

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 29 OCTOBER 1958

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

QUESTIONS.

REGISTRATION FEES ON COMMONWEALTH
GOVERNMENT MOTOR VEHICLES.

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

“Do Federal-owned motor vehicles operating in Queensland including those owned by the Armed Services and the Postal Department pay any registration fees or any other motor tax to the Queensland Government?”

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

“In respect to the Departments under my control, no licence or permit fees are payable in respect of motor vehicles owned by the Commonwealth Government. The classes of vehicles referred to in the Question, are exempted by Section 24 (1) of the State Transport Facilities Acts, 1946 to 1955, which states—‘It shall be lawful to use upon any road any vehicle owned by the Crown, or by any Crown corporation or instrumentality, or corporation or instrumentality or person representing the Crown while such vehicle is being used for purposes of the business of the Crown.’ If the Honourable Member has Main Roads Registration fees in mind, he should direct his question to my colleague, the Minister for Development, Mines and Main Roads.”

MANIFEST ROAD LICENCE, WALTONS-SEARS, ROCKHAMPTON.

Mr. THACKERAY (Koppel) asked the Minister for Transport—

“(1) Will he inform the House if electrical goods are in the terms of the manifest licence granted to Waltons-Sears, Rockhampton?”

“(2) Has the electrical firm of H. K. Findlay of Yeppoon applied for a manifest licence? If so, on what grounds was the application rejected?”

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

“(1) The wording in the Document of Licence permits the carriage of electrical appliances.”

“(2) On or about August 21, 1953, Mr. H. W. Findlay (H. W. Findlay and Co.), of James Street, Yeppoon, made application for an extended Permit (Form 5) to transport refrigerators and electrical goods from Rockhampton to Yeppoon fortnightly, for an indefinite period. In support of his application, Mr. Findlay stated that if he got the refrigerators down by rail or transport (presumably road transport), they have to be crated in Rockhampton by Chandlers Pty. at a charge of £3 10s. to £4 for crate and carting, which amount is unreturnable and had to be absorbed by Mr. Findlay. He stated that his firm could not compete with Rockhampton as most people go to Rockhampton for the day, buy a refrigerator and cart it down, less crate, themselves. He also stated that he had a special rail concession for goods, but refrigerators had to be crated for rail and for road transport, as these carriers would not be responsible for refrigerators being chipped or damaged in transit. Mr. Findlay concluded by asking that if a permit is not granted for electrical goods, could one be granted for refrigerators only. The allegation respecting people carting their own refrigerators between Rockhampton and Yeppoon was investigated

by local police officers, who made patrols on the Rockhampton-Yeppoon road and stopped all motor vehicles coming from the direction of Rockhampton. However, none appeared to be contravening the provisions of the State Transport Facilities Acts. The reporting police officer expressed opinion that Mr. Findlay's complaint was groundless. Therefore, on or about August 28, 1953, Mr. Findlay's application was refused. No other reason is recorded in the 1953 file as to the refusal, but I would say such was based on the policy of the then Government. The distinction between Waltons-Sears' authority and that applied for by Mr. Findlay is that Waltons-Sears' authority permits the distribution of goods from their own store direct to customers and Mr. Findlay's proposal was to carry goods from the wholesaler at Rockhampton to his own store for display and possible sale to his customers.”

ROAD TRANSPORT LICENCE FEE AND COST OF ROAD CONSTRUCTION.

Mr. COBURN (Burdekin), for **Mr. AIKENS** (Mundingburra), asked the Minister for Transport—

“(1) On what date was the road transport licence fee of threepence per ton-mile determined and first applied?”

“(2) Since that date what has been the approximate percentage increase in the construction cost and maintenance of roads and administration of the Transport Department?”

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

“(1) A permit fee of 3d. per ton mile was provided for under the Fee Schedule of the State Transport Acts, 1938 to 1943. The State Transport Acts were assented to on November 24, 1938, and the Regulations thereunder came into force on February 19, 1940. The State Transport Facilities Act of 1946 was assented to on December 24, 1946, and came into operation by Proclamation published in the ‘Gazette,’ on April 8, 1947. That Act repealed a substantial portion of the State Transport Acts, 1938 to 1943, but re-enacted the subject permit fee of 3d. per ton mile. Vide Section 35 of the Act, in respect to licence fees, and the State Transport Facilities Regulations, 1947, which came into force on April 8, 1947, made provision for a fee of 3d. per ton mile in respect of permits.”

“(2) That portion of the Question relating to ‘the approximate percentage increase in the construction cost and maintenance of roads’ should be referred to my colleague, the Minister for Development, Mines and Main Roads. With respect to that portion of the Question relating to the increase in administrative costs of the Department of Transport, percentage figures are not available with respect to the former State

Transport Commission, but in respect to the Department administered by the Commissioner for Transport under the State Transport Facilities Act on and since the inception of the Act on April 8, 1947, the following are the percentage costs of administration in respect to collections for the financial years shown:—1948-1949, 7.08 per cent.; 1949-1950, 6.5 per cent.; 1950-1951, 6 per cent.; 1951-1952, 5.9 per cent.; 1952-1953, 5.5 per cent.; 1953-1954, 4.81 per cent.; 1954-1955, 5.5 per cent.; 1955-1956, 5.6 per cent.; 1956-1957, 5.17 per cent.; 1957-1958, 5.27 per cent.”

DEPOSITIONS AT INQUEST, JAMES MICHAEL JORGENSEN.

Hon. W. POWER (Baroona) asked the Minister for Justice—

“Will he make available to me for perusal the depositions taken at the recent inquiry at Mount Isa into the death of James Michael Jorgensen?”

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong) replied—

“The Honourable Member will be aware from his experience as Attorney-General that as a general practice only interested parties are allowed to peruse depositions taken at inquests. However, this case has exceptional features and in these circumstances I am prepared to make a departure from the general practice. The depositions will be made available for perusal by the Honourable Member if he will arrange to call at my office to peruse them at some mutually convenient time.”

RETURN OF DOMAIN TO BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL.

