be temporarily accommodated pending placement in outside Orphanages or Foster Homes. The number of children accommodated in State Receiving Depots at June 30, 1958, was 106.”

“(2) £9 5s. 3d. gross.”

“(3) 916.”

“(4) £1 5s. per week, plus a 50 per cent. subsidy on capital expenditure. The high staff ratio required to care for young babes contributes largely to this cost.”

STAMP DUTY AND LEVIES PAID BY INSURANCE COMPANIES.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

“For the twelve months ending June 30, 1958, how much did insurance companies (other than the State Government Insurance Office) (a) pay in Stamp Duty on fire policies, (b) pay in levies for the upkeep of fire brigades, on the basis of the relevant Act, and (c) how much did the insurance companies pay in Fire Brigade levies for a complete year preceding the amendment to the Act increasing their contribution from three-sevenths to five-sevenths?”

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo) replied—

“(a) Based on information furnished to the Commissioner of Stamp Duties, Insurance Companies (which excludes the State Government Insurance Office) paid in Stamp Duty on Fire Policies an amount approximating £209,893 for the twelve months ended June 30, 1958. I might add for the Honourable Member’s information that, during the same period, the Insurance Commissioner paid £51,036 in this connection. (b) The contribution by Insurance Companies (which excludes the State Government Insurance Office) based on levies for the upkeep of Fire Brigades was £576,713 10s. 5d. for the twelve months ended June 30, 1958. This was based on 5/7ths of the cost of Fire Brigade maintenance. During the same period, the Insurance Commissioner paid £80,880 1s. 4d. (c) The contribution by Insurance Companies (which excludes the State Government Insurance Office) for the twelve months ended June 30, 1956, was £304,145 19s. 10d. During the same period, the Insurance Commissioner paid £33,037 1s. 9d. This was the last full year in which the precept for Insurance Companies was based on 3/7ths of the cost of maintaining fire services. For the year 1956-1957, the first quarter was based on the proportion of 3/7ths and the remaining three quarters of the year were based on 5/7ths.”

DISALLOWANCE OF QUESTION.

REPORT OF MR. A. J. PEEL ON NATIONAL PETROLEUM LIMITED.

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) asked the Premier—

“Will he table in Parliament for the information of Honourable Members the report of the State Government investigator, Mr. A. J. Peel, who inquired into the affairs of National Petroleum Limited? If so, will he move that such report be printed?”

Mr. SPEAKER: Hon. members, in regard to question No. 6 which relates to National Petroleum Ltd., I have been informed that certain legal action has been taken in regard to matters connected with this company and it is expected that certain litigation will commence today. As I consider the matter is sub judice I do not propose to allow the question.

PAPERS.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Proclamation under the State Education Acts, 1875 to 1957.

Order in Council under the Water Acts, 1926 to 1957.

Proclamations under the Valuation of Land Acts, 1944 to 1958.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

Hon. J. A. HEADING (Marodian—Minister for Public Works and Local Government): I move—

“That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Local Government Acts, 1936 to 1958, in certain particulars, and for other purposes.”

Motion agreed to.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry): I move—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Weights and Measures Acts, 1951 to 1957, in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

INSPECTION OF SCAFFOLDING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry): I move—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Inspection of Scaffolding Acts, 1915 to 1955, in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry): I move—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Acts, 1932 to 1955, in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

HIDE, SKIN, AND WOOL DEALERS BILL.

INITIATION.

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry): I move—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the

Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to regulate the buying and selling of hides, skins and wool, and for purposes incidental thereto and consequent thereon.’’

Motion agreed to.

TRAFFIC ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry): I move—

‘‘That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Traffic Acts, 1949 to 1957, in certain particulars.’’

Motion agreed to.

VAGRANTS, GAMING, AND OTHER OFFENCES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry): I move—

‘‘That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Vagrants, Gaming, and other Offences Acts, 1931 to 1955, in certain particulars.’’

Motion agreed to.

POLICE ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry): I move—

‘‘That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Police Acts, 1937 to 1957, in certain particulars.’’

Motion agreed to.

MINES REGULATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads): I move—

‘‘That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Mines Regulation Acts, 1910 to 1958, in certain particulars.’’

Motion agreed to.

PETROLEUM ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads): I move—

‘‘That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Petroleum Acts, 1923 to 1955, in certain particulars.’’

Motion agreed to.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

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

Hon. J. A. HEADING (Marodian—Minister for Public Works and Local Government) (11.31 a.m.): I move—

‘‘That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Local Government Acts, 1936 to 1958, in certain particulars, and for other purposes.’’

This is a very short measure and it is introduced for a particular purpose. Later in the session I shall introduce fairly extensive amendments to the Local Authorities Acts, and I suggest that will be a more appropriate time to discuss local authorities generally.

The immediate necessity for the Bill arises from circumstances which have occurred in the Shire of Peak Downs following ouster proceedings now in course of being determined by the Supreme Court, and the resignation of the chairman and a majority of members of the council. As the ouster proceedings in question are now sub judice, I have no comment to make on them except to say that the Bill does not interfere with them nor does it in any way prejudice their determination by the due processes of law. Cabinet did consider the exercise of the power of dissolution of the council but felt that, in the circumstances, it would be an improper exercise of power unless it were taken with the consent of all the parties. The parties were approached but would not give agreement to the exercise of the power. Two members of the council did not resign and we would not like to see them in the position of being mulcted in costs because they stayed there when the others resigned. Under existing law, if vacancies occur so that a quorum cannot be obtained, an election has to be held to fill the vacancies. There is no provision to enable the carrying on of administration for the period between the occurrence of the vacancies and the holding and completion of the election of new members. Moreover, the present law does not contemplate a set of circumstances where the qualification or right to office of a member might be challenged. The Bill is a short measure which simply enables the

Governor-in-Council to appoint an administrator to carry on the affairs of the council where vacancies occur resulting in the lack of a quorum. The powers, duties, authorities and responsibilities of the administrator are specified by the Order in Council appointing him. By the same or a subsequent Order in Council the Governor in Council can require a fresh election to be held to fill the vacancies.

Mr. Aikens: Have you not the power now to dissolve the council and appoint an administrator?

Mr. HEADING: Yes. I do not want to do that because this case is coming on—the ouster by the defeated candidate for the chair against the chairman. The other point is we still have two members there who stayed on the job. Thus, if some dispute occurs as to right to office, the administrator can be appointed until the right is determined by the due processes of law, whereupon an election can, if necessary, be ordered to be held. If there is no such matter involved, an election can be ordered to be held immediately. Under the law as it stands an election would have to be held. That is not thought desirable in view of the ouster proceedings.

There is one further point. In the case of Peak Downs Shire, arrangements had to be made for the payment of salary and wages to the staff pending special legislative provision covering the case. Arrangements were made with the Council's bankers for salaries and wages to be drawn by cheques signed only by the Shire Clerk. These arrangements are approved and confirmed and will continue until terminated by the Minister by written notice served on the Council's bankers.

Those are the salient points of the Bill. It has been introduced because of the position that has arisen in this council.

Mr. Aikens: Does the Bill refer specifically to the one case, or will it give general power in the future?

Mr. HEADING: The Bill will give general power in future in regard to a similar occurrence. At present it only removes the need to hold an immediate election.

Mr. DUGGAN (North Toowoomba—Leader of the Opposition) (11.37 a.m.): Opposition members support the Bill. I thank the Minister for his courtesy in discussing the essential principles with me prior to the introduction of the Bill.

Any amendment of the Local Government Act opens the possibility of useful discussion on various aspects of local government administration but in view of the Minister's assurance that at a later date he will be introducing a measure of far-reaching importance and that we will have an opportunity of discussing the subject generally, and because

I accept his word as a man of honour, Opposition members will stick strictly to the outline of the Bill he has given.

The Bill seems to us to be a very sensible method of dealing with the particular situation that has developed. Perhaps it might have been decided to dissolve the council completely, but there seems to be no useful purpose in doing that in view of the fact that other members properly elected have remained on the council. It would be unfair to inflict on them the expense of another election for which they were in no way blameworthy.

After considering all the relevant facts, the Minister, no doubt on the advice of his advisers, has seen fit to introduce this Bill. It is reasonable and sensible and will facilitate the administration of the council's affairs until finality is reached and a new election held after the ouster proceedings are determined.

I do not consider that this is an occasion for very much elaboration on the subject. The provision giving authority to the shire clerk seems to be necessary. The Governor in Council will lay down the general conditions obtaining in these matters, and hon. members will have an opportunity of discovering whether the powers in the Order in Council are excessive. We will be able to watch that aspect.

I think the Minister has been fair in his explanation. The Bill should be accepted, and accordingly we give it our support.

Mr. WALSH (Bundaberg) (11.39 a.m.): The three main principles of the Bill give power to appoint an administrator of the Peak Downs local authority, power for the conduct of a subsequent election, and power to validate certain acts already performed by the shire clerk in the course of his duties, that is, the payment of moneys by him, which will not only protect the shire clerk but will also protect the bank. Those principles do not contain anything very arguable.

I think I should put on record once again that time is taken up in discussing the submissions by Ministers, not because of any deficiency in the law, but because of the failure of returning officers to comply with the law. There is also the failure of voters to vote in accordance with the Act. Over the years Governments have altered the system of voting and electors have become confused. In this case the law relating to Local Authority elections is the same as it was in 1929. The amendment made to the Third Schedule on that occasion provided for the manner in which a ballot paper is to be marked, and that still remains. I cannot understand, having regard to a case determined by the Full Court arising out of a Townsville Local Authority election in 1930 how any legal man could advise any client that the law was deficient and that he had any chance of success. I might say, at this stage, that the Director of Local Government gave a very interesting address on these very

principles to the Municipal Officers' Association, and as a result, the whole of this *Entriken* case was published in the March issue of the *Journal of the Queensland Institute of Municipal Administration*. That should have been a complete guide to returning officers throughout Local Authority areas in Queensland. A case was stated by Mr. Justice R. J. Douglas, to the Full Court, and the Full Court determined that the proceedings must succeed because of the failure of the voter to comply with the law. I am not making any reference to the present case. The whole case is set out in this journal, and the reasons for judgment are given. In this case the people were asked to mark the ballot papers 1, 2, 3 and 4, in consecutive numbers and the marking of the papers with the number 1 should have been the clear intention of the voter.

The CHAIRMAN: I should be pleased if the hon. member would make it clear to the Committee which case he is referring to. The Peak Downs case is sub judice. I gathered that he was referring only to the circumstances which arose in Townsville.

Mr. WALSH: I said that the case I was referring to was the *Entriken* case. I should mention that there is a typographical error in the report of the *Entriken* case in that it says that it is reproduced from "*Queensland State School reports*", whereas it should have read, "*Reproduced from Queensland State Law Reports*." The judgment in the Full Court referred to *R. v. Entriken ex parte Henderson and Others, Relators* and *R. v. Robertson, ex parte Henderson and Others, Relators*.

That goes back a long way; it has nothing to do with the present circumstances. All that I am doing is indicating that on that occasion it was clearly pointed out that ballot papers were rejected in the following circumstances:—

"(a) Where the voter had marked the ballot-paper by placing crosses or other marks thereon and not by placing consecutive numbers in the squares opposite the names of the candidate for whom he desired to vote;

(b) Where the voter had marked the ballot-paper with fewer consecutive numbers than eleven and partly with crosses or other marks;

(c) Where the voter had marked the ballot-paper with numbers but had placed such numbers outside the squares on the ballot-paper;

(d) Where the voter had by consecutive numbers indicated more than eleven candidates;

(e) Where the voter had indicated by numbers eleven candidates but had not used consecutive numbers to indicate such candidates;

(f) Where the voter had indicated eleven candidates with consecutive numbers but

had also crossed out the names of all of the remaining candidates or of some of the remaining candidates;

(g) Certain ballot-papers allowed by the returning officer having markings thereon which appeared to the Registrar to be outside any of the classes above-named and which he placed in a separate additional class as irregular votes."

The point I make is that the schedule provides that the ballot-paper must be marked consecutively. Numerous complaints came to the hon. member for South Brisbane, to me, and to other members of the Queensland Labour Party because of the large number of ballot-papers that had been rejected. In some cases they were rejected because they failed to comply with the Third Schedule of the Local Government Act, while apparently some returning officers allowed such votes. That has created the confusion. The law is there and it is for the people who administer it as well as the voter to apply themselves diligently to the task and see that it is given effect to. If that had been done in this case, many people as well as this Parliament would have been saved a good deal of trouble.

Mr. AIKENS (Mundingburra) (11.47 a.m.): When I asked the Minister by interjection if he had not power under the Act to dissolve the Council and appoint an administrator, I did not intend to convey that he should have dissolved the Council. I merely thought that the present section of the Local Government Act might have covered the present circumstances without the necessity to introduce amending legislation.

It is true, as the hon. member for Bundaberg has said, that any law passed by Parliament is only as good as those who are called upon to administer it. We have had many examples of that recently. For instance, there was the appeal to the Elections Tribunal on the result of the election in Flinders. That was caused by the failure of one man to administer the law as he should have. It is not always the average elector who fails to carry out the electoral law. Quite recently an election was conducted among members of the Charters Towers City Council and the Dalrymple Shire Council. It may have been only the members of the Charters Towers City Council, but three of the votes that were cast by those councillors for the election of a local representative on the Townsville Harbour Board were rejected because they were not properly cast. Either those three councillors voted informal deliberately, or they did not have the brains to cast a vote correctly, notwithstanding the fact that clear instructions appeared on the ballot-papers.

Mr. Power: Do you not think it was done deliberately?

Mr. AIKENS: It could have been done deliberately, or it may have been that they did not have the brains to cast their votes correctly. It resulted in a dark horse coming

home. Mr. Anthony was elected as a member of the Townsville Harbour Board—he is now chairman—although prior to the ballot he himself did not think he had the proverbial bolter's chance.

Mr. Walsh: He is quite a good member.

Mr. AIKENS: I have no doubt that he will make a good chairman.

I make these remarks to point out that it is not the average man in the street or the aged pensioner who necessarily casts the informal vote. Sometimes those who claim intelligence superior to the battler in the street vote informally.

Motion (Mr. Heading) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING.

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

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—THIRD ALLOTTED DAY.

Debate resumed from 28 August (see p. 151) on Mr. Rae's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (11.52 a.m.): I associate myself with the expressions of loyalty contained in the motion and with the congratulations extended to His Excellency the Governor on the enthusiastic interest he is taking in the development of the State and the welfare of the people. However, after reading the report of the year's activities and plans for the future, I agree with my leader that the speech is one of the most uninspiring documents that could have been prepared by a Government. One might have expected them after being 12 months in office to have made plans for large-scale development as one of the most valuable contributions to Australia's defence. With the threats facing the free world and the explosive situation in the Far East and the Middle East, the State must be developed to absorb more people and that cannot be done unless it is planned by the Government. During the past few months we have seen how the mistakes of years past have accumulated in the East. Because Western countries have maintained economic supremacy there has been an upsurge of nationalism and the problem created leaves very few alternatives to the Western democracies. They must either maintain their economic dictatorship by force or surrender it in some measure. Whether the upsurge of national feeling can be prevented by force can only be shown by history.

I do not intend to give an opinion on whether the United States or the United Kingdom have made the correct manoeuvre, whether the threat to international order is

warranted, but history will tell. Meanwhile in Australia we must remember the march forward of imperialistic Communism; we must regard it as something foreign to our own ideology, foreign to all our views of striving to provide for ourselves a freedom of existence which is denied many other countries in the world. But at a time like this we would expect the Government to give the development of Queensland the consideration that it deserves.