Mr. CLARK (Fitzroy) asked the Premier—

“In view of (a) his letter to the Trades and Labour Council stating that the Government does not intend to allow forums in Brisbane and other Queensland centres for the conduct of public meetings on Sundays; and (b) the assurance given to the Leader of the Opposition by him in Parliament on 29 October last year that the Brisbane Domain would be handed back to the Brisbane City Council for public use as soon as alternative accommodation for certain departments of the Central Technical College was provided—

(1) Has the Government now reversed its attitude and determined not to return the Domain to the City for use as a public forum on Sundays and other days?

(2) If not, what efforts have been made, and with what success, to secure alternative accommodation for the Technical College in accordance with his promise made a year ago, and when does he expect that the people's Domain will be returned to the people?”

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough) replied—

“(1) Definitely no. In my reply to the Leader of the Opposition on October

29, 1957, I did not say, as the Honourable Member suggests, that when available, the Domain would be handed back to the Brisbane City Council for use as a public forum on Sundays and other days. What I did say was that it would be returned to the City Council ‘for public use’ and the use to which it would then be put would be a matter for determination by the Brisbane City Council.”

“(2) I must emphasise that due to the policy of stagnation followed by successive Labour Governments for twenty-five years, State Primary and Secondary School accommodation degenerated into a shockingly inadequate state. My Government inherited a deplorable legacy in this regard, and on assuming office, we set about a vigorous policy of increasing accommodation in established schools and building new ones. We are continuing that policy to the extreme limits of our resources, financial and otherwise. As Member of this House for several years supporting the party which controlled the Treasury Benches, the Honourable Member must accept his full share of responsibility for the continued neglect in providing adequate school accommodation, but for which it would have been possible to restore the Domain to the people long ago.”

INVITATION TO GENERAL DOUGLAS MACARTHUR TO ATTEND CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS.

Mr. DONALD (Bremer) asked the Premier—

“Has the Government given consideration to inviting General Douglas Macarthur to Queensland during the Centenary Celebrations? If not, will he give the suggestion some consideration?”

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough) replied—

“Not specifically. Overtures have been made to have a high-ranking American Official visit Brisbane for the opening of the American Consulate next year. From information in my possession, I know that it is extremely unlikely that General Macarthur would undertake such a long journey, much as we would like to have him.”

VOTING AT TOWNSVILLE REGIONAL ELECTRICITY BOARD MEETING TO ABOLISH 10 PER CENT. SURCHARGE.

Mr. DONALD (Bremer) asked the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads—

“Is it true that at a recent meeting of the Townsville Regional Electricity Board the State Electricity Commissioner (Mr. Neil Smith) voted against a motion seeking to abolish the 10 per cent. surcharge on all areas outside Townsville?”

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani) replied—

“I am informed that the Board’s Operating Fund budget presented by the Manager was submitted to and approved by the State Electricity Commission, pursuant to the relevant legislation, prior to its presentation to the Board’s budget meeting on August 28, 1958. The budget, as recommended by the Manager, and as approved by the Commission, allowed for continuance of the existing electricity tariffs and the surcharge on rural areas. As the budget already approved by the Commission, and its adoption as moved at the Board meeting, could not be achieved if the surcharge were removed without increasing tariffs in the base load area, and as the motion referred to by the Honourable Member, which actually was an amendment of the original motion, provided only for the removal of the surcharge, it was obviously impracticable for such an amendment to be supported by the Commissioner and for this reason I am advised the Commissioner opposed the amendment.”

IMPROVEMENT OF BRUCE HIGHWAY,
MARYBOROUGH TO BAUPLE.

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

“(1) Is he aware of the poor state of the Bruce Highway between Maryborough and Bauple, the road being too narrow and for several miles badly corrugated?”

“(2) Will he indicate what action his Department is considering for the improvement of this section of the Bruce Highway?”

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani) replied—

“(1 and 2) Between Maryborough and Bauple there are several sections, totalling approximately 8 miles where the bitumen pavement which was constructed some 20 years ago is only 12 feet wide. The Honourable Member for Nash, Mr. A. M. Hodges, took this matter up with me some two months ago and I have informed him that money will be made available for the progressive improvement of the affected section of this road during the current financial year.”

NEW HEAD TEACHER’S RESIDENCE AT WEST
STATE SCHOOL, MARYBOROUGH.

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

“Have plans been prepared or are they being prepared for a new head teacher’s residence at West State School, Maryborough? If so, will he indicate when it is expected that work will commence?”

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis) replied—

“Plans for the erection of a new Official residence for the Maryborough West State

School have been completed. Tenders are being invited for the construction of this residence, the closing date being November 26, 1958.”

PAPERS.

The following paper was laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

Report of the Department of Public Works for the year 1957-1958.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Order in Council under the Primary Producers’ Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1957.

Order in Council under the State Development and Public Works Organisation Acts, 1938 to 1954.

Order in Council under the Irrigation Acts, 1922 to 1957 and the Irrigation Areas (Land Settlement) Acts, 1933 to 1954.

Regulation under the Irrigation Acts, 1922 to 1957.

LAND ACTS AND OTHER ACTS
AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

Hon. A. G. MULLER (Fassifern)—Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation (11.20 a.m.): 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 encourage the breeding of stud stock by granting long term Leases, to enable the holders of certain Crown leases to apply for review of rent by the Land Court, to extend the provisions for the freeholding of perpetual lease tenures to other tenures, to make better provision for the eradication of *Harrisia cactus*, and for those and other purposes to amend the Land Acts, 1910 to 1958, the Closer Settlement Acts Amendment Act of 1917, the Discharged Soldiers’ Settlement Acts, 1917 to 1957, the Tully Sugar Works Area Land Regulations Acts, 1924 to 1957, the Land Acts Amendment Act of 1927, the War Service Land Settlement Acts, 1946 to 1951, and the Land Acts and Other Acts Amendment Act of 1957, each in certain particulars and for other purposes.”

Motion agreed to.

INSPECTION OF MACHINERY ACTS
AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Debate resumed from 28 October (see p. 853) on Mr. Morris’s motion—

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

Mr. DONALD (Bremer) (11.22 a.m.): There is very little I have to add to what I

said yesterday during the debate on this Bill but I should remind hon. members that the passing of it will not cause any more employment in the industry nor will it arrest the decline which has been brought about by the use of refrigerators in place of ice chests. It will not improve the conditions of those employed in the industry and what is very important, it will not improve the safety factor for those who are employed. When applicants for engineering or engine-driving certificates sit for their examinations they are asked the specific question—what would you do in the event of an emergency or an accident? I say quite definitely that if a person said he would run away from the machinery under his care when an emergency or accident occurred, as suggested by the hon. member for Chermiside, he would be failed in his examination. During the training of apprentices certain things are brought to their attention. They are told that when an accident occurs certain taps and valves have to be turned off the machine by the man in charge of the machinery. If he is on the job he can ensure a minimum of damage to human life and property. On the other hand, if a man in charge of an ice-making plant is delivering ice to various places in the metropolitan area he could not be in his proper place to take appropriate action to prevent the results of the accident from becoming widespread and doing much damage to life and property.

For the reasons that I have given, the Opposition feel that the Bill should be rejected, that the Act should be left as it is. Members of Parliament are responsible people in the community and as the framers of legislation we should be aware that it is our duty to do our best to see that people in industry and the public generally are protected. It is not our duty to undermine safety conditions. We must do all we can to see that the safety conditions are efficient, that every protection is given and that the job of the inspector under the Act is made as easy as possible from the safety point of view. We should do everything possible to close every loophole and make it illegal for people to absent themselves from machinery if there is the slightest possibility that their absence will result in damage to property and injury to people in the vicinity.

The Chief Inspector of Machinery and those working under him have been mentioned by previous speakers. During my long association with machinery, I have always found the inspectors to be conscientious and capable, and willing to co-operate and assist at all times. I pay them that tribute.

Mr. NICHOLSON (Murrumba) (11.25 a.m.): At the outset, I should like to commend the Minister for bringing down the Bill. Despite the fact that hon. members opposite have set up a hue and cry about safety factors and the loss of employment, I can assure them that there is absolutely nothing to fear. The amendment of the present law

to allow automatically-controlled machines of up to 50 tons capacity to be operated by a person who has not a certificate is in keeping with modern trends in industry. The answer to the objections of hon. members opposite was given by the Leader of the Opposition himself recently when he was speaking at a trade union congress. "The Telegraph" report of what he said reads as follows:—

"Mr. Duggan said that automation must relieve a lot of drudgery and give shorter working hours, but there would still be plenty for the honest worker to do."

The Leader of the Opposition there gave the reply to any objection that hon. members opposite may have to the Bill. To a certain extent, it gives way to automation.

The hon. members for Bremer and Baroona said that to take a man away from a machine was removing the safety factor.

Mr. Duggan: That is our only objection.

Mr. NICHOLSON: I cannot see why there should be any objection. As long as the machine is installed properly and has a high-pressure switch on the high side, a low-pressure switch on the low side, and a thermal overload on the electricity supply, it cannot create a danger. The controls that are fitted to present-day machines are so perfect that they are even safer than manually-controlled machines. There is an old saying that it is human to err, and with a manually-controlled machine a great deal of damage could be caused within the short space of even 30 seconds.

I have had some 20 years' experience in refrigeration and I am rather sceptical of the knowledge claimed by some hon. members who have opposed the Bill. Perhaps they had briefs from outside organisations. Some of them have spoken in terms of 50 tons of ice. I point out, however, that when a refrigeration machine of 50 tons' capacity is referred to, it must not be inferred that it produces 50 tons of ice. The capacity of a refrigeration machine is based on the number of British thermal units of heat that it can extract from a given article in a specified time. In other words, it is somewhat similar to the horse-power rating of a motor vehicle. On today's standards, a 50-ton refrigeration machine is quite small. Quite a few of these ice-making plants are operated on ammonia and I do not know of any ammonia-operated refrigerating machine that is automatically controlled.

Mr. A. J. Smith: Would the speed of the compressor have any bearing on the tonnage of ice produced?

Mr. NICHOLSON: Definitely, yes. The compressor can be speeded up.

Mr. A. J. Smith: The faster the compressor the greater the tonnage.

Mr. NICHOLSON: That is a fallacy relied on by some manufacturers. They install a machine of low capacity and fit bigger

pulleys to speed it up. However, that is beside the point. The Bill covers only machines that are automatically controlled. If the inspectors do the right thing they will insist that all those devices I have mentioned—high-pressure switches, low-pressure switches and thermal overload switches—are fitted to a machine before it is classified as fully automatic.

Mr. Houston: Is that mentioned in the Bill?

Mr. NICHOLSON: The hon. member is new to the Assembly so he may not know that Orders in Council or regulations are issued under every Act and that could quite easily be included in the regulations.

Mr. Hanlon: It would not hurt to put it in the Bill.

Mr. NICHOLSON: If the Act speaks of a fully-automatic machine all those devices must be on it; it must be fully automatic in every detail.

Let us get this matter of the capacity of the machine straight. No doubt some hon. members will persist in their belief that a machine of 50 tons capacity can produce 50 tons of ice. The hon. member for Chermide said yesterday that a refrigerating plant of 50 tons capacity would produce about 15 tons, I think it was.

Mr. Houston: About 26 tons.

Mr. NICHOLSON: Yes, an ordinary ammonia plant. We must remember that the modern refrigerants of the F.12 series, an American-type known as freon, have a greater absorption capacity than ammonia, and most automatic machines use gases of that type. A modern refrigerating plant of 50 tons capacity is only a small machine. I think the air-conditioning plant installed at Penneys in Queen Street, Brisbane, has a capacity of 400 tons. Those who speak of 50 tons as being a great deal are drawing the long bow. A ton of refrigeration is assessed on British thermal units. A British thermal unit is the amount of heat required to raise the temperature of 1 lb. of water one degree. That might sound a little technical but that is the measure for refrigeration. The capacity of a refrigerator is judged by the number of thermal units it will remove from an article in a given time. On the American rating one ton of refrigeration will extract 12,000 British thermal units in one hour. That is the whole picture of the rating of these machines. A normal ammonia plant would have to be working under ideal conditions and would have to be in absolutely perfect mechanical condition to make 15½ tons, or 30 tons, of ice—one ton of ice an hour. That is what it amounts to—30 tons of ice in 30 hours for a machine of 50-ton capacity. The modern machine, allowing for the greater absorptive capacity of the gas F.12, would possibly produce a little more. We could safely say it would produce another 10 per cent., no more. The modern gas F.12 is

non-toxic, non-inflammable and non-explosive but ammonia is both inflammable and explosive.