We have heard many political statements by the Premier, the Deputy Premier and other members of Cabinet about the development of industry in the State, but in all cases we find that the developmental works of which they speak are only projects planned and commenced by Labour Governments in the past. Many of the industries of which they speak of expanding are industries which were assisted in their establishment by past Labour Governments. The Deputy Premier has indulged in political humbug in his claims of so many new factories commencing operations in Queensland and in his statements that he and his Government are doing something never done before to encourage the growth of industry here. When they are analysed so many of the statements are mere political humbug. In reply to a question asked by the hon. member for Maryborough this morning the Deputy Premier gave figures to show the increase in the number of factories in Queensland but they represented no more than the normal growth over the years. Consequently, the increase in the number of factories has been no greater than previous years. Indeed in the last five or six years under Labour administration the number was doubled.

Mr. Dewar: Has there been a delegation before to seek new industries for the State?

Mr. LLOYD: There have been numerous delegations, one-man delegations by Ministers of the Labour Cabinet who went to the United Kingdom and indeed travelled the world endeavouring to attract industry to the State. Many attempts have been made. Wonderful incentives have been offered to industry in the United Kingdom and the United States to become established in Queensland.

I have here a copy of the June 1958 issue, No. 199, of a publication put out by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, prepared under instructions from the Rt. Hon. the Treasurer by S. R. Carver, Commonwealth Statistician. Surely its contents would be factual enough to be accepted by hon. members of the Government. This booklet reveals that for the first time in many years there has been a reduction in the numbers of wage and salary earners employed in industry in Queensland. An examination of the figures shows that in the last financial year every other State in the Commonwealth has continued its gradual increase in the number of wage and salary earners employed in industry. So much for

all the talk about the encouragement given to new industries to establish themselves here and encouragement to existing industries to expand, which is just as important! Instead we find that the figures disprove the political humbug of the Deputy Premier and other members of Cabinet. The figures are conclusive. In table 5 on page 4 of the "Monthly Bulletin", under the heading of "Wage and Salary Earners in Civilian Employment, States and Territories (excluding Wage earners in rural industry and private domestic service—Personnel in Defence Forces and National Service Trainees in camp are also excluded)" we find that the total number of persons employed from June 1953 to June 1957, during a period of Labour administration in Queensland, increased from 345,600 to 379,600.

That is an increase which has been paralleled by every other State. There has been an equal increase of a little more than 10 per cent. in every State in the Commonwealth during that period. In Queensland the figure was reduced from 379,000 as at June, 1957, to 378,400 at June, 1958. If the Deputy Premier wishes to convince the people of Queensland that it is his intention to give every incentive to new industry let him tell the people what are the requirements of the Government of Queensland from people wishing to invest in this State, instead of giving an outline of his tour to England and the United States. The most important part was omitted from his 60-minute dreary address. We did expect to hear from him of the requirements of industry in those countries—whether the Government were required to supply power, transport and markets. I repeat, that this State is trailing badly behind the other States in the matter of industrial expansion. When I made that statement the other day it was thrown back to me by the Minister who said that 500 new companies had been registered here. What the people want to see is an increase in the number employed in industry and the absorption of unemployed in existing or new industries. Despite all the statements that have been made, very little is being done to stimulate existing industry. What is being done in relation to the ship-building industry, which is one of the most important defence projects in the State? Nothing is being done in relation to tenders called by the shipping companies for ship building. What is being done by this Government to persuade the Commonwealth Government to ensure that there shall be an equitable distribution of ship building throughout Australia so that Queensland may secure its share and employment in this industry may be maintained? The figures show a decrease of 1,000 in the 12 months during the period the Government have been in office. Instead of all this political humbug, a definite attempt should be made to encourage the growth of secondary industry in Queensland. We have seen no evidence of it. If words were adequate we would have a Utopia, but words do not prove anything if not substantiated

by facts. The figures which I have quoted show that they are not substantiated. The development of Queensland is allied with the development of an adequate housing plan throughout the State. I do not doubt the sincerity of the Deputy Premier nor the Treasurer, but I believe that while they disregard the basic facts and do not move with their feet on the ground they will not be able to overcome the social problems involved in the lack of housing and development. We do not deny the fact that the Government have encouraged co-operative building societies. That is commendable. In fact, it was a feature of the policy outlined by the Leader of the Opposition during the last election. It was a step we intended to take to encourage further home building, even if the scheme covered only a certain section of the community. The legislation introduced by the Government was designed to assist those who could afford to pay a deposit of 20 per cent. Because of the diversion of finance to co-operatives from the normal housing loans of trading banks and insurance companies, interest rates have increased to 6½ per cent. As the loans required for home building in many instances are £3,000, the ordinary working man or unit cannot afford to build homes on such loans. Co-operative building societies will cater for a section of the community, those people who can afford monthly repayments of £16 to £20, but working people cannot afford that amount. The Treasurer, in rather a slighting manner, said that there could not be home ownership on the one hand and rental rebates on the other. On that point I ask why Mt. Isa Mines, Broken Hill, and the Zinc Corporation have decided to make housing loans available at a low rate of interest and to write down the capital value of those loans. As the large monopolies or companies accept housing as a social problem, it must be accepted as such by every Government in the Commonwealth as well.

Housing loans and the rate of interest on them have grown rapidly over the past few years, and it is now virtually impossible for those on ordinary salaries to meet the annual interest and redemption payments.

The Government have foreshadowed a scheme under which rental houses will be made available to tenants on a deposit as low as £25. It is an excellent step. Under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement it is envisaged that the occupiers of homes will become the owners of them, but in order to implement the scheme, loans of £3,200 up to £4,000 will be needed by the purchasers. One of the most essential features of a housing programme is a low rate of interest on housing loans. Immediately following the last war, loans were advanced to builders, contractors, and others by the Commonwealth Savings Bank. A low rate of interest was charged and thus people were able to build houses without accepting the heavy burden of present-day interest rates.

The Commonwealth Government have increased the interest on housing loans to the States from 3 to 4 per cent. That in turn has meant a tremendous rise in rentals and repayments. That action by the Commonwealth Government was quite unnecessary, in view of the fact that a great percentage of the money made available for this purpose is derived by the Commonwealth Government from revenue. Commonwealth and State Governments must be made to realise the heavy burden that interest represents. An increase of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. on a loan of £3,000 means a rise of £1 in monthly repayments. If interest rates continue to rise, within a short time purchasers will have to pay an interest rate of $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.

Co-operative building societies can cater for a certain section of the community, but it is necessary for the Government to have a scheme to enable the working people to participate in home purchase. We have not such a home-purchase scheme at the present time and even with the extension of the present scheme to enable people to buy a home on a £25 deposit the amount of redemption repayments will be too high for the ordinary family to meet. With the Government relinquishing rent control people are finding it impossible to secure homes for rental under £5 a week. Homes are being offered for rent at seven guineas and eight guineas a week, but with the decontrol of rentals an impossible situation will be created for the ordinary working people. With the ever-increasing rentals being charged by the Housing Commission because of high interest charges imposed by the Commonwealth the opportunity for securing a rental home at a reasonable rate is being taken away from the ordinary working man. On a wage of £14 a week many families are paying £4 10s. a week in rent. Unless the Government realise that the heavy burden of interest charges is making it impossible for people to be properly accommodated we will not get a decent housing system in this State. I appeal to the Government, and particularly to the Treasurer, to give the question of interest charges on housing loans serious consideration to enable people to secure a loan which will provide the degree of comfort to which they are entitled.

I have already mentioned the subject of the coloured races of the world and the difficulties confronting many nations in gradually educating coloured people in the Far East and Middle East. Indeed, we have a problem confronting our own aboriginals. I realise that the policy of the Government is one of assimilation of the aboriginal population of Australia, and I hope that it will be possible for them to accomplish their objective. That our treatment of aboriginals has not been up to the standard we desire has been one of the most unfortunate features of the past. It is also unfortunate that there are many people in the community who attempt to put the label of Communism on those who desire to do something to the credit of

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Australia. I recall a member of the Government talking to an Anglican Minister and intimidating him by informing him that the executive of the State Council for the Advancement of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders was communistic and that the security police were to be placed on the heels of members of the executive. The statement caused grave resentment amongst many members of the executive. It was one that should not have been made.

Dr. Noble: You are not saying that I made that statement.

Mr. LLOYD: I said that a member of the Government made it, not the Minister. The problem of assimilation of the aboriginal population has not really been tackled over the years in Queensland. In reply to a question this morning the Minister said that over the past five years 1,073 aboriginals had been assimilated in the Queensland population and that there was a natural growth of 586 aboriginals to be brought under the control of the Director of Native Affairs.

Dr. Noble: That is the natural increase.

Mr. LLOYD: That is correct. On the basis of the figures that were given—

Dr. Noble: The numbers are increasing.

Mr. LLOYD: That may be so, but on the figures that were given it will take 170 years to assimilate the present aboriginal population. Some improvement in the present system of educating aboriginals is essential.

Dr. Noble: Aboriginal children who are now being cared for by the State in reserves will get a proper education that will help in their assimilation.

Mr. LLOYD: I think the Minister will agree that in the past it has been possible to bring the educational standard of aboriginals only up to fourth grade.

Dr. Noble: Fifth grade. With a new approach, we can get them beyond that stage.

Mr. LLOYD: There have been many problems to overcome. There can be no suggestion that aboriginals in this State have been neglected or starved, but in the past there has been too much concentration on segregation rather than assimilation. Whites have been inclined to treat the aboriginal with contempt and to regard him more as a child than a potential respectable citizen. In addition, aboriginals have been subject to too many controls. Although aboriginals in the Torres Strait Islands pay income tax on their wages, they cannot get the benefit of social service payments. That matter is at present the subject of negotiations between the State and Commonwealth Governments.

There cannot possibly be assimilation until we regard aboriginals as capable of being educated. Over the years anthropologists have been able to show that in many respects the social life of aboriginals is far superior

to that of whites. Even though they may be more primitive than whites in their ways, in some directions they are more advanced than we are. They have proved their adaptability to any environment, and a scheme of education should be evolved under which the children of aboriginals will receive the same form of education as white children.

Dr. Noble: There would have to be a special type of education for aboriginal children.

Mr. LLOYD: Unfortunately, aboriginal children have always got a form of education that is a departure from the usual form. For example, on the settlements and mission areas they are supposed to be trained in trades and crafts. However, their training is such that it debars them from entering outside industry except as semi-skilled workers. If the educational system for aboriginals is to be efficient, it must give them the same opportunities as are given to whites. Otherwise, the system will fall down and assimilation will be impossible. Not only should the Director of Native Affairs be responsible for educating the aboriginal child to a standard equivalent to our own, but the Government should undertake the responsibility of finding employment for him. Aboriginal children should be educated to a sufficiently high standard for them to be given certain forms of governmental employment and for their complete assimilation in the community.

Dr. Noble: We have two at the Teachers' Training College now.

Mr. LLOYD: That is excellent. I hope that in the future there will be many more and that the Minister will be successful in his efforts to train them for assimilation. There is no question in my mind that the policy of segregation as practised in the past is unsatisfactory.

Dr. Noble: One of the most serious factors is white prejudice against coloured people.

Mr. LLOYD: That is one I have mentioned. White people have held the aboriginal's ability in contempt and when they regard him as a child they engender in him an inferiority complex. It is not a simple problem but we are very fortunate that it is not as serious here as in other parts of the Commonwealth. Many statements have appeared in the Press and many people who should be more responsible in their expressions of opinion have referred to the conditions of aboriginals in other parts of Australia. One in particular is the Warburton reserve, which I mentioned once before in the House. At that time attempts were made by members of the Queensland Labour Party to slander individual churchmen who had taken a great interest in the subject. Any such attempt to label anyone interested in the welfare of aboriginals as a Communist is a disservice to the nation. Furthermore, we

cannot allow Communists, or anti-Communists, or the rest of the world, to take a much more direct interest in the welfare of aboriginals than we do; it is our problem. It is strange that throughout the Commonwealth legislation has been passed to prevent cruelty to dumb animals but no similar enactments protect our own people from poverty and indirect cruelty. The Commonwealth Constitution does not recognise the aboriginals and throughout history contempt has been shown for them. It is sincerely hoped that the incident that occurred at Nambucca Heads several weeks ago will not have a parallel in Queensland. I am sure every hon. member will agree that it was unfortunate and that it could never have happened if all Australians were regarded with due respect as human beings. The ideals of the Declaration of Human Rights in the United Nations Charter and the Atlantic Charter itself are not idealist prattle. We must carry out our responsibilities to the native peoples of Australia as well as the rest of the world.

Mr. Walsh: Do you subscribe to the Atlantic Charter?

Mr. LLOYD: Yes, and to the universal Declaration of Human Rights, most certainly. There are some hon. members on the Q.L.P. cross benches whose attitude and whose remarks often make me doubt whether they agree with the universal Declaration of Human Rights within the United Nations Charter. However, a great awakening throughout Australia to the problems of aboriginals will do the country a service and let Australians overseas hold their heads higher than in the past.

Mr. RICHTER (Somerset) (12.24 p.m.): I support the motion so ably moved and seconded and I associate myself with the expression of loyalty and devotion to the Throne. The Government's record of achievements in the past 12 months is a tribute to the personal leadership of the Premier who has proved that he has what it takes. He has proved in no uncertain manner that he is a very capable administrator. He is held in the highest esteem by the people of Queensland.

I compliment His Excellency the Governor on his excellent work as the representative of Her Majesty in Queensland. He has endeared himself to people throughout Queensland. He has displayed a splendid knowledge of the primary-producing industries so vitally important to the State. His Excellency drew attention to the immense resources of Queensland and the need for their speedy development. I believe that we must aim at a fast and balanced growth, not only of the whole of Queensland, but also of Australia. Indeed, I believe that we can claim that over the last decade—which is virtually the same as saying during the term of the present Federal Government there has been a fast and well-balanced growth. In a decade the population has increased by 2,000,000, an increase

of 25 per cent. In that time Australia has absorbed about 1,250,000 migrants and found employment for them. Living standards have improved substantially, for instance, per head of the population twice as many people own motor vehicles today.

Mr. Davies: The value of the £1 has constantly depreciated.

Mr. RICHTER: I am speaking about numbers. Household appliances are common in virtually every home. We find that steel production in Australia is up 300 per cent. There are 50 per cent. more factories than 10 years ago and the volume of factory production is up approximately 60 per cent.

Mr. Davies: But that has not solved the unemployment problem.

Mr. RICHTER: I shall come to that. Farm production is up by 40 per cent. in quantity, and exports have increased by 60 per cent. in volume. Unfortunately, while the quantity of farm production is up 40 per cent., prices have declined considerably. Indeed it would be a great mistake to think for a moment that rural economy is something apart from the rest of the country's economy. The purchasing power of the rural sector of the community is of great importance to the entire manufacturing structure and all of the service industries. All Australia depends overwhelmingly upon rural industries to earn funds overseas with which to buy imports. The import requirements of factories for machinery, raw materials etc., use more than half our import budget while these manufacturing industries and the items necessary for the general development of the country absorb almost 80 per cent. of our total import expenditure. These simple figures make it very clear that a serious reduction in our ability to import would produce grave consequences in our capacity to develop the country and to sustain employment in our factories.

I should like to remind hon. members that matter of maintaining employment in our factories is a very critical one for Australia. However, I believe that the Australian economy is sufficiently well balanced to ride out the storm. We are in a much more favourable position to cope with the situation than most other countries which are producers of bulk commodities. This State has tremendous potentialities and great resources and has every justification for confidence in the future. This confidence must be shared by all the people, and it must be encouraged by our leaders. That is important. A recession can be brought about by a lack of confidence in the future. I say, in reply to an earlier interjection, that I fully realise the significance and the seriousness of even a small figure of unemployment, and every endeavour should be made to reduce it to the absolute minimum. Let me say this: It ill becomes the Leader of the Opposition to make political capital out of this position. That may tend to destroy the confidence of

the people in the future. I refer to a recent broadcast by the Leader of the Opposition when he dealt with unemployment figures. I say that that broadcast was unworthy of one who aspires to become the Premier of this State. The hon. member cast a doubt on the accuracy of the statistical figures which were quoted by the Federal Minister for Labour. Those figures show that the number registered for employment in Queensland is 1.6 of the total work force. In Queensland only, the number of persons receiving unemployment benefits fell by 1,220.

Mr. Duggan: Fifty people were dismissed in Toowoomba last week from two institutions.

Mr. RICHTER: I am going to ask this question: Does the Leader of the Opposition claim that these officers are deliberately deceiving the people of Australia?

Mr. Duggan: It is the method of compilation.

Mr. RICHTER: I do not believe that that is his suggestion. The statement made by the hon. member was misguided political propaganda. Unemployment in most other countries is much more serious than it is here. The position calls for more responsible statements from the country's political leaders. I suggest that the Leader of the Opposition jack-up his political thinking to a statesman-like level and assist the Government in their endeavour to bring about full employment.

In 1957-58 the export of our primary products earned £700,000,000 and in the same period our imports of essential materials and equipment cost £762,000,000. In that period we had inescapable overseas commitments of about £44,000,000. Thus we see that in the last financial year our primary industries earned £700,000,000 in overseas currency and the expenditure on absolute essentials was £806,000,000, showing a deficiency of £106,000,000. That is not the whole of the story. I do not want to deceive the Committee. Our manufacturing and semi-manufacturing industries earned £109,000,000 by export, approximately 11 per cent. of our total earnings. In addition, we were able to borrow some money. We had the advantage of overseas funds invested in Australia, to pay for overseas goods in that period, and because of prudence in early years Australia built up reserves of more than £500,000,000.

In the figures I have quoted, however, I have not included a very large array of imports that are not considered to be absolutely essential. The total for these is in the vicinity of £100,000,000. The real point I am trying to make is that in this country, which of necessity must be a big importer and which overwhelmingly depends on primary products to earn sufficient money for imports, we find that primary products fall short by about £100,000,000 a year of the cost of the absolute necessities in our overseas obligations. With this situation in mind, the wellbeing

of our primary industries is not a parochial matter. It is not a matter for concern only of primary producers or farmers. It is a matter of concern to each and every person in the community. It touches on the entire wellbeing of the Australian people and affects our capacity to develop and ability to sustain employment. I think all hon. members will agree.

The figures I have quoted illustrate the vital nature to Australia of this matter. It is equally important to a great number of bulk commodity producing countries north of Australia, in South-east Asia, and Africa and South America. I remind hon. members that last year our export earnings fell by almost £170,000,000 compared with the previous year. Farm income was down by about £130,000,000. Naturally the farming community has been placed in a very serious position.

Mr. Power: Whom do you blame for the decline?

Mr. RICHTER: I shall tell the hon. member.

We must do something about it. Within Australia, that is, internally, we must sustain the producing power for farm products, we must continue with our stabilisation plans and we must pursue efficiency of production. Governments and all who serve the rural community must avoid placing any extra costs on the rural community. When a factory becomes unprofitable, an immediate survey is made of the costs. If it is found that nothing can be done to improve the position, there is an immediate reduction in production. If unprofitability in rural industry should lead to a reduction in production, there would be very serious consequences throughout Australia. I think that is clear to everyone. The Australian farmer is an expansionist in his thinking and he is prepared to expand his operations, but he cannot be expected to do that unless he is assured of a reasonable margin of profit on his product. At the present time he is not getting even the cost of production. Problems of cost have been created within Australia and they must be ironed out. There are many costs passed onto the primary producer that he cannot pass on because he is governed and controlled by world prices. The explanation of the problem is not an internal but an external one. It is the general fall in the value of bulk commodities—not only a fall in the value of commodities but the great disparity which exists between the value of bulk commodities as against industrial products in world trade. In the last 10 years industrial products have doubled in value whilst the value of primary products has risen by only 50 per cent. When we think of a short term, the position is more serious. Taking a period of 18 months we find that wool has fallen by 34 per cent., butter by 28 per cent., metals 35 per cent. and meat 16 per cent. The prices of sugar and grain have remained stationary but there is a tremendous

stockpile of wheat and a surplus of sugar. As against the tremendous fall in the value of major exports over the last 18 months the value of manufactured goods in world trade has risen by 4 per cent. This situation extends to almost all the bulk-producing countries, and it is more serious for the great group of countries outside Australia than Australia. Their living standards are less satisfactory than ours and their need for development is greater than ours. We have a greater balance in this country, but they are depending entirely on the sale of their bulk commodities. If we make a survey of South-east Asia over the same 18 months we find that rubber prices have fallen by 18 per cent., tea by 16 per cent., jute by 8 per cent., rice 5 per cent., and tin by 7 per cent. We are all familiar with the great assistance given these people by the Colombo Plan and the generosity of the United States. If we take the total of the aid given to those countries and add the total of overseas investments in those countries we find that it is offset and negated by a fall of 5 per cent. in the value of their export products. The fall in prices would possibly average about 15 per cent. and the aid that they have been given is about 5 per cent.

That is a very serious matter for those countries, and it must not continue. However, just as I have pointed out that any deterioration in the purchasing power of Australia's primary industries is bad for the whole of Australia, equally any deterioration in the purchasing power of this great group of under-developed, commodity-producing countries must be bad for the whole world.

It cannot be expected that they should produce cheap food and commodities for the factories of the world and become markets for the factories of the world unless they can earn enough funds from overseas countries to enable them to buy. Only recently India realised the truth of that, and imposed very drastic import restrictions. It is only reasonable that those countries should expect to improve their present standards of living, and we would not be realists if we did not recognise that the existing conditions could have serious political repercussions.

Mr. Davies: Are you trying to tell us that Communist influences are trying to improve the conditions of the people in those countries?

Mr. RICHTER: I am not trying to tell the hon. member that at all; I am giving the story in my own way.

Any political repercussions that might occur in those countries would result in serious repercussions throughout the Western world. Unless the free-enterprise countries are prepared to pay reasonable prices for the products that those countries produce, it is possible that Communism will appear to them more attractive than the Western world.

Mr. Power: They will jump out of the frying pan into the fire.

Mr. RICHTER: That is so, but that is the position as it exists. If we deny them the right to live and the right to earn their own living, is it not understandable that in desperation they will look somewhere else and take the risk?

The present world-wide fall in commodity prices is not just a phenomenon of trade; it is not one of those things that happen in cycles every few years. It has been brought about mainly by the recession in the United States of America. Again, the tightening of credit in the United Kingdom and the accompanying increase in interest rates have had an adverse effect on wool prices. Fortunately, there is now an easing of credit in the United Kingdom and according to the news this morning there is to be a reduction in interest rates. That should help.

Industrial products are protected throughout the world and a great deal of stability in their prices has been brought about by G.A.T.T.—General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs. However, for commodity trade there are no rules, no agreement—nothing whatever. Uneconomic price supports for agricultural products have disturbed trade. The level of price support for wheat, for instance, throughout Europe has destroyed the market. It is serious in the United States, too, where price supports have encouraged the overproduction of grain, butter and many other foodstuffs. Germany, who for many years advocated free trade, is today imposing drastic restrictions on the importation of foodstuffs from the very countries to which she sells her industrial products; but Australia finds herself driven out of the flour markets of Ceylon and Indonesia by subsidised German and French producers.

The undeveloped countries of South-east Asia have a history, a civilisation and a culture possibly as old as Europe's.

Mr. Davies: How will that solve the timber problem?

Mr. RICHTER: What has that got to do with it?

Mr. Davies: It has a lot to do with it.

Mr. RICHTER: Those countries deserve help to achieve a satisfactory standard of living not by charity but by the right to grow their products and to sell them at profitable prices on the world market.

Mr. Davies: Are you going to tell us what you suggest should be done?

Mr. RICHTER: I will tell the hon. member if he will be patient.

Mr. Davies: You have got only till 22 November.

Mr. RICHTER: The national dignity of those countries must be preserved and help must be based on their own efforts rather than on charity.

On the principles that are at issue, Australia and New Zealand have a great deal in

common with the countries of South-east Asia. The problem will be discussed by the countries of the British Commonwealth at the Montreal conference this month and a solution is possible. I do not think an absolute solution of all our problems will come from the conference but, as the member countries include many undeveloped primary-producing nations and the greatest consumer of raw materials for commodity goods, Britain herself, I have no doubt that the conference will arrive at a solution that can be sold to the rest of the world.

The solution will lie in an arrangement like G.A.T.T. throughout our primary industry. We have right in our midst a splendid example in the International and Commonwealth Sugar Agreements, probably the best example in the world today of controlling the volume of production and stabilising prices. I do not suggest that the control of prices and the like will solve all our problems but unless we view the matter seriously and make every effort the main problem will recur frequently in the years to come and may cause major recessions one after the other. Is it not reasonable to accept that the primary-producing countries of the world could have a trade agreement or understanding to control the volume of production and regulate prices?

Mr. Burrows: Do you think that platitudes and promises will be much help?

Mr. RICHTER: I am not giving any practical suggestions. I am asking that the nations of the world get together on this matter and formulate some sort of scheme based on the principle of G.A.T.T. to apply to the primary-producing countries of the world.

Mr. Burrows: Do you not think that the immediate and urgent need of the dairy farmer should come first?

Mr. RICHTER: I mentioned that before but apparently the hon. member was asleep.

Mr. Burrows: At least I have wakened up which is more than you have done!

Mr. RICHTER: I said that we had internal problems. They have to be faced internally. But I gave what I considered was of paramount importance, the drop in value on the world markets. If we are to ask other countries of the world to assist us in bringing about order in the sale of primary products, I agree with the hon. member that we in Australia must first put our own house in order.

Mr. Davies: You have got control of the State and Commonwealth Governments; let us see you get on and do something.

Mr. RICHTER: I would ask the hon. member for Maryborough to assist us. He is not going to assist by adopting the attitude he did before of creating a feeling of uncertainty and doubt in the minds of the

people by playing up the subject of unemployment and making the position appear to be worse than it is. We ask for practical suggestions.

Efficiency in production must be encouraged. We must be businesslike on our drive for markets. The sale of Australian products has suffered in the past because of bad marketing. It has given our products a bad name overseas. We must avoid this in the future. We must realise that our product is good and sell it accordingly. We have made mistakes in the past but every effort is being made by the Federal Government at the present time to overcome the difficulties. The cold truth is that if there were any serious failure of our export industries, although it would hurt the farming community, it would hurt the rest of the community even more because it would dislocate the whole of our economy. The Australian economy has been geared for expansion; any temporary halt in that expansion could have serious repercussions for the whole of Australia. Therefore I appeal to all hon. members to take a serious view of the position and to assist the Government by putting forward constructive suggestions to overcome the problem confronting the primary-producing countries of the world. A prosperous and contented rural community is vital if we are to develop our vast resources and maintain the standard of living enjoyed by Australians today.

Hon. V. C. GAIR (South Brisbane) (2.15 p.m.): At the outset, I should like to congratulate the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply. Both hon. members created a very good impression by their speeches. The hon. member for Gregory adopted a theme that was quite away from parochial matters when he made a request that, in the event of Queensland's being honoured by a visit from a member of the Royal family, all sections and all areas of Queensland should be given the opportunity of paying their homage and respect to the distinguished visitor. The hon. member for Sandgate, in a truly Queensland attitude, made an appeal for Queensland manufacturers to be given preference. While I do not entirely agree with all the hon. member had to say on preference to Queensland, I think he at least was prompted by a patriotic spirit to do something for Queensland manufacturers. There is, of course, a limit to the margin any Government can give to our own manufacturers. That is determined by a sense of justice and the recognition of quality and value which must always be taken into account when purchases are made to meet Government needs. After all, the Government are only the custodians of the finances of the people, and they would not be justified in expending public money in giving Queensland manufacturers unreasonable margins. Queensland manufacturers have a responsibility to keep abreast of development

and progress in management and manufacture, both of which contribute to a reduction in the cost of production. I recollect that during the war years many of our old manufacturers, particularly those in the foundry business, complained very bitterly that they were receiving no Commonwealth orders for goods. We went into the matter and found that they were receiving no orders for the simple reason that their plants were antiquated and not able to produce the goods required by the various branches of the Defence Department. The reason for this was that everything they had made over the years had been paid away in dividends to shareholders and that very little had been put back for the improvement or modernisation of plant. While we have good reason to support our own manufacturers—no-one will quibble about that—on the other hand the manufacturers have a responsibility to themselves and to the public to keep abreast of the times by putting some of their profits back into the modernisation of their plants, thereby maintaining the highest measure of efficiency so that costs may be kept down, thus enabling them to compete successfully with their competitors.

Mr. Windsor: If we had been allowed greater depreciation on machinery we could have ploughed more back into our businesses.

Mr. GAIR: That might have been the reason, but the fact remains that if Queensland manufacturers are to compete successfully with manufacturers in other States they must keep abreast of the latest methods.

Mr. Coburn: You cannot place a premium on inefficiency.

Mr. GAIR: That is so. No-one with common sense could argue to the contrary.

The hon. member for Sandgate made a good, spirited speech in favour of assisting our manufacturers by purchasing from them, but there is a limit to the margin that a Government can give. Furthermore, I ask is it to be left only to the Government to support these people, or is private enterprise to be equally concerned about buying from Queensland manufacturers and extending an unlimited margin of preference to them?

Mr. Morris: I think they should be.

Mr. GAIR: If that is expected of the Government, it should be expected of private enterprise. Private enterprise should set an example. The Government cannot be expected to extend these concessions if private enterprise refuses to recognise the merit of the argument.

Mr. Morris: Quite right.

Mr. GAIR: I cannot see any merit in the argument that the margin of preference should be unlimited.

I congratulate His Excellency on the excellent manner in which he has discharged

his responsibilities as Governor during the period he has been here, and on the simple dignity he has displayed. He has quickly destroyed the false impression of him that I think was created by a section of the Press. All the material I read about the Governor prior to his arrival in Queensland was devoted to his love for outdoor sport and his pleasure in knowing there were facilities for shooting and other recreations. I cannot recollect having read in the Press that he was coming to Queensland as the representative of the Queen to do a job of work in the interests of Queensland and the people of this State. That was a great pity. Having met the Governor, I with other Queenslanders realise that he is very conscious of the need to do a job of work as representative of the Queen. He has discharged his duties excellently and with great distinction.

I was very pleased to learn from the people while I was in North Queensland recently that they appreciated the genuine and sincere interest of the Governor and Lady May in them at all times, and particularly during the time of adversity, calamity and distress in a part of North Queensland last year.

The papers portrayed the Governor unfairly, but he has now with a great measure of success eradicated or obliterated that false impression. I think he will prove to be a very good Governor, a man who will do much to cement the ties between Her Majesty the Queen and the people of this State.

Without any reflection on the Governor, however, there are in Australia men who have distinguished themselves greatly in time of peace and in time of war, men to whom this honour rightly could have been given, men who would have discharged the duties of the position with equal distinction and success.

Outside of that part of the Speech delivered by His Excellency at the opening of Parliament which was contributed by the Governor himself, it was anything but inspiring. It left hon. members and the public who were privileged to hear it in a state of confusion. The Government, in reviewing their first year of office, deliberately avoided mention in the Governor's opening speech of anything about the increase in unemployment that has taken place in the 12 months that they have been in office. Any decrease in unemployment that has taken place quite recently has not been because of any planned campaign of activity on the part of the Government but rather because of an improvement in the seasons. There is little evidence of any planning on the part of the Government to absorb those out of work and to prevent a similar pattern of rising unemployment such as took place in the latter part of the last year and will take place again unless there is some planned attack against the evil of unemployment. Those people walking the streets vainly in search of employment and

living on the miserly social service payment handed out to them by the Federal Government find cold comfort in the Government's election promise as stated by the Premier in these words—

“By our policy of planned development of the whole of Queensland we will bring about a state of affairs which will result in employment.”