Mr. Houston: Is there anything in the Bill to say that the gas used cannot be ammonia?

Mr. NICHOLSON: Nothing at all, but I doubt very much if anyone would be operating an ammonia plant of 50 tons capacity with a fully automatic control. The starting torque alone would require a huge motor to start a refrigerator of that capacity. Hon. members were on the wrong track when they suggested that taking a man away from a fully automatic machine would create a danger. The hon. member for Baroona referred to a refrigerator explosion that caused a fire in a hotel. If I remember rightly, that refrigerator was charged with methyl chloride, an inflammable gas. The only possible way it could explode would be if the machine were not fitted with a high-pressure switch. In my opinion the explosion was caused by a gas leak inside the cabinet of the refrigerator. Even then it could explode only if a naked light were applied to the gas. My conclusion would be that the refrigerated cabinet became saturated with methyl chloride and then working after hours someone who was using a naked light lifted the lid of the refrigerator. Most refrigeration accidents are not caused by the human element but by a fracture in a pipe that would cause a leak. However, if there is a safety control that operates when a certain pressure is reached or when the head pressure rises excessively there is nothing to fear. On the other hand, as a safeguard on the electrical side, once a certain temperature is reached the thermal overload automatically cuts out the machine.

Mr. Lloyd: Cannot these safety devices go wrong?

Mr. NICHOLSON: Very seldom. If the machines are properly installed and serviced there is absolutely no danger with them at all. If the bellows happened to blow on the high-pressure side or low-pressure side, the device would automatically cut out because it loses its charge and the points fly open.

Mr. Lloyd: Who is going to do the servicing?

Mr. Houston: You think they will fly open every time?

Mr. NICHOLSON: I have never known them to fail yet. I have done the servicing of dozens of machines where the automatic switch has cut out.

Mr. Houston: You have serviced the electrical part of them too?

Mr. NICHOLSON: Yes, I have serviced every part.

Mr. Houston: Are you a qualified electrician?

Mr. NICHOLSON: I have serviced motors as a qualified refrigeration mechanic.

Mr. Houston: As a qualified electrician?

Mr. NICHOLSON: As a qualified refrigeration mechanic which gives me the permission to do it.

Opposition Members: No!

Mr. NICHOLSON: Yes it does. In any case we have electricians in the firm to do the job. I have done it myself. If it was good enough for them to class me as being engaged in an essential service in refrigeration during the war I think I am qualified to do anything in that field.

The point arises with most of the thermal overloads or high-pressure switches, once they cut out it is the signal of danger. Something has caused them to cut out. The low-pressure switch would cut out when the refrigerator or ice room comes down to a certain temperature. Normally when the high-pressure switch cuts out it has to be manually re-set. If the thermal overload cuts out it has to be manually re-set. Nobody would re-set the switch without finding out what caused the trouble. There are skilled tradesmen with these refrigeration organisations. It is much cheaper for the ice manufacturer or the cold storage man to engage a service mechanic when the machine goes wrong.

Mr. A. J. Smith: He does not hold a certificate under the Machinery and Scaffolding Act.

Mr. NICHOLSON: He holds a mechanic's certificate. He may have a first-class or a second-class refrigeration ticket. He can hold his first-class refrigeration ticket and still be engaged permanently on the one job. He can set himself up as a service man with his first-class certificate. I can see no danger to human life and no danger of creating unemployment by the passage of the Bill. At present the refrigeration trade is suffering from a scarcity of skilled tradesmen. The people who use air-conditioning such as big stores like Penneys and Woolworths, want to expand air-conditioning to the country, but they cannot because they have not sufficient mechanics and maintenance men to do so.

Mr. Graham: This Bill will not make any more men available.

Mr. NICHOLSON: I am saying that there is no need to fear unemployment. Any certificated tradesman who may be put out of work by the Bill will be quickly absorbed in the industry elsewhere.

Mr. Power: What about the apprentices? Will they be affected?

Mr. NICHOLSON: No. I cannot see how the Bill will limit employment. The hon. member for Baroona thinks it might affect the present apprentices. There may be an apprentice on the 50-ton plants and there

may not. Most apprentices get their training through the service organisations. Some of the larger places such as freezing works perhaps have apprentices, but most of the skilled tradesmen come from the industry itself. They do not come from the big works; they come through the industry. They study and work as apprentices and gradually qualify for a ticket. In some instances ammonia-plant men would have to go through a refresher course to service the later type of low-compression jobs. There is a scarcity of mechanics and refrigeration men. Automation is here to stay. As the Leader of the Opposition has said, we have to make room for it.

Mr. Lloyd: For factory work you want very highly-qualified men.

Mr. NICHOLSON: There are not enough highly-qualified men. The Opposition is claiming that they will be thrown out of work. The hon. member for Chermide mentioned about 24 manufacturers many of whom are running the plants as owner-operators.

The Redcliffe ice works is run by two men. It is a family concern. The owners of the plant are top refrigeration men and certificated operators.

That ice works will not be affected because it is not being run automatically and is never likely to be run automatically. Personally, I would think twice before I installed automatic control in an ammonia plant. Whether it is possible or not, it may be perfectly safe if the equipment is good and up to standard.

Mr. Power: I should think a lot before I put money into ice manufacturing.

Mr. NICHOLSON: The hon. member for Baroona has stated that he would not invest money in ice manufacture. I am certain I would not do so, but that is no reason why the Government should not protect this industry that is battling for an existence. Every domestic refrigerator that is sold represents a nail in the coffin of the industry. That cannot be denied. The future of the ice manufacturer is very grim.

The Redcliffe ice works is doing reasonably well, because with an influx of campers there is a demand for ice, and the fishing fleet also uses ice.

Mr. Lloyd: Have you given that refrigeration agency away?

Mr. NICHOLSON: That is the stupid type of interjection I should expect from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. He is a wily little fox or a cunning little boy who makes those statements in order to belittle those who are trying to inculcate some sense into people such as he who do not know the difference between a refrigerator compressor and an electric motor.

He is trying to create the impression that I am merely trying to advertise myself as a

refrigeration expert. I am not now in that business and I am never likely to be again, because no Labour candidate will ever unseat me in my electorate. My future is in Parliament, and I will not be going back to that industry or trade. I have no desire to make capital out of my knowledge of this subject.

Mr. Power: You may lose your endorsement by the Country Party.

Mr. NICHOLSON: I will take that risk.

It does not necessarily follow that a plant of 50 tons capacity can produce 50 tons of ice. Incidentally, one ton of ice is cut into 32 slabs, and each slab is then reduced to four blocks. If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is as smart as he thinks he is, he can calculate the number of standard blocks to the ton.

Mr. Baxter: 1,700. You will get 34 drags to the ton.

Mr. NICHOLSON: There are 32 slabs to the ton, and four blocks to the slab.

So that hon. members opposite may understand the position, I explain my concluding point in the simplest language at my command. A refrigerator of 50 tons capacity will remove the same amount of heat from a room or an article as 50 tons of ice. A 50-ton refrigerating machine will remove the same amount of British thermal units from an article that 50 tons of ice will or, put in the reverse, it will supply as much cold. A refrigerator does not put coldness into an article, it takes heat out. That is where the capacity comes in.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba) (11.50 a.m.): We all agree that the hon. member who has just resumed his seat certainly knows the subject of the manufacture of ice. There was a great contrast between his knowledge and that displayed by the Liberal Member for Chermiside who tried to compare the capacity of a machine for ice-making with that of a household refrigerator. There is no comparison at all, and in fact it is ridiculous to compare the two. A household refrigerator is a sealed unit operated by a $\frac{1}{2}$ horse power motor. A 50-ton ice-making machine, assuming it makes 26 tons of ice, and working on the rule of thumb of 2 horse power per ton would have a 50 horse power motor. There is a great difference between that motor and $\frac{1}{2}$ horse power motor.

Mr. Nicholson: The same principle on a bigger scale?

Mr. HOUSTON: I am not speaking as a refrigeration man but as a qualified electrician. There is no comparison between the control gear of a 50 horse power motor and a $\frac{1}{2}$ horse power sealed unit.

The hon. member for Murrumba referred to the speech of the Leader of the A.L.P. at the Trade Union Congress—and what a great speech it was, too—when he mentioned that automation was taking over. He said

that there would have to be a change of outlook in regard to employment. That is true. Due to automation there will be a change in men from manual workers to men to supervise and control machines. We will require more supervisors. From my knowledge of the electrical industry there is no perfect automatic equipment. Many switches have the contacts welded together and it is when you do not use a switch that the contacts weld together. As the hon. member for Murrumba mentioned, we will have unqualified men supervising these machines and that is where the trouble will come about. Automatic equipment is good, provided it is maintained correctly. Refrigeration mechanics are not electrical men and have no knowledge of electrical principles at all. Hon. members must realise that there is nothing about size of machines in the Bill nor is any mention made of the protection required or servicing or inspection. It is all very well to say that the Order in Council will provide for all these matters. There is no definition of "automatic." I do not believe in government by regulation on matters of this nature where life is at stake. It is no use saying one thing and meaning another in regard to safety. If something goes wrong it will be said that the equipment stuck. It will stick unless it is maintained efficiently. When legislation such as this is brought down it should contain definitions and if that was the case there would be a different story from this side of the House. The Bill is so open that it would be possible to drive a herd of bullocks through it. I refuse to support something if I cannot do it conscientiously.

Mr. Morris: You are naturally affected that way.

Mr. HOUSTON: If the Minister knew as much about running his department as I do about the electrical industry, the Bill would never have been brought down.

Mr. Morris: Evidently you have not read the Bill. You do not know what is in it.

Mr. HOUSTON: Does the Minister know what is in it?

Mr. Morris: Yes. I will tell you in a few minutes.

Mr. HOUSTON: I will be very interested to hear what the Minister has to say.

Mr. Lloyd: What would you say about the minimum period of inspections?

Mr. HOUSTON: The machines should be inspected at least daily. Back pressures can build up at any time. In addition, the gauge should be read continuously. It is no use waiting until something blows up. The more automatic a machine becomes, the more gauges it must have on it. I admit that the man responsible for it can be doing other work nearby, but he must be on the premises to keep a continuous check of the gauges.

Mr. Nicholson: There are only two gauges, high pressure and low pressure.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is right, but someone has to watch them. If there is no necessity for a gauge, why have it?

Mr. Nicholson: It is not necessary.

Mr. HOUSTON: The hon. member had better tell the manufacturers that. The gauges are necessary and they should be read continuously. Otherwise, there would be no need to have them.

I do not wish to bore the House with other matters. However, I stress the fact that the Bill is so open that it will enable the manufacturers to run their factories in their own way. I forecast that there will be a succession of regulations, and they will not be challenged until something serious happens, probably resulting in loss of life. I suggest to the Minister that he defer the Bill and examine the matter further. He can then bring down legislation that will protect fully every person in the industry.

I do not want people outside to get the idea that we are opposed to helping the ice manufacturer. He has done a good job in the past and he will be needed for many years to come. Unfortunately, many people cannot afford refrigerators and we must look after them. But that is no reason why we should cast aside all protective measures. A plant that can manufacture 3,300 blocks of ice is by no means small. No man could manufacture that quantity of ice and deliver it himself.

Mr. Nicholson: He does not deliver it himself. He trades it out.

Mr. HOUSTON: Then what will he be doing? Will he be away on holidays most of the time? The Minister has said that the manufacturer will make the ice and then deliver it. Again we are getting two different stories from the Government.

Mr. Nicholson: I am referring to what the big manufacturers do. The Bill is designed to help the small manufacturer—the one-man show.