Whilst the ranks of the State's jobless and their dependants number thousands, the Government added to their difficulty by relinquishing and relaxing rent controls, with the result that many of the unfortunate people who have no job are also faced with the additional problem of paying increased rentals because of the Government's disregard for their interests. Since the September quarter of 1957 the basic wage has been subjected to three upward variations amounting to 13s. a week, the last being a rise of 6s. a week. That is indisputably due to the Government's overthrow of price control which has been discussed in this House on more than one occasion. Who will benefit by the forced economic position which necessitated a rise in the basic wage? Nobody, not even the Government which must meet a wage increase amounting to hundreds of thousands of pounds. The worker receives no benefit by an increase in the basic wage because already prices of goods have increased warranting the increase in the basic wage that he receives. As the former Attorney-General has just reminded me, the worker is three months behind in any case. These increases in the basic wage benefit nobody. It should be the desire, the intention and the determination of the Government to arrest those almost daily increases in the cost of living.

It is a mystery to me how a man, his wife and three children can live on the basic wage today when regard is had to the cost of essential commodities. Only the other day I was looking through an old scrapbook for 1948, and I saw a Press cutting of a statement that I made as Minister for Labour and Industry on the increase in the price of bread from 5d. to 6d. a loaf. What a tremendous increase has taken place in the price of bread in the last 10 years! True, the basic wage has increased, but one is a set-off against the other and the worker is no better off with the increase in wages. Inflation might benefit some people, but it does not benefit the family man and his wife and children, who have to balance the domestic budget.

The unemployed section of the community to which I have referred has the additional worry today because of the increased rents that have taken place as the result of the Government's inexperience and their haste to give effect to a policy that will please only the landlord section of the community. The Government have political debts that they must liquidate. They made promises to those whom they represent and

they have to honour them. They are doing it with indecent haste, irrespective of the effect on the economy of the State.

This self-imposed strain on the Government's resources has undoubtedly been the reason for the savage reduction in Government subsidies to local and semi-governmental authorities during the parliamentary recess. This twofold attack by the Government—decreased subsidies and increased wages—will have a very grave effect on these public bodies, who are expected to play a major part in the State's development.

The work of local authorities is very closely linked with that of the State Government; indeed, it is closely linked with that of all forms of government. The Government whom I had the privilege to lead endeavoured to the best of their ability to keep up the supply of money and subsidies to local authorities, because we believed that they were doing a work that was very necessary for the development of the State—work that only local authorities themselves could perform and implement.

We hear a great deal from the present Government about decentralisation. It is very difficult for me to understand why a Government who preach decentralisation should choose to lessen the efficiency of the most decentralised form of government in this country, namely, local authorities. I repeat, that because of their increased wages bill and reduced Government subsidies many works that are crying out to be done will not be done, and many people will be put on the unemployed market.

Because of my experience as the Leader of a Government, I am not unconscious or unappreciative of the dilemma that the Government find themselves in, particularly in the matter of finance. But when hon. members opposite sat on this side of the House they were full of suggestions and eloquent advocacy of what the then Government should do. They spoke about increased grants and increased subsidies for everything. In their first year of office they have hit a very vital form of Government by reducing the State's subsidies to local authorities for the carrying out of very important works throughout Queensland. The former Treasurer and I were criticised on more than one occasion in the House for the tactics and attitudes we adopted at Loan Council meetings and Premiers' conferences. We were charged with having used the wrong technique. We were told that we should have used the honey treatment instead of the vinegar. The Premier and the Treasurer recently returned from the Loan Council meeting crying like koalas because they have not been given enough loan moneys and tax reimbursement by the Federal Government. We probably used the honey trick, too, and failed and then we were compelled to use other methods to draw attention to the inadequacy of the State's share of the finances of the country.

Mr. Gaven: How do you think Dr. Evatt would treat us?

Mr. GAIR: I was about to say that Queensland has never had any preference from Canberra irrespective of the Government in power. I recollect that my predecessor, Mr. Hanlon, complained bitterly of the scant treatment Queensland received from the Federal Government at that time. I have always said that if there is anything that Mr. Menzies and Dr. Evatt would agree on, and agree on wholeheartedly, it would be the abolition of State Parliaments. Neither of them would hide his opposition to the existence of State Parliaments. They make no bones about that.

Mr. Aikens: They cannot vote us out so they are trying to starve us out.

Mr. GAIR: That is true, too. But they are not slow to push onto the State extra responsibilities for hospitalisation, education and the like, which present themselves as the population increases and which the State Government cannot possibly overlook. Attention has been drawn to these matters on numerous occasions but with little or no effect. It is refreshing to see that the present State Government have changed their attitude towards the Federal Government's distribution of finances. Previously my Treasurer and the other members of my party and I were told that we were only making a political football of the matter, that we were using the attack on Mr. Menzies and Sir Arthur Fadden for political purposes. Hon. members opposite now realise how difficult the task is and how little they can expect from Canberra even with their own political ilk and kidney in charge of the coffers of the national Parliament. We have to be realistic. When we talk of unemployment we must realise that unless the Government have money to spend on useful and necessary works it is utterly impossible to maintain full employment.

In the post-war years the Labour Government in Queensland were able to maintain full employment only because we could supplement the inadequate loan moneys made available by the Federal Government out of reserve funds that had been built up during the war when revenues were buoyant. Wise members of the Labour Government saw that funds were built up for the rainy days ahead in the post-war years when they realised that loan moneys available to them would be inadequate for the work required to be done in Queensland. We have repeatedly told the public of Queensland and this Parliament that we were able to maintain full employment only because we had these reserve funds. But there is the old saying, "You cannot eat your cake and have it too." My Government recognised that the time was fast approaching when something would have to be done about getting sufficient loan money to maintain all industrious and worthy workers in Queensland in full employment. As I have said here on more than one occasion, full

employment should be the paramount concern of any Government. The Government which I was privileged to lead always aimed at maintaining full employment. That is why we were compelled to refuse three weeks' annual leave. Three weeks' annual leave could have been introduced only at the expense of workers who were engaged in government utilities and on government projects. The spending of money to give people additional recreational facilities or additional leisure at the expense of workers in industry, on main roads, and in forestry, etc., was not my understanding of true Labour principles. Accordingly, we rejected three weeks' annual leave; and the result, of course, is history today. Cabinet was unanimous in its attitude.

Mr. Mann: Cabinet wanted to override convention.

Mr. GAIR: It is news to me that the people elected Convention. The people of Queensland elected Cabinet and the Government.

An A.L.P. Member: You did not do much good in North Toowoomba.

Mr. GAIR: I shall deal with that. Members of the Australian Labour Party were told on innumerable occasions that three weeks' annual leave could be granted only at the expense of people who would be thrown out of work. Let us see how sincere they are on the matter of unemployment. When I moved a motion of no confidence in the Government in the last session of Parliament—the main reason for it being unemployment—hon. members of the Australian Labour Party, rather than vote for the no confidence motion, like a lot of irresponsible children left the Chamber. That is an excellent example of the sincerity of those hon. members on this vital question of unemployment.

The subject of hire purchase has been discussed in the Chamber on previous occasions. It seems to get a very prominent place in the Press today. I hope that the Government are sincere and genuine in their attempts to grapple with the problem it has raised. We all know the advantages of hire purchase to the community. It is after all a credit system which enables people to purchase items which they could not buy if the credit system were not available to them. No-one can dispute that because of the greed and avariciousness of some people the hire-purchase system has got out of hand, and it calls for immediate remedy; it calls for action of Governments both Federal and State to deal with the question in a concerted way. The usurious rates of interest must be checked, and some of the conditions written into the contracts which are contrary to all decent principles must also be looked into. The Treasurer has already indicated that the Government's concern springs from one aspect only, the difficulty of raising loan moneys for developmental purposes. Their interest in this matter should be stimulated by more reasons than that, although it is a particularly good one. It gets back to the subject I was

dealing with when I said that State Governments require to have loan money to expend on necessary and essential works in order to maintain full employment. If they have not got the money it is utterly impossible for them to maintain full employment; but from time to time we hear representatives of private enterprise saying, "Why should the Government spend so much loan money?", and that private enterprise could take up the lag and find employment for our people. That has not been our experience. We have found that unless the Government spend considerable sums of loan money there must inevitably be unemployment. It is incumbent on the Government to endeavour to afford some relief in lower hire-purchase interest rates for those who find it necessary to use the hire-purchase system. This should not be done by forfeiting State power and allowing the Commonwealth to act. I prefer to see legislation introduced by all the States to control the matter. The Commonwealth, up to now, have not been very interested. Indeed the Commonwealth Bank engaged in the field of hire purchase with just as much enthusiasm as private companies. I have sometimes wondered whether it would not be of some advantage to the people of Queensland if the State Government entered the field of hire purchase through our Agricultural Bank or State Government Insurance office or some other office, in order to make money available to the people who wanted credit and loans for important purchases at a reasonable rate of interest. We all remember the great effect that the establishment of the State Government Insurance office had in checking the excessive premiums charged by private insurance offices at the time. In 1915 or 1916 that legislation was introduced, and the State Government Insurance office has been a great influence and has had an arresting affect on private insurance companies who were inclined to charge excessive premiums and reap tremendous profit from the public generally.

Mr. Aikens: The State Government Insurance Office joined in the stamp duties steal that private companies are putting on the public now.

Mr. GAIR: The State Government Insurance Office has done a very good job in the interests of the people.

I sometimes wonder whether the State should not enter the field of hire purchase and make money available at a reduced rate of interest, in competition with those who are causing this trouble in the community at present. I know there are many difficulties and that it is not as easily done as said; nevertheless it is worthy of consideration.

Mr. Evans: The regional boards are doing that now in regard to electrical appliances.

Mr. GAIR: Yes.

Time will not allow my touching on all subjects I had intended to discuss during this debate but I shall refer to some matters

in regard to the political position in Queensland and Australia that cause me very much concern.

I feel concern about the great drift that has taken place in the political field in recent times, and the great influence, the almost unlimited influence, that the Communists in Australia are exercising in our industrial unions and within the ranks of the Australian Labour Party. Dr. Evatt publicly stated in Sydney recently in a T.V. interview that he will, if elected as Prime Minister, resume diplomatic relations with the Soviet, trade with Red China, support her admission to U.N.O. and oppose United States' military aid for Australia in the event of war. That is a remarkable statement from the leader of a political party, an important political party, in the national Parliament of our country. Mr. Chamberlain, the political boss of the A.L.P. movement in Australia at the present time, went to Red China for the May Day celebrations. He returned and wrote articles for "The Courier-Mail" and other leading newspapers in Australia. In those articles he had not one word of criticism to offer on what he saw in China; rather, he had general and enthusiastic acclaim and applause for all he saw in Red China during his brief visit. He said nothing of the slave camps of that country or the poverty and religious persecution that exists under the Communist regime. He said, among other things, and, of course, with a view to influencing the people of Australia, that religion in China was as free as it could be; that all denominations were free to practise their religion. That is not supported by more authentic and reliable visitors to Red China and those who have suffered at the hands of the Communists of Red China. What Mr. Chamberlain saw in Red China was what would suit him. He saw Communism at work there and it fitted into his plans for Australia. He is the leader of the Australian Labour Party, the political boss of the Australian Labour Party. But what did Dr. Malcolm Mackay, Minister of Scots Church, Sydney, say about the Christian Church in China? He said that the Christian Church in China is "as free as a tiger in a cage." We have the undeniable reports of missionary priests and representatives of other denominations who have been kicked out of China like dogs because they dared to teach Christian principles in a Communist country. There are priests in Brisbane today who were in China and were kicked out of that country. Thousands of them were murdered while others were thrown into prison and left to perish. Mr. Chamberlain, the Leader of the A.L.P., came back and tried to gull the people of this country into believing that Communism was good for the people.

(Time expired.)

Mr. P. R. SMITH (Windsor) (2.55 p.m.): I join with preceding speakers in their congratulations to His Excellency the Governor

on the manner in which he has fulfilled the duties attaching to his high office in this State. Whilst the name Smith is one which will endear the Governor to many of our people, his actions will endear him to all. Later I propose to elaborate on his visit to North Queensland during its time of trial and tribulation.

I desire to congratulate the hon. member for Flinders on his re-entry into this House. It is pleasing indeed to see him back amongst us. He was with us for a short while, away for a time, and his return to the House serves to emphasise his first victory. I also congratulate the hon. member for North Toowoomba on being returned to this House. I congratulate him more for his tenacity of purpose and the way he seized every opportunity that presented itself to come back to this Chamber. I think that hon. members occupying the cross benches would sooner see the hon. member for Flinders here than somebody else. I am moved to say, that in view of the proposed electoral perambulations of the Federal A.L.P. leader and the past perambulations of the Labour leader in this State, to those of us of less radical thought, it would appear that the seat of the A.L.P. leader grows progressively hotter. It will be interesting to see what future moves are required.

I propose in the time allotted to me to deal with three main matters that I think should be considered by the House. The first is the question of preparedness in the event of any state-wide or national disaster of the people of the State to render first aid to themselves. I am speaking in the sense of medical first aid.

I should like, secondly to draw attention to the iniquities and anomalies that have been thrust upon the people who use the roads through the deficiencies of the Motor Vehicles Insurance Act. Thirdly, I suggest to the Traffic Commission that we in Brisbane might be the first of all States to install a traffic circus. The position I suggest is at the Albion Fiveways like that at Piccadilly Circus, London. I suggest to hon. members that there is an undeniable and urgent need for the people of this State to equip themselves with the necessary knowledge to render first aid, not only to themselves but to others in the immediate vicinity. In the course of his speech the hon. member for Sherwood directed attention to atomic and nuclear warfare, but it is not only as a result of atomic and nuclear warfare that a national crisis might be precipitated upon this country.

Has it occurred to hon. members that, with the advent of atomic power, there may be a release of dangerous and mighty forces causing great havoc in this State? Has it occurred to them that, whereas previously this country benefited from a vast buffer of water that provided great immunity from disease and epidemic, we now have landing here in great numbers aircraft that bring the

United Kingdom and the United States of America within 48 hours or a little more of this country? They bring much closer still the disease-ridden and pestilence-stricken countries of the Near and Far East.

With the growth of international air traffic, the immunity of this country from disease is lessening. It cannot be denied that the incubation period that was previously spent on shipboard no longer exists. People can come into this country and expose us to the risk of epidemic. How many hon. members—we can presume that they are 75 enlightened members of the community—have been immunised against smallpox or cholera?

Mr. Lloyd: Some of them have.

Mr. P. R. SMITH: Some of them, but is there total immunisation? That is a danger that has thrust itself upon us.

Australia is no stranger to flood or bush-fire. Nothing has a worse effect on hygiene than flood. The greater the flood the greater the risk to hygiene. Flood is no choicer of positions, and the thickly-populated towns and cities are subject to its ravages. Bush-fires, of course, have a somewhat restricted area of operations, but not so floods.

I am not being unreasonable when I suggest that with large, high-powered aircraft flying across cities, there is always the possibility of a mishap. One of them could either explode or crash in the middle of a densely-populated city, and anyone who has seen such a thing happen will realise the extent of the damage.

The hon. member for Sherwood pointed out that in the case of a nuclear attack the area of devastation would be some four miles in diameter. It is not inconceivable that in the case of a crashing aircraft the damage could be spread over a very large area, too. The damage may be smaller than in the case of a nuclear attack, but the dislocation to the city could be great.