Mr. HOUSTON: What, 3,300 blocks?

Mr. Nicholson: Some of them manufacture only 12 tons.

Mr. HOUSTON: Then why does not the Bill refer specifically to machines with a 5-ton or a 10-ton capacity? It covers machines with capacities of up to 50 tons. The Minister will find it very hard to justify his action.

Mr. A. J. SMITH (Carpentaria) (12 noon): I have listened attentively to the debate. I have read the Bill and I have heard hon. members discussing all the technicalities of ice-making and talking about so many blocks of ice and so many slabs. There is no standard of weight or number for blocks of ice manufactured. The moulds range in size from 20 lb. through 30 and 40 lb. to 50 lb. each; but that is by the way.

The main provision of the Act affected is that the certificated driver in an iceworks must not, for any period while he is on shift, leave the vicinity of the machinery while it is in operation. He must be near to take immediate action if anything goes wrong. He is the man I seek to protect today. According to the capacity of the ice-manufacturing plant, a third-class, second-class or first-class refrigeration driver must be employed and all that he does is watch the ammonia compressor. He might have a 5 h.p., 10 h.p., 15 h.p., 50 h.p., or 100 h.p. electric motor. Under the laws of the State there is no need for a certificated driver to take charge of that electric motor. In the past manufacturers used an internal combustion engine—a petrol or diesel engine—but, with the generation of electricity in the city and its extension into country areas, ice-manufacturers have converted to electric power. They use anything from a 5 h.p. to a 100 h.p. electric motor to drive a refrigeration unit, according to its capacity. No certificated driver is needed to take charge of the motor. Under the Act all that is required of the manufacturer is that he employ a qualified electrician to install the motor. From then on all he needs is a third-class, second-class or first-class refrigeration driver to watch the plant working. For pulling the ice from the tanks and cutting it up into blocks for delivery he has to employ a labourer, who is covered by the Australian Workers' Union under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act.

The Bill will allow the certificated driver to leave the precincts of the plant and it does not specify the period. How long can he be away from the machinery, and how far can he go from it?

Mr. Morris: As a matter of fact, you are the only hon. member on that side who really understands the details of ice making.

Mr. A. J. SMITH: I have been associated with the manufacture of ice all my life. Only last August we closed our ice plant in Mt. Isa. We had ice-making machinery of 50 tons capacity with multiple working—two Stern machines of 20 tons capacity each, with Wilac, with an extra capacity of 10 tons or so.

The point at issue is: How long will the Minister, through the department, allow that certificated driver to be absent from the machine while it is in operation, and how far can he go away? Under the Act he must be there at all times while he is on shift and while the plant is in operation. Hon. members talk about safety valves, automation and automatic devices, but the man in charge holds a certificate given by the Inspection of Machinery and Scaffolding Department. He could hold either a first-class, second-class or third-class certificate but if anything happens to the plant there is nobody else who can be charged with neglect because of any injury or accident that may occur.

The hon. member for Murrumba spoke about the technicians, fitters and engineers

who install the plants. That is the danger. We have too many mugs as refrigeration technicians. I am looking to the day when the Minister will introduce legislations to require all who undertake the repair or installation of household refrigerators to be certificated. Today mugs come in and install a refrigerator. There is a risk of fire. Have hon. members read the report of Mr. Healy of the Metropolitan Fire Brigades' Board wherein he mentions how many houses have been burnt down because of the inefficiency of household refrigerators? It is time that the Minister took action to ensure that every man who takes on the job of repairer or fitter of household refrigerators shall be certificated under the Inspection of Machinery Act. I should like the Bill to say how far the certificated operator can go away from his plant while it is in operation. How many miles away can he go and for how long? As an illustration, take the case of a man with an iceworks at Chelmer. Let us suppose that he has an automatic plant. His delivery might take him to, say, Milton. He might be away for several hours. It would mean that the certificated man would be absent from his automatic plant for a number of hours and at a great distance. If anything happened while he were absent, as the man holding the certificate, he would be responsible for any deaths or injuries that might occur in his absence. He could be charged with neglect by the Board of Examiners under the Inspection of Machinery Act. He might lose his certificate.

I am greatly concerned about the attitude of industrial leaders who attend conferences called by Ministers. They do not take action to protect members of their unions at that time but immediately a Bill is printed or they become aware of its contents through members of Parliament or public utterances they condemn the legislation. Already this session I have spoken about machinery under the control of the Department of Mines. Huge automatic winding machines have been installed in Mt. Isa Mines for underground haulage to the surface. It was stated that the presence of a certificated operator is not necessary when these machines are operating. The Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads told me that Mr. Whiteside, the Secretary of the Federated Engine Drivers' Union, did not object to that legislation going through the House. The Minister for Labour and Industry told the House that Mr. Whiteside did not object at the conference to this legislation going through the House. It does not matter whether it is automatic or manual plant, if any accident occurs while it is in operation the man with the certificate is the person who will be charged with the consequences.

I rise here to protect that man. In future I suggest that when the Minister has a conference or receives a deputation on a matter that affects the workers he should see that a member of the rank and file of the union

is present. I can take hon. members back to the early days when the temperature clause for underground mines was drawn up. Today the miners claim they are suffering working conditions which should be improved because a member of the rank and file was not present when the temperature clause was drawn up for the industrial award in 1927 or 1928, when Beecher Hay was district secretary of the A.W.U. in Townsville. The workers are suffering today because of the lack of knowledge of their industrial leaders. I have been up to Mt. Isa and members of the Federated Engine Drivers' and Firemen's Association have asked me what actually happened. For the benefit of those who are affected I would like to see the Minister table the report of the deputation. I should also like the Minister to see that in future a member of the rank and file is invited to attend. That is consistent with my policy since I have been a member. Many ex-Ministers who are present are aware of that. Whenever there was a deputation from my electorate I always asked that the rank and file be represented. It has been the policy of Governments in the past to meet only the executive of the union as a deputation, or at a conference. I think it is time we changed that and brought to conferences members of the rank and file of the union. These are the people who will be affected by amendments just as they were affected in regard to the winding gear at Mt. Isa.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. A. J. SMITH: I mention that as an example, Mr. Speaker. It does not matter whether the capacity is 30, 60, or 100 tons, it is an amendment to the Act which says that the certificated man may be absent from the plant for an indefinite period. I should like the Minister to lay down a specified time during which a man may be absent from the machinery and also a specified distance which he may travel away from the machinery. The Minister should protect the men in the industry and he should lay down how far he can go from the machinery and for how long. I appeal to every Minister to insist, when receiving a deputation on a matter that affects the workers in industry, that a responsible member of the rank and file of the union is a member of the deputation. Because he is one who is conversant with the actual conditions under which he works.