Let us put it in its worst light. If a city was devastated by a nuclear attack there would be no telephones, no fire brigades, no ambulance, and no hospitals, not even Parliament House. We would be deprived of these essential services. Consider the damage that would be suffered if a large aircraft crashed in the centre of a city. Many fires would spring up and shattered windows could injure possibly hundreds of people.

From now on, because of the possibility of nuclear warfare and the need to have available for service every able-bodied person, it is imperative that as many as possible should know how to take steps to remedy any damage that may be done. In motor collisions, flying glass is often the cause of grave injury and even loss of life. Speaking of the mounting toll of road accidents, with the increased speeds that we are now able to attain on the better roads that are being built, who can deny that there will be more and worse accidents? How many people

on the roads today carry first-aid kits in their cars? How many office employees could render first aid to their fellow workers? In this Chamber the hon. member for Kedron would perhaps be in a better position than most because he has had service training. Whether he can apply it is a matter for himself and his immediate neighbours.

When we run the risk of these catastrophes it is important to have in the community people trained to be self-sufficient. It does not take much imagination to realise that, without the telephone to summon an ambulance to even a simple accident a person might bleed to death simply because nobody around knows how to apply pressure at the right spot or how to apply a tourniquet. Burns could be equally serious and they are common with fires and accidents, not only on the road but also in industry. No doubt in industry there are available people trained to a certain degree; but how does that help the little boy or girl on the fringe of a devastated area? I am not referring to the area devastated by an atomic bomb or other nuclear weapon but to that area which, because of a catastrophe, is cut off from outside aid for a while. It need not be for very long. First aid has to be immediate if it is to be of any use.

The easiest way to do something about the matter would be to start training at an early age. Children are receptive and could be taught the principles of hygiene and first aid. With a little training over a long period they would become efficient and they would know what to do in an emergency without panic. It cannot be denied that the panic that may result from some of these sudden and unexpected events could cause great confusion and loss of life and property in the community. It is well to have people acquainted with the sight of blood. I do not suggest we should go around letting blood to familiarise them with it, but they should learn what they can do. No doubt it would be inadvisable to train children in some matters. The hon. member for Nundah interjected about tourniquets. A tourniquet is sometimes essential to prevent a person's bleeding to death, but it is equally essential to loosen it occasionally so that the blood may flow. That may be elementary to some of us with a knowledge of first aid but it may be completely incomprehensible to others. I am sure the Minister for Health and Home Affairs will support my contention. It is not uncommon for people to lose limbs, or even their lives, because of the improper application of tourniquets.

It cannot be denied that with distances ever diminishing we are threatened with outbreaks of hostility and catastrophes of all kinds and we must learn to look after ourselves and our immediate neighbours. It is imperative that we waste no time. We cannot acquaint people with the principles of first aid overnight; it will be a lengthy process. If we want the country to be able to survive

disaster and make a quick recovery in war, we must have the people fully trained and as accustomed to rendering first aid as possible. Let us do what we can with civil defence. Let us by all means adopt the suggestions made by the returned soldiers' organisations to set up a scheme for defence; but all those organisations will be only as good as the weakest link. Part and parcel of it will be the tending of the injured or maimed and no doubt many would be maimed in such a disaster as I have spoken of.

I therefore make an earnest request to all hon. members to give consideration to the training of people in the principles of first aid, to give consideration to how soon the training can be started, and furthermore to give consideration to ambulance training. I am not suggesting that they should all be ambulance bearers but at least some people should be fully equipped and able to cope with any emergency, confident in knowing that what they do is the right thing, confident that they can deal not only with minor injuries but I hope in time with the larger emergencies that might present themselves.

I pass now to the subject of motor vehicle insurance which today must loom large in the consideration of many people. On a previous occasion I referred to certain aspects of it. Since then I have been able to peruse the Acts in other States relating to the subject. It appears that with the advent of good roads and higher speeds we must face the tragedy of accidents occurring not only more frequently but also more spectacularly. Throughout the pages of the daily Press considerable publicity has been accorded to drink-driving. We have seen how the punishment has slowly mounted. Perhaps it is desirable that it should mount much more quickly. But in any event it is a human trait that once the penalty gets to a fairly high level we will be hard put to apprehend such a driver because he will run for it as soon as he knows he is in trouble. If he is involved in an accident and there is any suggestion at all of his having taken drink and possibly could be implicated in a drink-driving charge, to use the vernacular he will shoot through for sure. We will then be confronted with the sorry plight of an injured or maimed person, certainly a person who has suffered damage and loss, left without anyone to sue. It is all very well if there are witnesses, if the owner of the car is known or if the number is taken, but in the dead of night if there is no-one around it is very hard for a person who has been struck down and splattered across the pavement to know very much about the owner, the driver or the number of a car. In these cases I commend to the legislature the appointment of a nominal defendant, something which is not unusual in our legislation. It would serve a very good purpose in providing for the needs of people who at the present time are placed in very difficult financial circumstances. The victim of a hit-run

motorist is in a singularly bad position. He is left lamenting, in many cases he is left dead when those he leaves behind are left lamenting. The man who is injured is left out of work for a period with no money coming in and no-one to sue. If a driver stops and gives his name and registration number the injured person has a remedy. It is much better, of course, not to be involved in an accident, but having been hit he does at least have the benefit of recovery. When he is hit and the motorist runs away he is in a particularly disastrous position. I foresee that with heavier and stricter punishments there may well be an increase in the number of hit-and-run drivers. It is not the man who is completely drunk because he would not know what is going on, but the man who has had one, two or three drinks and considers he is still capable who will possibly panic and drive on. If the circumstances are right for him he will get off scot free. Then, of course, there is the problem of the unregistered vehicle. There is nothing physical to prevent an unregistered vehicle from being used on the road. It has wheels and power and naturally it can become involved in accidents. It is not covered by registration and its accompanying insurance. That car is involved and the person affected is again disadvantaged. The person may lose his tools of trade, he may lose his car, he may lose his time and his health—and he has nowhere to turn. There may be some civil action that he can take, but it is scant solace to have an empty judgment.

Mr. Power: How would you protect him if a man of straw was using an unregistered car?

Mr. P. R. SMITH: I was just dealing with that case. You could appoint a nominal defendant.

Mr. Power: That is not the point. Suppose the fellow using an unregistered car that was not insured was a man of straw.

Mr. P. R. SMITH: I am talking about anybody who is affected through being struck by an unregistered car or vehicle. It would be a proper thing to appoint a nominal defendant. In all these cases of collision or running down by a registered car there is somewhere a premium paid against the eventuality. With the hit-run that eventuality is never effected. The insurance company does not hear of it and there is no pay-out.

Mr. Walsh: The claim ratio in third-party insurance is high.

Mr. P. R. SMITH: 95.3 per cent.

Mr. Walsh: Over 70 per cent. and you are in trouble.

Mr. P. R. SMITH: That leads me to suggest the appointment of a trust to handle these claims. These are the expensive ones—classes 6 to 9 of the Schedule. Those classes attract high premiums because the

risk is great. It means that the companies, particularly the tariff companies, are continually attempting to raise their premiums. If you have a high degree of pay-out, you must get a high degree of premium in order to meet it. Nobody expects them to be in the business for the love of insuring people; they have to show a profit. The pay-out is particularly high, as the hon. member for Bundaberg pointed out. I point out that in one instance the payment for injury was estimated at £50, and a couple of years later a claim for £9,000 in respect of the injury succeeded against the company. The company which was working on the basis of £50 pay-out was confronted two years later with an additional £8,500 payout. In the matter of these classes, particularly 6 to 9, I submit the insurance could better be effected by means of a trust and the appointment of a nominal defendant. The nominal defendant is not a stranger in Australia in this sphere of action. Section 29 of the New South Wales Act says—

“The Governor in Council may from time to time, by notification in the *Gazette*, appoint any person resident in New South Wales to be the nominal defendant for the purposes of this Act. . . .”

Similarly in Victoria, section 46 of their Act contains a like provision. In New South Wales and Victoria there is a much greater use of the roads than in Queensland although they are not as long and narrow as ours are. They have a considerable number of motor vehicles and they have provision for a nominal defendant. I commend it for consideration. It would mean that there would be a remedy in those instances which until now have been disastrous to the person affected. The nominal defendant would not impose any great strain on the particular fund to be drawn on, particularly if a trust is set up, because the trust would then receive all the premiums in respect of motor vehicles, and it would be a very long shot if the vehicle which caused the accident was not one of those for which a contribution was made to the fund. Of course, it might be a farm vehicle crossing a road from one paddock to another, an unregistered vehicle. That aspect may require consideration. You, Mr. Speaker, would know only too well that in rural areas it is not uncommon for farmers to have paddocks on each side of the road, and you would know also that it is not uncommon for those farmers to drive tractors and farm implements across those roads. You would know only too well whether those vehicles are registered and equally well the position that would arise in the event of an accident. Those vehicles would be fairly and squarely included in the topic I have been discussing. Insurance of those vehicles may be necessary. Registration may become necessary for those vehicles, because after all they could constitute a threat to other road users. On long roads with no turnings, a driver does not expect a vehicle to come out on the road. If this trust is set up and

the fund is being mulcted from time to time of heavy pay-outs for accidents caused by unregistered vehicles, it may be necessary to turn to every source of income for the fund. At the present time we have 120 insurance offices operating in Queensland, about 70 being foreign companies. I submit it is time to consider the setting up of a trust. My suggestion is based on what is in fact being done in Western Australia. Under section 3A of the Motor Vehicles (Third Party Insurance) Act Western Australia has set up the Motor Vehicles Insurance Trust. That trust consists of five members, three of them being set out in the Act. I commend that institution to the Government. There are many ways in which the trust could function. It is possible that people who are accident prone should be refused insurance, and some of them refused the right to drive.

Mr. Walsh: Are you suggesting that every insurance company should pay into that trust?

Mr. P. R. SMITH: Yes.

Mr. Walsh: That would be one way of making the companies that will not take third party insurance now pay into a fund.

Mr. P. R. SMITH: The fund is not in existence in Queensland. I suggest a trust should be set up and in regard to the fund I suggest that a nominal defendant be appointed. I believe it should be the Insurance Commissioner.

Mr. Aikens: You must have read my speech in “Hansard” a few years ago.

Mr. P. R. SMITH: If for once the hon. member for Mundingburra has made a suggestion of which I approve, I applaud him in regard to that particular suggestion. I submit that the Insurance Commissioner could quite rightly be made the nominal defendant. It may be that he would then be forced into this action, an action urged on him some years ago by the hon. member for Mundingburra. I do not know whether he would have any objection or not. He may be quite agreeable to the institution of the trust. If one was set up I suggest that the pattern of the Western Australian trust would be quite suitable for this State.

Mr. Aikens: In another State they can nominate the company they will sue.

Mr. P. R. SMITH: I am not conversant with the position in other States. I should think that the right to nominate the company would be certainly relished by the company by which the driver was insured if he nominated some other company, but I do not think it could possibly be as the hon. member for Mundingburra suggests. However, so far as nominal defendants are concerned I think the matter is fully covered by the New South Wales and Victorian Acts and the trust under the West Australian Act.

I have referred to the fact that the insurer should be able—here we have to look at both the driver's side and the insurer's side—to refuse a risk he knows is a bad one. In Queensland he cannot refuse insurance unless registration is cancelled. In other States the insurer is allowed on complaint to go before a magistrate to show cause why the registration should be cancelled. That is something we should consider. We see men with three or four drunken driving convictions.

Mr. Aikens: An excellent idea.

Mr. P. R. SMITH: The matter is going to become more and more pronounced and the remedy will have to be more and more stringent and as well as cancel a licence we should provide that the man cannot get registration of his car. Even that will not prevent a man driving without a licence. The penalties to be imposed will have to be such that he will not feel like doing it a second time. Breaches of the Act might attract a penalty of not more than £100 but that could go on ad infinitum. In West Australia there is a sliding scale of £100 for the first offence and £200 for the second. Our magistrates are beginning to impose fines with a meaning of reality for traffic offences but it seems that they have not gone far enough.

On the question of motor vehicle insurance there is one other anomaly which exists in our Act. A person who through his injury receives Workers' Compensation and at a later stage obtains judgment in an action has to make allowance for the Workers' Compensation but no reference is made to the case where the court orders contribution. Two drivers might be involved, one of them gets Workers' Compensation and the other does not, but at some subsequent date when a civil action is completed the driver who receives Workers' Compensation is somewhat at a disadvantage because the other person gets his contribution. Where the contribution is arrived at in civil claims provision regarding it could be written into the provisions of Section 3 (4) of the Act.

Finally, there is the matter of compulsory examination, and this is supported by the instance of the increased pay out I referred to earlier. Other States have compulsory examination. It is provided in West Australia by Section 30 of the Act and in Victoria by Section 61 and in South Australia by Section 77. It is a provision in the Workers' Compensation Act that a person submit himself to a compulsory medical examination and I suggest that it would be well to write that into our Insurance Act. If these things can be brought into consideration I submit that for road users in general there would be an improvement in the position. I think the Trust is most important.

I commend the Minister for Labour and Industry on the appointment of a Traffic Commission with an engineer in charge of it. It cannot be denied that a considerable

improvement has been wrought in traffic control in this city during the last few months. I am pleased to see that, following remarks by me on the subject last year, pedestrian crossings are now adequately marked.

Mr. Aikens: It is still a case of "the quick and the dead" when pedestrians want to get across the street.

Mr. P. R. SMITH: At least, the crossings are marked.

I should be more than delighted if the rules of the road could be strictly enforced. I do not think that the "right hand" rule has received enough publicity. Many people who are driving along a main road and on the left of another vehicle still consider that they have the right of way, particularly if theirs is the bigger car.

Mr. Walsh: It is a question of who is on the right.

Mr. P. R. SMITH: The law lays it down as to who has the right of way, but the rule is not being obeyed unflinchingly.

Before concluding, I should like to deal with the traffic circus at the Albion Fiveways. A large area of land is available, and it is ideally situated for the installation of something similar to Piccadilly Circus.

Mr. Aikens: The old parish pump.

Mr. P. R. SMITH: It may be the old parish pump, but the same parish pump got pedestrian crossings for the rest of Brisbane.

Mr. Taylor interjected.

Mr. P. R. SMITH: I know that the hon. members for Clayfield and Fortitude Valley will support my suggestion for a traffic circus at the Albion Fiveways. The present layout is ideal for a circus, and with the area of land available it could be done quite easily. Very little resumption work, if any, would be necessary. Only one tramline—the Clayfield line—would be involved, and even then I do not think it would have to be disturbed. If it was in any way difficult, it could easily be remedied by the use of bus traffic. The installation of a traffic circus there would lead the city as a whole—and even Australia—to a realisation of the benefits to be gained from a traffic circus, and we would see a far more orderly progression of traffic on that side of Brisbane. It may well be that this is a matter of the parish pump.

The people in my electorate are quite pleased with the results of my remarks on pedestrian crossings. I trust that in the fullness of time they will be equally pleased if these remarks lead to the installation of a traffic circus in that area. It apparently has the support of hon. members from the north side of Brisbane as well as from North Queensland.

Mr. DUFFICY (Warrego) (3.33 p.m.): I was very happy to get some legal advice

from the hon. member for Windsor, particularly as it was free, which is so unusual in the legal profession. I should also like to compliment the mover and the seconder of the motion, the hon. members for Gregory and Sandgate. Although the hon. member for Gregory and I have nothing in common politically, at least we have this in common, that we both represent outlying portions of the State in the Far West.

I am hoping that the selection by his party of the hon. member for Gregory to move the motion indicates that they are paying at least some attention to the far-flung portions of the State that he and I represent. However, I hope that the hon. member's party do not pay too much attention to his opinions on some of the matters that so vitally affect the area that he represents, and similar areas. If the hon. member was correctly reported he did say that a living area in the Gregory electorate—

Mr. Rae: I never said such a thing.