Mr. GRAHAM (Mackay) (12.14 p.m.): The hon. member for Carpentaria has demonstrated his lack of knowledge of industrial matters. How could the Minister discuss matters with the rank and file of the union when the rank and file are spread over the length and breadth of the State? The usual procedure is for the Minister to discuss such matters with the executive of the interested union. The suggestion that the subject should be discussed with rank-and-file members of the union is just so much boloney.

Mr. A. J. Smith: Bunk! Do you say they should not be considered?

Mr. GRAHAM: Previous amendments of the Act have been for the purpose of giving further protection to the men referred to by the hon. member for Carpentaria, but his suggestion is ridiculous.

I oppose the Bill. The fact that the ice industry is a dying industry, according to the opinions of Government members, is no reason to remove the safety provisions from the Act, and that is the sole purpose of the Bill. It amends Section 15 of the Act and provides that a fully automatic plant can be left unattended. The normal procedure in industry is to have certificated men in charge of machinery, but the Bill will allow the operator of a plant of up to 50 tons capacity to leave his plant unattended for the purpose of delivering the ice he has manufactured for any other reason he likes to advance.

Two Government members have put the case for the Minister. The hon. member for Chermside had a well-prepared brief from the ice manufacturers. The hon. member for Murrumba submitted a case also on the manufacturers' viewpoint. Any legislation that means the displacement of labour must be treated rather cautiously. The Government will take action to displace labour if it is possible, and this is another instance of that policy.

Mr. Morris: Nonsense!

Mr. GRAHAM: The hon. gentleman cannot get away from that fact. He admitted it.

Take the P.C.D. Iceworks in Mackay. Qualified engine-drivers are employed to operate the plant. If it is of up to 50 tons capacity and automatic controls are installed, one or perhaps two of those men can be displaced. A danger will thus be created. Previous Opposition members have mentioned explosions and accidents caused by machinery breakdowns.

Mr. Dewar: Not in automatic plant.

Mr. GRAHAM: The fact that automatic controls are installed would not overcome that possibility. Automatic controls, as I understand them, affect only the stopping and starting of the machinery, not the operation of it. Automatic controls cannot take the place of a certificated person who is on the job and is able to take action to prevent loss of life. That is my objection to the Bill.

It has been introduced at the behest of employers and manufacturers. In Brisbane, according to the hon. member for Chermside, there are 20 plants.

Mr. Dewar: No. I said there were 18 in the Brisbane and Redcliffe areas.

Mr. GRAHAM: How many of those plants would employ more than one man? The Bill

will enable displacement of those employees and the operation of those plants by one man.

Mr. Morris: Not one person will be in danger of losing his employment.

Mr. GRAHAM: What is the intention, if it is not the displacement of labour?

Mr. Morris: The hon. member for Carpentaria explained the position.

Mr. GRAHAM: What did he say? He asked how long a machine could be left unattended and how far the attendant could go away from the plant if the exemption clause is included. He said nothing more than that. I repeat that he asked the Minister what period of time could the machine be left unattended and how far from the machine could the attendant go. Section 15 of the Act provides that the machines must never be left unattended, but the Minister is amending it to allow a machine to be left unattended.

Mr. Morris: Do you think any size machine could be left unattended?

Mr. GRAHAM: If the Minister was honest in his intention and if as the hon. member for Carpentaria has said that the Bill applies to the small ice-making plants of 10 tons with one man in charge, we might be prepared to listen to reason. The Bill covers every ice-making plant in Queensland.

Mr. Morris: Would you say that a 5-ton machine could be left unattended?

Mr. GRAHAM: I have not sufficient knowledge of that nor am I a refrigeration engineer. As there is an element of risk we have every reason to oppose the Bill. The Minister has no right to remove a safety clause which provides that a machine shall not be left unattended. I am surprised that he is introducing a Bill on behalf of the employers without, as the hon. member for Carpentaria said, discussing it with executives of the unions concerned. This Bill is opposed by those employed in the industry but it will not be opposed by the employer. It will be opposed by men working in the industry because it will provide for the displacement of labour in the manufacture of ice. It provides, as I have already said, for the removal of the safety clause from the Act and so we oppose it. It is wrong for the Minister to introduce a Bill which creates a danger and a hazard. Its introduction could endanger life. To whom does it give any privilege? Only a few ice manufacturers in Queensland who want to save a pound or two by displacing workers and what is more this will be the thin end of the wedge to extend the same privilege to other industries where automatic controls are in operation.

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry) (12.24 p.m.), in reply: Before replying to some

of the comments that have been made I should like to ask the hon. member for Bulimba if he will answer a question?

Mr. Houston: Yes.

Mr. MORRIS: Will he be prepared to agree to machines of say 5, 10 or 20-ton capacity being included?

Mr. Houston: I say in reply to the Minister that it would depend entirely on the set-up of the refrigeration engines. To my knowledge at the present time there are no machines—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MORRIS: Your order, Mr. Speaker, saved the hon. member from his folly. As a matter of fact the hon. member for Bulimba and the hon. member for Mackay have demonstrated today by the stupid things they have said that they do not understand the Act or even the Bill. I have never heard such inherent folly in my life.

Mr. HOUSTON: I rise to a point of order. There is a tremendous difference between a one-third h.p. sealed unit and open units comprising two different components, working refrigeration plants.