Mr. DUFFICY: How does the hon. member know what I was going to say? It shows that he has a guilty conscience when he denies something before he has even been charged. However, if he was correctly reported he did say that a living area in the West was 10,000 acres. If he denies that, I will accept his denial; but it has not been denied publicly or in the Press.

Mr. RAE: I rise to a point of order. There has been some misunderstanding about that. The article in the "Longreach Leader" is correct, and if it is read correctly it will be seen that I said that 10,000 acres was the area of land that I would swap for what I could earn as a parliamentarian. I then went on to say that we as a Party believed in 6,000 to 7,000 sheep and the acreage necessary for them.

Mr. DUFFICY: I was on the point of moving an extension of time for the hon. member. If he denies having made that statement, or if he has since seen the light, I am prepared to believe him. Let us leave it at that.

The Governor's opening speech sounded very drab and uninteresting and, since its delivery, I have studied it more closely in printed form and again I have found it a drab and uninteresting document. We cannot blame His Excellency for that; his advisers are at fault. "The Courier-Mail" which, after all, supports the Government, was compelled to say in a leading article that the speech contained a good deal of padding but very little fact and gave very little indication of what the Government intended to do this session. We can understand that it would be a drab and uninteresting speech and an uninteresting document because the Government had little to boast about other than that they had legislated for certain favoured sections of the community.

Let us briefly examine the legislation passed in the last 12 months. Certainly they abolished rent control, and that has made the Queensland landlords very happy, but one would not expect the Government to boast about that in the Governor's Opening Speech. They relaxed price control, which may have pleased Leon Trout, the Chamber of Commerce and others, but it did not please the great mass of the people of the State and could not be expected to. They also placed on the Statute Book a measure to assist certain farmers with irrigation and water conservation. It may have pleased that small section but it did not please the great mass of the people.

Mr. Evans: You voted for it.

Mr. DUFFICY: I shall reply to the hon. gentleman in a moment. It certainly did not please the people I have the honour to represent here, people who have been trying to get a weir in the Warrego River so that they could complete an irrigation scheme that would benefit the community and indirectly the State. After all, this was merely legislation that gave assistance to certain individuals in the carrying out of their own private business. The hon. gentleman interjected that I voted for it. I remind him that the remarks I am making now I made in condemnation of the legislation introduced on that occasion. Let us go a little further and look at some of the legislation that is likely to come before us this session. The proposal to further amend the Land Acts particularly interests me. An amendment of the Lands Act was introduced in the last session of Parliament but apparently it is proposed to amend the Act still further. Let me say right now that I am opposed to freehold tenure in all its forms. I say that without any qualification whatsoever. I made that statement previously and I repeat it now—I am opposed to freehold tenure in all its forms. Never at any time since I have been in the Chamber have I listened to such humbug and hypocrisy as I heard in the course of the debate on the amendment to the Lands Act which provided for the freeholding of certain perpetual lease selections and town lots. Many of the statements made by hon. members opposite were pure humbug and hypocrisy, the chief argument being that it provided for greater security of tenure. That is absolute stupidity, humbug and hypocrisy because you cannot get greater security of tenure than perpetual lease. How can anything be more secure than a lease that is perpetual? Nothing could be. What they did not point out was that perpetual lease does not allow for the unearned increment flowing to the occupier that freehold tenure does. That is where the hypocrisy came in. They were not arguing for a greater security of tenure but that certain individuals be placed in a position where they could benefit from the community effort. I shall give some instances of what I mean. Do not forget that we can go to other States and other parts of the world

to demonstrate the danger and inequality that exists in freehold tenure. I shall give one simple example of what I mean. Before doing so, let me repeat what I have said in the Chamber before, that when dealing with land matters it is necessary to look at least 100 years ahead, or more if possible. It is no use looking at the problem of land tenures on the basis of what exists today. We must endeavour to look at the matter on the basis of what is likely to happen in the future and shape our policy accordingly.

Mr. Beardmore: What about Victoria, where most of the land is freehold?

Mr. DUFFICY: I shall quote an instance of what happened in South Australia. At the corner of Rundle and King William Streets, Adelaide, in 1835—a little over 100 years ago—one acre of freehold land was purchased for 12s. Ninety-eight years later the unimproved value of that land was £265,880. That was certainly a good return for an outlay of 12s. That improved value was due to community effort, and not because of anything done by the purchaser. During the debate on land matters members of the Government argued that after all taxation would look after the unearned increment that freehold has a tendency to create. That has not worked out in practice. A man named Thorngate who never left England, invested £340 in 1837 in town and country lots in South Australia, and less than 100 years afterwards his estate has taken £1,000,000 out of South Australia, and not one member of the family had ever set foot in the State. In view of that fact it is ridiculous to suggest that taxation will look after the unearned increment that flows to the owner of freehold. The land committee advising the Government has suggested, according to "Country Life" that not only agricultural farms or town lots, but pastoral holdings of up to 60,000 acres should be made available as freehold. The chairman of the land committee made the suggestion that the conversion to freehold should be on the basis of 40 times the annual rental spread over a period of 40 years. It follows that after the person with 60,000 acres of pastoral country in the west has paid rent for 40 years he will obtain the freehold title of his land without further payment. The lands committee go a little further. The statements in this publication have not been denied to date. The committee suggest that the land rents should be frozen at their present rate. During that period of 40 years those in possession of the land would not have to pay increased rentals or land tax. At the end of that period they would have freehold tenure of the land. What a lovely scheme! It is a pity the members of the committee were not more consistent when recommending the freezing of rents by recommending that the rents paid by the toilers of this State be frozen, rents that in some instances have been increased by about 250 per cent.

I do not know whether I am a little off the track, but I am referring to the report in "Country Life" of the decisions of the lands committee.

I am very sorry that the hon. member for Aubigny is not present. His statements were published at length. He said something like this, "The committee decided that the purchase price for conversion should be 40 times the annual rental, spread over 40 years, without interest." I have read every issue of "Country Life" and that statement has not been denied.

Mr. Roberts: Is that all the use you have for "Country Life"?

Mr. DUFFICY: I could find other uses for it, but I am using it for this purpose at the moment. The article continues—

"If the rent had been determined more than five years a new rental should be determined and applied for conversion purposes."

That statement in "Country Life" has not been denied and I assume I am entitled to quote it.

Mr. Mann: It is the organ of the Country Party.

Mr. DUFFICY: That is so, and that is the statement published on 7 August.

In some ways I agree entirely with the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation, who is putting up such a strenuous battle against those who not only want to retain but want to freehold exorbitant areas. However, I do not always see eye to eye with the hon. gentleman.

On the subject of freehold tenure let me conclude by saying that just as I opposed the freeholding of 2,580 acres for agricultural farms and town lots, I oppose even more strenuously, the extension of the principle. Neither this Government nor any other Government have the right to alienate the land of this State. The Government are custodians of the land only for the moment. Generations yet to be born will be making a living out of this land. The Government's land committee stated that it agreed entirely with the 1951 Royal Commission report on living areas. Might I say that I do too. The lands committee did not mention this part—

"With the sorry example of older lands and other States before it, the Queensland legislature soon decided against the wholesale alienation of the public estate to individual land seekers and speculators.

They foresaw the inevitability of future demand for land which, if alienated would have to be re-purchased by the Crown for subdivision to meet the public need, after the expenditure of public moneys on roads, railways and social amenities had made it desirable and suitable for closer settlement."

The lands committee seemed to forget that portion of the report. I believe that we will

see, during the life of this Parliament, that this policy of freeholding of which we have seen the thin end of the wedge, will be extended, and that the Government will dictate who will own the land, not only during this generation but for generations to come.

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen: That does not apply to the freehold area of the Downs and the South Burnett.

Mr. DUFFICY: What?

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen: That nobody else can get any benefit from it.

Mr. DUFFICY: As I said before, it is either sheer hypocrisy or pure humbug or lack of knowledge on the part of the hon. members opposite that causes them to make a statement such as we have just heard. If you own the freehold tenure, and the land committee's recommendation is adopted, this is what will happen. This is the land committee's recommendation—

“Mr. Sparkes said . . .”

And unfortunately he is not here, but the hon. member for Aubigny is a responsible member of the Government and chairman of the land committee. He went on to say—

“In keeping with our election policy . . .” and I take it that it is the Government's election policy—

“there should be immediate increase in land-tax exemption, and eventually the tax should be wiped out completely.”

Let me get back to what the hon. member for Barambah said. If he owned freehold on the Downs or anywhere else, he does not pay land tax on it, and the land is his entirely. The State gets no benefit from any increased valuation of the land because he is not paying rent to the State. The land is his to give to anybody he wishes to give it to. No matter what development there might be over the years, the hon. member and his descendants benefit and not the State.

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen: Surely if we develop it we can do what we want with it.

Mr. DUFFICY: I do not think it belongs to the hon. member. He is entitled to the use of the land and nothing more.

Mr. Beardmore: If it is freehold it could still be resumed.

Mr. DUFFICY: In the meantime if what the Government's land committee suggests comes about, that there will be no land tax, no matter how much the value of the land appreciates over the years, the hon. member, and he alone, benefits, not the State. That is not so with leasehold, because in that case you pay an additional rent. That is why hon. members opposite prefer freehold to leasehold, and it is the reason for all the humbug and hypocrisy displayed by them in the whole of this argument.

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen interjected.

Mr. DUFFICY: You pay rates to the local authority. I am talking about land tax. If you do not pay land tax and the community effort increases the value of your property 500 per cent., you benefit while the State pays.

Mr. Beardmore: Do you think that Victoria and New South Wales are backward in their land policies?

Mr. DUFFICY: I am talking about this Government's policy. This Government, not the New South Wales or Victorian Government, are legislating on this State's lands. In my opinion, no Government have the right to alienate land from the Crown.

Mr. Beardmore: That is a Socialistic attitude.

Mr. DUFFICY: It is not a Socialistic attitude; it is common sense. I should be very surprised if the hon. member would class as a Socialist a past President of the United Graziers' Association, Mr. McLean. I had the privilege of knowing him; he is a man of common sense, and he subscribed his name to what I read from the report about the danger of alienating land from the Crown. The hon. member is entitled to disagree with Mr. McLean, but he should not drag Socialism or Communism into what I am trying to put up as a sensible argument on land matters.

Let me now pass onto something else that may interest the hon. member for Balonne and the hon. member for Gregory. I am sure that it does interest my friend and colleague, the hon. member for Barcoo, and me. I refer to the subject of living areas in the West. I have here a letter that was written on a similar subject by the hon. member for Balonne, showing that he himself is not very happy about his Government's policy on living areas.

Mr. Beardmore: I was speaking for myself, not for my Government.

Mr. DUFFICY: I know the hon. member was speaking for himself. That is why I say he is not very happy with his Government's policy. He was speaking for himself, and I assume that he was speaking the truth. I agree with what the hon. member said. I am not very happy about his Government's policy on living areas, either. That subject was dealt with very fully both in the Payne report and in the report that I have referred to. In deciding on a living area, carrying capacity only should be considered. A living area in terms of acres in one portion of the State does not necessarily represent a living area of the same size in another portion of the State.

Mr. Beardmore: That is quite reasonable.

Mr. DUFFICY: It is quite reasonable.

Mr. Hewitt: Only 50 miles away.

Mr. DUFFICY: Fifty miles, or 100 miles. Irrespective of the climatic conditions or the type of country, the living area remains

constant. I entirely agree with closer settlement, but it is possible to provide for too small an area in the West.

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen: Do you think the Payne report covers the position well?

Mr. DUFFICY: Yes, and the 1951 Royal Commission report covers it reasonably well.

Mr. Roberts: Who were the members of that commission?

Mr. DUFFICY: The United Graziers' Association was represented by Mr. Maclean; the Department of Public Lands was represented by Mr. Creighton, the Department of Agriculture and Stock by the late Mr. Bell and the Australian Workers' Union by Mr. Williams.

Mr. Roberts: That is the one I wanted to get in. I wanted to see if you would say the same thing twice.

Mr. DUFFICY: To any question the hon. member might ask me I am likely to make the same reply twice because, unlike many hon. members opposite—

Mr. Graham: You speak the truth.

Mr. DUFFICY: I am factual. The reports indicate that in the Charleville area and surrounding districts from 5,000 to 5,500 sheep represent a living area. Possibly in Balonne something like 5,000 sheep would be a living area. I do not know whether the hon. member for Balonne would agree with that.

Mr. Beardmore: I agree.

Mr. DUFFICY: I am not speaking in terms of acres but purely in terms of carrying capacity.

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen: Don't you think the present Government are administering it on that basis?

Mr. DUFFICY: It is not so much what I think at the moment because I have not very much information. What worries me is that experienced men like the hon. member for Balonne are concerned, which indicates that there must be some friction within the party between experienced men and the Minister and the rest of the Cabinet, who, after all, are not very experienced.

Mr. Beardmore: There is no friction but the difference is that hon. members on this side can say what they like.

Mr. DUFFICY: When the hon. member rushes into print and indicates to all and sundry that he is not very happy, I, being on the outside and not having his knowledge of Government policy, am at least entitled to be a little concerned because I represent a similar area. I do not think the hon. member for Roma is very happy about it, either.

It has been said to me that the present Government are a cow-cocky Government. I

would not be unkind enough to say that. However, on the front bench are several Ministers who have had farming experience of various kinds—banana farming, pig farming, share farming, and sugar farming. I have been told, but I am still not saying it is correct, that their idea of a living area would perhaps be a pig run and 10 acres of lucerne. We want something slightly different from that in the West. It seems to me that in the West stations like Dynevor Downs and Dundoo, big properties that are to be subdivided in my area, may be subdivided into areas that are too small. Do not forget that that has been done in the past. That is what placed us in the difficulty of having to provide for additional areas in 1927. Very largely it made a hotch-potch of a great deal of pastoral settlement in Western Queensland. Do not let us get into that difficulty again. At least it is much better to subdivide and subsequently make them smaller as circumstances demand than to endeavour to increase them after having made the initial mistake.

Mr. Ewan: You will agree that it is wiser to err on the side of generosity?

Mr. DUFFICY: Of course it is, because there are so many areas in Western Queensland now that were cut up into anything from 15,000 to 20,000 acres that would not under any circumstances comprise living areas; at least 60,000 acres would be required.

Mr. Tooth: Who was responsible for that error?

Mr. DUFFICY: As a matter of fact, various Governments—not Labour Governments. We have all learned from experience. I am hoping that this Government, completely inexperienced legislatively, will also benefit by experience. Of course, they will not have a very great opportunity because they will have only two years in which to gain experience when it will come back into the hands of people whose legislative ability is great.

(Time expired.)

Mr. HART (Mt. Gravatt) (4.12 p.m.): First of all I reaffirm my loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen. I congratulate the people of Queensland on their Governor in the person of Sir Henry Abel Smith. We are indeed fortunate to have him in Queensland. I do not agree at all with what apparently is the policy of the Australian Labour Party in this regard. The Leader of that party said the other day in the course of this debate, "As is well known, the plank of the Australian Labour Party does not provide for the appointment of imperial Governors. I and my colleagues adhere very strictly to that principle."

Mr. Graham: What is wrong with it?

Mr. HART: I shall tell the hon. member what is wrong with it. Speaking of Sir

Henry's appointment, the hon. member for South Brisbane said that there were many Australians who could have done the job just as well.

Mr. Hanlon: That would be true.

Mr. HART: It may be true that there are many other Australians who could do a good job, but any Australian who accepts the office is at a disadvantage.

Mr. Graham: Why? You would not be?

Mr. HART: Because he has been mixed up with politics in this country.

Mr. Power: Sir John Lavarack was not.

Mr. HART: He must have been mixed up with politics by the mere fact that he lived here. I agree that Sir John never took any active part in politics. Far be it from me to criticise Sir John in any way at all. I served under him in the Middle East, and certainly I am not criticising him. But I do say that any Australian appointed as a Governor of any State cannot be completely free from politics. He may not have been connected with any political party but being Australian born, unless he has broken the electoral laws, from time to time he must have voted for one party or another.

Mr. Power: What about the Tory Whip who was sent out here? What about Sir Leslie Orme Wilson?

Mr. HART: Sir Leslie Wilson was an excellent Governor and was never mixed up with politics in this country.

Mr. Gair: If there is any merit in your argument anyone who was mixed up in politics should not be elevated to the judiciary.

Mr. HART: That is not correct in any way. When a man is appointed to the Bench he ceases to be associated with politics. This policy of the Labour Party tends to break down the British Commonwealth.

It is the practice of Labour politicians to exaggerate the unemployment position for political purposes, and they do not care what damage it might do to this State. There is one thing that will tend to increase unemployment and that is the destruction of confidence in our economy. During a talk over the wireless the Leader of the Opposition exaggerated the unemployment position. The Labour Party is constantly doing that because the Federal elections are approaching. It is doing a disservice to our economy. I was informed by the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads this afternoon that since we came into office Mt. Isa Mines wanted 25 more men each week but they have not been able to get them. The hon. member for South Brisbane said that full employment should be the most important consideration of any Government. I could not agree more.

Mr. Davies interjected.

Mr. HART: The object of our Government is to have full employment. Hon. members opposite should assist the Government to achieve that aim instead of exaggerating the unemployment position, thereby causing injury to the worker.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. HART: Hon. members opposite are endeavouring to create insecurity which would bring about another depression.

The hon. member for Warrego said that he was opposed to freehold in all its forms.

Mr. Davies: Read what Churchill said about it.

Mr. HART: If that policy were carried out it would mean the electors of Mt. Gravatt could not own their own homes.

Mr. Power: It does not mean that at all.

Mr. HART: The hon. member for Warrego thinks that perpetual leasehold is good because he wants the people to pay rent instead of owning their own property, and if there is an increase in prices the rent can be put up. Such a man is not a true friend of the worker. That is the philosophy of the Labour Party; it is not our philosophy. The philosophy of the Labour Party is State landlordism—do not let anybody own their own homes.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. I do not mind a reasonable form of relevant interjection, especially an inquiring one, but if it is irrelevant and destructive it is out of order. I warn the hon. member for Maryborough, the hon. member for Mackay and the hon. member for Port Curtis—I think they were the main offenders—and the hon. member for Baroona, that I will not tolerate it and I will take action under the Standing Orders to deal with them.

Mr. HART: The policy of the Liberal Party is ownership of homes by the workers. The Treasurer announced in this Chamber quite recently that legislation would be introduced to implement the Government's policy in that direction.

Mr. Davies: Will you answer a question? Is it not true that a bigger percentage—

Mr. HART: I ask the hon. member to keep quiet while I make my speech.

Mr. Davies: I am only asking a question.

Mr. HART: I ask the hon. member not to do so.

I suggest an alteration of the constitutional position of the Australian States, in particular the constitutional position of the State of Queensland. I suggest that we should be given power to legislate extra-territorially, that is, with regard to

matters outside Queensland. This suggestion requires for its implementation an Act of the Imperial Parliament. In the natural course of development of Australia, I suggest that the time is opportune for the passing of this Act. An appropriate occasion for the Royal assent to it would be the 100th birthday of Queensland on 6 June next. It would make a happy birthday present from Her Majesty. In order to give effect to this suggestion, the Government should consult with the other State Governments and the Commonwealth, with a view to approaching the Imperial authorities. The Statute of Westminster of 1931 adopted by the Commonwealth in 1942, as from 3 September, 1939, already grants power to legislate extra-territorially to the Commonwealth.

Mr. Jesson: What is the object?

Mr. HART: I shall state one of the objects. At the present moment Queensland citizens have a licence to go abroad and commit crimes and come back here and not be punished for them.

Mr. Aikens: They can be extradited to the country in which they committed the crime.

Mr. HART: I will deal with that.

Berriedale Keith in "Responsible Government for the Dominions," said—

"The powers of Dominion Legislature are not usually limited territorially by express words. They are authorised to legislate for the peace, order (or welfare), and good government of the territory, and it is the exception to find in Queensland the use of the term 'within,' and as regards the provinces of Canada the words 'in each province.'"

Those words do not occur, as far as I can see in the original Order in Council. The passage continues—

"It might have been argued that the power to legislate should be deemed to extend to anything calculated to achieve the purposes desired, whether strictly territorial in operation or not, but this doctrine had obvious inconveniences and as early as August, 1854, the Queen's Advocate advised that foreigners could only be forbidden to engage in fishing for seals or whales within three marine miles from the Falkland Islands, this being the normal extent of territorial waters under international law. In February, 1955, the law officers went much further, for they definitely held that the legislation of British Guiana must be deemed to be operative only within the territory and territorial waters as thus defined of the Colony and possibly beyond those limits to persons domiciled in the Colony."

Mr. Aikens: Would this refer to the fishing dispute with Iceland at the present time?

Mr. HART: I am not dealing with that.

There are two decisions on bigamy which very clearly illustrate my point. The words of the English Offences Against the Person Act of 1861, Section 57, are—

"Whosoever being married shall marry any other person during the life of the former husband or wife, whether the second marriage shall have taken place in England, Ireland, or elsewhere, shall be guilty of felony."

I shall quote the Russell case in 1901 Appeal Cases. Lord Russell went to the United States of America. He was already married in England, but when he went to America he got a divorce in the State of Nevada. He remarried in America and returned to England. His wife got a divorce on the ground of bigamous adultery. He was afterwards charged with bigamy before the House of Lords. He was a peer. He took the point that the Imperial Statute of bigamy did not refer to him because the crime took place in America but the House of Lords decided that the Statute applied to him. He then pleaded guilty and was sentenced to three months' gaol in Holloway Prison.

I wish to refer also to the McLeod case in which the facts were almost the same. This man was domiciled in New South Wales. He went to America and married a lady after he got a similar divorce to the one that Lord Russell got. He returned to New South Wales where he was charged with bigamy under the New South Wales Statute. It was decided that New South Wales had no power to prosecute for what took place in America and this man got off scot free. The case is reported in 1891 Appeal Cases. I do not think that is the proper limitation to be placed on the legislation of Queensland and the other Australian States. The Australian States, including Queensland, have only power to punish people for crimes committed within the States. I was reminded of this point the other day by a case brought to my notice by the hon. member for Sherwood. A man whom we shall call "A" married a woman whom we shall call "B", in Victoria. "A" went to England for a number of years where he married "C". He got tired of "C" and started to carry on with "D". "D" supplied him with money to divorce "C" which he did. He then married "D" and came to live in Queensland. He persuaded "D" to invest her life savings in a small property in the electorate of the hon. member for Sherwood. "B", his first wife, appeared on the scene and the gentleman promptly left "D". She was left with no redress whatsoever. She had lost her savings but "A" went scot free because of the gap in our legislation. That is wrong.

Mr. Davies: Have you made any suggestion to the Government?

Mr. HART: I am making it now. The only way to cure the position is to get the Imperial Parliament to legislate to give effect to extra-territorial jurisdiction. That is the whole of my point. This man I have been referring to could not be charged with bigamy

because he did not go through the bigamous marriage here. I repeat that there should be Imperial legislation to cure this particular matter. It has to be Imperial legislation. Already the Commonwealth Parliament has been given power by the Statute of Westminster to legislate extra-territorially.

Mr. Morris: That would not cover a case such as the one you mentioned?

Mr. HART: It did not apply to the Australian States.

The Parliament of the Dominion of Canada has power to legislate for crime. Prior to the Statute of Westminster, it was in a similar position to the Federal Parliament of Australia. It could not punish anyone for bigamy committed in the United States of America. When the Statute of Westminster was enacted power was conferred upon it to legislate extra-territorially, and because it has criminal jurisdiction it can now legislate to punish people who commit bigamy outside Canada.

Mr. Aikens: Do you suggest that the Federal Parliament should bring down legislation similar to that in Canada?

Mr. HART: It cannot do so generally because in Australia the States deal with criminal matters. The Federal Parliament has only such powers as are specifically conferred upon it by the Constitution. The power to legislate in criminal matters has not been conferred upon it, though possibly it might deal with bigamy because of its power to legislate on marriage.

Mr. Aikens: Australia is a federation and Canada is a dominion. Is that the difference?

Mr. HART: The difference is that the Canadian Parliament has power to legislate in criminal matters while the Australian Parliament has not.

Mr. Power: Could not a person who committed an offence in another State be charged with it in that State?

Mr. HART: But the offence that I am referring to was committed in England.

Mr. Power: Could not the people concerned apply to have him extradited to England?

Mr. HART: They could, but it is a question of expense. Also very often no offence is committed abroad as in McLeod's case. The gentleman to whom I refer is an Australian citizen, and an Australian court should have power to punish him for any crime that he may have committed.

Mr. Aikens: Do you suggest that the States should give the Commonwealth the power?

Mr. HART: No. I suggest that the Imperial Parliament should legislate to give the Australian States extra-territorial jurisdiction.

Mr. Morris: What you say applies to a crime committed in the United States of America. Would it also apply if a man went to England and committed a crime there?

Mr. HART: It would apply if he committed a crime in England or America. The courts in Queensland can punish people only for crimes committed in Queensland. That is what I am saying is wrong. Any citizen of Queensland can go abroad, commit a crime, then return to Queensland and go scot-free.

Mr. Davies: Is it a matter for the Commonwealth Government to approach the English Parliament?

Mr. HART: It would be a matter for the States to approach the Imperial Parliament, but the tactical way would be to do it in conjunction with the Federal Government. The present position is anomalous. The Federal Parliament has power to legislate extra-territorially. It is composed of representatives elected by the people of Australia, yet those same people have no power to act extra-territorially through their State legislatures. There seems to be no reason whatever for such a distinction.

It was decided in 1891 that no colony should have power to legislate outside its own boundaries. If the decision had been in the other direction, considerable embarrassment might have been caused to the Imperial Government. There were numerous colonies all over the world, many with irresponsible governments, and if they had been given power to legislate extra-territorially they might have involved the Imperial Government with foreign powers. The position now is, so far as the States of Australia are concerned that they have grown up and are fully ready to be given the powers to legislate extra-territorially. We have sent soldiers to two world wars and we now have troops fighting in Malaya. The altered position of Australia and the States has been reflected by the change in the Imperial title. I should like to read just how the title of the Crown has been altered.

Mr. Aikens: Have you read Dr. Evatt's work, "The King and his Dominion Governors?"

Mr. HART: Yes. Her Majesty Queen Victoria's title as shown in the Proclamation of June 6, 1859, was, "Victoria by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland Queen, Defender of the Faith." When the last Instructions to Governors were issued in 1925, the title of His Majesty was, "George by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the Dominions beyond the Seas King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India." The Queen's title varies in the different dominions and her present title in Australia is to be found in the Schedule to the Royal Style and Titles Act, 1953 Commonwealth Statutes, p. 137. It is,

“Elizabeth the Second, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom, Australia, and her other Realms and Territories, Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith.”

Mr. RAMSDEN (Merthyr) (4.37 p.m.): On this the second occasion of my rising to speak on a motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to His Excellency the Governor, I join with other hon. members who have already renewed their personal pledge of loyalty to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Since the Address-in-Reply debate last year we have been privileged to receive a State visit from the Queen Mother, who endeared herself to all who met her and saw her by her own friendliness and heartfelt sympathy. Her visit bound us closer together by the Imperial ties as a part of the Dominions beyond the seas, and it brought to us a closer realisation that we are one family under a common throne. We are indeed grateful for her visit and, on the eve of the State's centenary celebrations, we trust that yet another responsible and popular member of the Queen's household will be sent to represent Her Majesty.

We have also welcomed to the State as the Queen's representative Sir Henry Abel Smith, who, by his kindness, sympathy and earnest desire to get to know intimately the people and the broad acres of the State, has already endeared himself to Queenslanders as a man of the people and a worthy representative of Her Majesty. We trust that he will be given strength and knowledge and courage to continue to do his duty as faithfully and as well for the rest of his term of office as he has done so far since his assumption of his high office. In these days when we witness to a large degree the disintegration of the great British Empire as we knew it and experience the sometimes painful birth-pangs of the newly-born Commonwealth of Nations held together only by a common loyalty to the Throne, it is good for us to know that in this portion of her realm the Queen is represented by one as conscious of his high office as the present Governor is. We trust that when the time comes for Sir Henry to return to England and to give an account to Her Majesty of his stewardship here, he will be able to look back on his stay in Queensland as one of the happiest periods of his life.

I join with the previous speakers who have mentioned the very able service done to the State by the Chief Justice, Sir Alan Mansfield, when he carried out the onerous duties of Administrator. We are indeed grateful to Sir Alan for all that he did in that very difficult time.

Mr. Speaker, just 12 months ago in congratulating you upon your elevation to the Speakership I expressed the hope that you would exercise your judgment in the Chamber without fear or favour and that you would uphold the dignity of this Parliament. I would like to say publicly now that over the

past 12 months in every way you have done a very difficult task with the utmost impartiality and with a sense of dignity which has left nothing to be desired. While passing around bouquets I should like to pass one to the hon. member for Clayfield, who in the very difficult job of Chairman of Committees has kept the Chamber in order and maintained dignity in your absence while we have sat as a Committee of the Whole, particularly during some highly contentious legislation. He has done a very good job and I should like to put my appreciation on record.

As a new member of the Assembly I pledged myself last year to give my undivided time, energy and loyalty to the people of Merthyr, the good Government of the State, and to play my own part in the observance of the dignity of the Chamber. After 12 months I think I can say that irrespective of their political persuasion the people of Merthyr now readily admit that they have been served faithfully and well by their present Parliamentary representative.

At this time last year I asked the Government to give serious consideration to two pressing needs. First of all, I asked that the Government should consider how the increasing menace of soot and smog could be eradicated or controlled. On March 11 last the Minister for Health and Home Affairs in reply to a question I asked advised the House that following my speech and subsequent representations the Director-General of Health had been requested to investigate possible means of combating smog. He further advised that a committee, representing officers of the Department of Health and Home Affairs, the Brisbane City Council and the Meteorological Bureau had been set up to devise ways and means of studying the amount of deposit falling on selected observation stations in the Greater Brisbane area so that the deposit could be collected, weighed, measured and subjected to analysis to determine what corrective measures could be taken. I am delighted, as I am sure the people of Merthyr will be, to hear that in the very near future one such soot-collecting station will be set up in Merthyr as a first step to combating this growing threat to the purity of the air we breathe.

The second matter to which I asked consideration to be given concerned the Government's taking some cognisance of that very fine body of people we know as the Queensland Sub-normal Children's Association. On September 4, 1947, as reported in "Hansard" at page 103, I asked the Government to grant an increased subsidy of £8,500 to this organisation. I discussed this matter during the year with the Minister for Education and the Minister for Health and Home Affairs together with interested bodies. I am happy to have read in a Press report recently that due to the sympathetic approach of both these Ministers the Government have decided to grant that increased amount. I feel justly proud of the Government of which I am a member that they have seen fit to recognise this good work in such a way in their first

year of office in spite of the many financial calls made upon them. The Government have earned the gratitude of the parents of many of these children who have tended in the past to be the forgotten children of our generation.

His Excellency mentioned in his Opening Speech on 19 August the vigorous attempt the Government are making to overcome the shortage of accommodation in Queensland. His Excellency pointed out that of the 1,504 houses completed last year by the Queensland Housing Commission 91 per cent. were required by home owners. That, of course, is part of the policy of this Government—to encourage people to invest in their own homes, rather than to remain tenants of the State and contribute to the greatest single factor which keeps the people of Queensland in the bondage of Socialism.

Mr. Davies: Is it not a fact that Queensland had the biggest percentage of home-owners in Australia under the previous Government?

Mr. RAMSDEN: I am told that Queensland has the greatest percentage of home owners. The policy of the late Government was demonstrated by the hon. member for Warrego when he told the House that under no circumstances would he grant freehold tenure. I said to him, "Do you mean in no circumstances?" and he said, "Yes." The hon. member wants to bring about the perfect socialist State. I heard a comment the other day within the precincts of the House that when people own their own homes they are half-way to becoming supporters of the anti-socialist parties because home-ownership gives them a sense of responsibility which the socialist State has done its utmost to kill under a system of State landlordism.

Mr. Power: Who said that?

Mr. RAMSDEN: I should not like to embarrass the hon. member who said it.

His Excellency also reminded us that as a result of the recent legislation, co-operative housing societies are expected to mushroom in the State and relieve the State from the heavy load of home-building which it at present, apart from the War Service Homes Department, almost bears alone in this State. The hon. member for Mt. Gravatt is to be congratulated on the setting up of a co-operative housing society which, I understand, will build houses to the value of £100,000. I also understand that that amount has been increased by another £50,000. That £150,000 will do much to relieve the pressure on the Government in their housing programme. I think the story of housing in 12 months from now will be one of great expansion with a very great increase in home ownership. The Government are to be congratulated on their earnest endeavour to eradicate the temporary housing camps which have been a blot on our community life for so many years after the war. On 11 March this year the Minister for Housing, in reply to a question I asked,

advised that it would take from 12 to 18 months to totally eradicate those unsightly camps. Great strides have been made since that date, and the Government are to be congratulated on their efforts. I subscribe wholeheartedly to the Government belief that they should vacate the field of State landlordism as soon as possible; at the same time I do not believe it will be possible for the Government to vacate the field of housing entirely. Today I wish to leave with the Government some thoughts which I believe are constructive and which can be reconciled with Government policy. There are three classes of people about whom I shall speak. They are the people that we as a Government must consider.

I am afraid there will ever be with us and in other communities some people who will not be acceptable tenants to anyone, either because of their habits or because of their lack of responsibility. I believe the Housing Commission could verify that fact from its files. I have in mind one case. I have been informed by officers of the Commission that a tenant was admitted to a brand-new home and after seven or eight months of occupancy had to be ejected for non-payment of rent. The Commission found that about £125 had to be spent on the repair of that house to put it into a habitable state for the next tenant. Such people have nothing to commend them, but in spite of their vandalism and their irresponsibility, we must recognise that they are human beings, although they might be substandard and although they might be most blameworthy, society cannot leave them and their offspring to their own devices, to sleep in parks or on river banks or to build their own shanty towns in an environment which they might enjoy. That would be a scathing indictment of any civilised community. What are we to do with this type of person as temporary housing ceases to exist? I have asked that question of officers of the Housing Commission. They have thought about it and said, "Well, I suppose the only thing we can do when the last temporary hut comes down is to give them another chance and to try them once more in a decent house." That is a humanitarian answer, but I wonder whether we can go on ad infinitum taking the risk of endangering houses worth £2,000 to £3,000 by letting them to irresponsible people who will damage them to the extent I have mentioned. I am sure there must be a more satisfactory answer to this question. Later this afternoon I hope to develop it.

Then there is another category, the young couples who are striving together to get their deposit on their own home. Many of these young people are childless and have no need for large two-bedroom flats made available by private landlords. They merely want a place where they can sleep and eat. Most of them merely want only one bedroom, and a kitchen-dinette with private toilet facilities. I have seen some flatettes of this description in West End which are ideally suited for

such couples, but there are not nearly enough of them. Some consideration should be given to the way in which we can make finance available to investors who are prepared to build such flatettes to cater for those temporary home seekers who are living somewhere until they have saved sufficient to commence the building of their own home where they can find the necessary security to raise their own families. Their children, as all hon. members realise, are the best migrants. Here then is a field for the private investor. If the private investor can borrow money cheaply enough, he could relieve the State of some of the need for urgent housing. If there were enough of these bachelor and young-couple flatettes, we would have no need to worry about Landlord and Tenant Acts to prevent high rents, because the field of competition would very soon cause any landlord to place his rent in a reasonable scale of charges rather than have empty flatettes on hand. In any case, if money was made available at a cheap enough rate, the landlord would not have to charge exorbitant rents to recoup his capital outlay.

I well remember pre-war days, when the State was not in the landlord business, and all homes were either owned by the occupants or were rented from some private citizen. I can recall most vividly that it was possible to walk round whole hosts of Sydney suburbs and see not one but many "House to Let" signs. In those days no State had let itself become so socialistic as to try and become the landlord for the vast majority of its citizens. It would pay us as thinking citizens to look at the reason why State landlordism grew so rapidly in the post-war years. In fact it was an inevitable price to pay for the freedom we had won in battle. Before the war families lived together in one house. There were mum and dad and a son or two, or a couple of sons and daughters. Then came the war which broke up family after family. Perhaps dad was put into an essential service and was the subject of manpower regulations. The mother in many cases became a process worker in a munitions factory. The sons went into the armed services and the daughter became a land girl or went into one of the auxiliary services. For many years during the war the family only saw one another when they got annual leave or vacation from their varied jobs. Many of the young people during the mad frantic war days became engaged or married, but homes did not matter as they did not really need them. After a short honeymoon the son went back to his military camp. Then came the peace, when men and women were released in large numbers from military service or manpower regulations and they came home to the new family unit, one of their own making. The sons no longer came back to their mothers and fathers. The sons had their wives and children and needed homes for themselves. The one-time homes could not accommodate them all. They had

to have places to bring up the new generation of Australians without the spoiling effects of grandmother and grandfather. Some of these people were fortunate in the early post-war years to get War Service homes on low deposits but a lot failed to do so. Some had the deposits to put down. They all had something because they had their deferred pay and their gratuities and even if they had to wait five years they then had their gratuities to fall back on. On the other hand, many were not so fortunate. There was a general shortage of men and materials. It was hard to get goods, timber, plaster or some other commodity. Many of the newly-marrieds were homeless for some years. Their savings dwindled and by the time they were able to get materials for their homes and before men were available to build their dream homes they had planned their savings had gone. Their capital had been used up and no longer were they able to build the home they planned. Then every State in the Commonwealth realised that it would have to do something for these veterans and others who were foot-weary in searching for homes. They turned to the large numbers of vacant Army and Air Force camp sites that were now standing like empty living areas which had served their day. The States then decided that here was the answer to the temporary needs of these home-hungry people. And so the camps were filled again, but this time not with armed forces subject to military discipline which could enforce standards of cleanliness and hygiene and good conduct, but into civilian camps which in many cases became the Australian equivalent for the overseas displaced persons' camp. There was no military discipline and so what did it matter if the surroundings were not kept spick and span. Anyhow, whose responsibility was it? There was no emu parade, no shouting sergeant-major to scream if the place was not ready for the commanding officer's inspection. In fact, there was no commanding officer's inspection. It was very easy to slip into slipshod habits when people were living in these unsavoury conditions. It was easy to lose the personal pride that these people had for many years, when all around them was crowded living conditions and a lack of privacy. The State then saw that if homes were to be provided for all these people in these old Army camps the State would have to provide most of them. Inflation had run rife in the immediate post-war period. There was no incentive for the private landlord to re-enter the field under the existing Landlord and Tenant Acts.

Mr. Davies: Do you agree that it was necessary for the State to build homes?

Mr. RAMSDEN: I do not agree.

Mr. Davies: What alternative was there at that time?

Mr. RAMSDEN: Here then was the chance for one of the greatest experiments in practical socialism that Australia has ever seen. Here was an opportunity to put into

practice one of the basic tenets of socialism without any opposition from the multitude who would accept it as a necessary service in the community. Gone was the need to argue the rightness or weakness of State landlordism. People would just have to accept it and to make sure that they did accept it the Landlord and Tenant Acts were kept in full function in order to keep the private investor right out of the field. Those Acts over the years have done more than any other thing in our time to make it impossible for the private investor to build homes or flats for those who wanted them, and thus left the field clear for the ever-growing tentacles of State landlordism. The private investor had no incentive, and I am afraid that the damage that has been done is well-nigh irreparable. In past years a man with money was able to invest it and get a reasonable return not only for his own good but for the good of large numbers of people in the community. However, he has been taught by the Socialists that he cannot expect a reasonable return for his capital, and so he has been forced to find more favourable ways of investing his money. Now, instead of investing it in bricks, mortar and houses for the people, he invests it in hire purchase where he can get lucrative rates of interest, with no repair bills and no maintenance charges.

If ever a nation was ruined by a Socialistic experiment, Australia was in general and Queensland was in particular. Not only have we now a shortage of homes because of the lack of private capital but we are being sorely tried by an ever-encroaching web of hire purchase at interest rates that are causing concern to every thinking man and woman in our midst. There is a third class of people. I have already mentioned two classes—the irresponsible and the young couple who are waiting until they can get enough to build their own home. The third class who must have our sympathetic consideration is the old couple who have lost their children by marriage. Often they find themselves in a large house that is far too big for their now simple requirements. The house and grounds are far beyond their capacity to care for. I know it will be said that the various churches have an excellent scheme in providing homes for the aged that are liberally subsidised by both the Federal and State Governments. I think it will be readily recognised that from the point of view of the individual and his personal welfare and from the point of view of the nation whose resources are involved, we should devote all our energies to enabling aged people to continue to live in their own homes as long as possible. There is probably no greater stimulus to a healthy old age than a sense of independence. Our first concern, then, should be to encourage that sense of independence, and then we should turn our minds to the residual problems.

Mr. Davies: Do you think you can get the Commonwealth Government to increase the basic wage?

Mr. RAMSDEN: If the hon. member lives to an age to enjoy it I shall be happy.

Of the normal old people nearly half live in their own homes, most of the remainder find a home with younger relatives, and a small remnant find their way into one of the church homes for the aged. These homes for the aged are doing a very good job but they cannot hope to cater adequately for all who need accommodation. For confirmation of that statement, one need only look at the long waiting lists at most of the better-class homes for the aged.

I should like the indulgence of the House for a few moments to refer to an English booklet entitled, "The Care of Old People." It is available in the Parliamentary Library and sets out the position in England in 1952 as follows:—

"There is little doubt that our pre-war building achievements, extensive though they were, failed to make sufficient provision for the high proportion of older folk in the community. Even today, when this proportion approaches one in five or six of the population, only about 8 per cent. of new building consists of one-roomed flats or bungalows, which are most suitable for old people. Since such accommodation is cheaper to provide and will frequently release a large family house for fresh letting, local authorities should review their building programmes with the needs of the old in mind. In one remarkable case, when the Hornsey Borough Council built 34 new cottages for old people, it was found that of the tenants who moved in, four had left three-bedroomed houses, 22 had left four or five-roomed houses, six had left six-roomed houses and two had been bombed out of their homes. The provision of 34 small cottages for old people released the pressure on 277 rooms."

It is clear to all, I think, that many of these older people living with their relatives would be greatly relieved to have a home of their own. It would make for happier families all round. We all realise that the noise and chatter of a large family can be very pleasant music to the ears of old people but if there is no hope of relief and if it has to be endured ad infinitum, that very pleasant music in the home can become in time a strident discord wearying in the extreme. I suggest that the Government investigate the small cottage type homes that have been built in Victoria by the Brotherhood of St. Laurence at Carrum Downs.

Mr. Davies: They have those little homes in the Homes for the Aged now.

Mr. RAMSDEN: That is true. They have them at Chermiside.

Mr. Davies: Yes, and in the State Home for the Aged, too. They have a hospital handy as well.

Mr. RAMSDEN: These small but essentially utilitarian homes could be erected very cheaply in timber and fibro and fill a real

need for old couples. I should like to quote briefly from a social survey by Bertram Hutchinson as set out in his book "Old People in a Modern Australian Community."

Mr. Davies: Did you say "socialist" survey or "social" survey?

Mr. RAMSDEN: A social survey. I do not want to confuse the issue. In this survey Mr. Hutchinson covers the whole ambit of the aged in Australia and on page 147, in his conclusion and recommendations, he writes:

"This investigation produced no evidence that a large proportion of older people are living in sub-standard housing. On the whole the housing position for this population appears reasonably good. There is, however, a minority for whom this cannot be said. These are old people who are living, largely in Melbourne, in conditions of squalor which cannot be too strongly condemned. While this must form part of a general plan for slum clearance, the aged, who can hope to achieve little by their own efforts in present circumstances, appear to have a special call upon the attention of housing authorities. In some degree these conditions result from the inability of infirm old people to keep their homes reasonably clean. It also arises from the inability of many old people to afford more than a minimum rent for their dwellings. The possibility of including special houses or flats for old people in new housing estates, such as is being done in Great Britain, should be carefully examined."

I should like to lay special emphasis on that last sentence.

Mr. Davies: You know that Queensland has the best record in Australia for its treatment of the aged.

Mr. RAMSDEN: The hon. member sounds so much like a parrot that if he likes I will give him the money to buy a packet of parrot seed.

Mr. Thackeray: He does not read his speech in the House.

Mr. RAMSDEN: If there was as much substance in his speech as there is in mine, I am sure he would be pardoned.

Hutchinson goes on to say —

"As in other western societies, it appears that in Victoria many old people are overhoused, that is, their present dwelling is greater than their needs.

"Many of these would be willing to move to a smaller house if such were available. As in Britain, a significant contribution to the present housing problem in Victoria would be made by the provision of smaller houses (at a smaller cost in labour and materials) for old people, who would then be able to leave their larger houses for younger people with families for whom they are more suitable."

I completely agree with Mr. Hutchinson on this point. If we substituted "Queensland"

for "Victoria" in his summing up I do not think we would be off the beam. His summing up would still be timely and of material value to all who are interested in overcoming the housing problems of this day. To sum up, I consider that whilst the Government are absolutely right in their aims and efforts to vacate the field of State landlordism, we must still recognise that there are three classes of people who will want tenancy rather than home-ownership, either temporarily until they are on their feet and on their way to purchasing their own homes, or in some cases because they are too irresponsible to ever achieve home-ownership for themselves, or permanently for the evening of their days. Equally, too, I believe that we must face up to the fact that the private capital that once used to be available for investment in home construction for letting purposes has now, in the main, largely dried up as a result of successive years of Labour policy which destroyed that wholesome stream of capital and diverted it into other channels which now give a greater return for much less trouble and worry. Until we overcome that, the responsibility will be on the State, whether we like it or not, to make some effort to house people in the three categories I have mentioned. I suggest to the Treasurer and Minister for Housing and Cabinet generally, together with the Government Parliamentary Housing Committee, that some urgent and constructive thinking be done on the subject I have raised today. It appears that we must direct our thoughts to three types of residences for State tenancy occupation—

1. The small cottage-home type for the aged who require special consideration.

2. Fairly large blocks of multiple flat-ettes of the one-bedroom type, for young marrieds to enjoy while they are saving up for their own homes in suburbia.

3. Housing Commission areas which would have blocks of flats in them, preferably built on a square idea with a central playground area for children.

The latter areas are necessary to house the irresponsibles who, whether we like it or not, must become a charge on society. They would also provide accommodation for those unfortunate people who are disturbed from the homes they normally occupy for various reasons and must be housed temporarily until better and more permanent accommodation can be found for them. I submit that such a scheme as I have outlined this afternoon must receive serious consideration from the Country-Liberal Government which intend to continue to govern the State in the future as they have in the first 12 months in the interests of all the people and for the good of the whole State.

Debate, on motion of Mr. Jesson, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 5.16 p.m.