Mr. MORRIS: Even you, Mr. Speaker, could not save the hon. member from putting his silly foot into the matter. I have never heard such a lot of stupid comments as those that have been made on this Bill. The Act that we are amending, and which has been in existence since 1951 includes 5-ton refrigeration plants, even 20-ton air-conditioning plants, and it was introduced by the hon. member for Baroona. Hon. members opposite did not know that. Only one hon. member of the Opposition has demonstrated a real knowledge of the contents of the Bill, and that was the hon. member for Carpentaria. I never push his barrow unless I am justified in doing so, but he at least knows what the Bill contains.

He made the point that if there is a feeling of disquiet among trade unions on any legislation, it is their responsibility to have it challenged. The unions associated with this industry have had many opportunities to see me about the Bill. However, they have failed to take advantage of them. As the hon. member for Baroona said that some unions had been in touch with the department on this matter, I went to the trouble of getting a letter from the Deputy Chief Inspector of Machinery—the Chief Inspector is away—on whether any approach had in fact been made by the unions in opposition to this legislation. He wrote to me as follows:—

“Re the amendment to the Inspection of Machinery Acts now before the House.

“Relative to the above, to my knowledge no approach has been made to the Department by any interested party in protest

against the Bill to amend ‘The Inspection of Machinery Acts, 1951 to 1954,’ in certain particulars regarding refrigeration.

“Yours faithfully,

“E. W. Smallcombe,

“Deputy Chief Inspector.”

In accordance with the request of the hon. member for Carpentaria, I table the letter so that he may read it.

(Whereupon the hon. gentleman laid the letter on the table.)

Mr. MORRIS: Since the introduction of the Bill I have received a deputation from the Trades and Labour Council on another matter. That was on Thursday of last week. They were with me for quite a time. Furthermore, prior to that the Premier had received a deputation from the same people. At neither deputation was any question raised about this Bill. That proves conclusively to me that the trade unions are not at all unhappy about it. The only other suggestion is that they are neglecting what they believe to be their duty and are merely presenting briefs to members of the Australian Labour Party for political purposes.

The hon. member for Carpentaria raised what I regard as the main point at issue in the Bill. In effect he asked, “While there are certificated people in charge of these machines, how long and how far can they be away from them while they are in operation?” I should like to dwell on that point. I was very much amused when the hon. members for Baroona and Bulimba got up in righteous indignation and protested against Government by regulation.

Mr. POWER: I rise to a point of order. The hon. gentleman is not in order in saying that I protested against Government by regulation. I have commended the Government for it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Labour and Industry.

Mr. MORRIS: If the hon. gentleman thinks he did not protest about government by regulation I accept his statement. The hon. member for Bulimba cannot deny it because he said it in the House this morning.

Mr. Houston: That is right, on the particular subject, the openness of the Bill, and you yourself admit that it is open.

Mr. MORRIS: Had they studied the Act that the Bill amends they would have realised that we as a Government could quite simply have excluded fully-automatic machines of 50 tons capacity.

Mr. Houston: What is the definition of “fully automatic” in the Bill?

Mr. MORRIS: The hon. member can deal with the Bill in detail later if he wishes to but I point out that on line 17, Clause 2, these words appear—

“ . . . exempt from the application of this section any fully automatic refrigeration machinery.”

Mr. Hanlon: But what is a fully-automatic machine?

Mr. MORRIS: The Government could have followed the legislation introduced by the hon. member for Baroona and in terms of subsection (vi.) excluded these machines by regulation because that provision reads—

“(vi.) Any other machinery that may be prescribed to be exempted from the application of this section.”

But we very deliberately refrained from doing it by regulation because we thought it should come before the House and because we desired to lay down rigid conditions as to when a person may be absent from a machine. We could not have laid down those conditions if we had used the machinery provided by the hon. member for Baroona so we are not adopting the principle of amending by regulation but are doing it by legislation. That very definitely answers the question raised by hon. members opposite.

Mr. Houston: Are you prepared to insert in the Bill a definition of “automatic” as it applies in this instance?

Mr. Hanlon: “Fully automatic.”

Mr. MORRIS: We will deal with that in Committee. I will be perfectly happy to do so.

The hon. member for Murrumba and the hon. member for Carpentaria gave an excellent description of the use of machinery of this type and I believe both adequately answered questions raised by other hon. members opposite.

The hon. member for Baroona, the hon. member for Bremer and I think the Leader of the Opposition said quite frankly that they came into the Chamber with briefs from their union. I do not mind that. They are quite entitled to bring along briefs. But it is a great pity that they do not study and understand the briefs given to them. I repeat that only one hon. member opposite has the faintest idea of what the Bill is about—and he has a very full understanding of it—and that is the hon. member for Carpentaria.

The leader of the Opposition, in a thoroughly unjustified attempt to build up a fear complex in the minds of the people, instanced all sorts of accidents that have occurred, some with semi-automatic and even some with automatic machinery. He cited railway accidents in Maryborough and all sorts of unusual refrigeration accidents, but he did not mention one that could be applied to the type of machinery in question even by

a child of 12. Indeed, hon. members opposite gave every indication that they had no knowledge of what they were talking about.

I am therefore forced to come to the conclusion that while it is generally recognised that the Bill is desirable—at least recognised by default because I have had no opposition expressed from outside—hon. members of the Opposition, certainly the A.L.P. section, the people who have demonstrated such abysmal ignorance, are trying to build up political propaganda by creating a fear that the legislation will make the safety factor less important. Not one hon. member opposite could cite even one example of fully-automatic machinery used under these conditions having caused an accident.

In a moment I shall deal with a few of the details of the accidents that they cited to show how thoroughly unreliable their comments are. First of all I must refer to some comments by the Leader of the Opposition. He said that I had no idea of the size of a plant with a capacity of 50 tons. He said, “Even if the blocks of ice in a mould weigh a hundredweight—they are only about half that—there would be at least 1,000 blocks of ice a day.” They are infinitely less than half a hundredweight, of course, but that is only a detail in his inaccuracies. When he said that there would be at least 1,000 blocks of ice a day the hon. member for Mundingburra in his rather mischievous way interjected, “Per pull.” The Leader of the Opposition immediately seized on this and said, “Yes, that is right, per pull.” He continued, “It could be twice a day.” Anybody who knows anything about this type of machinery realises that it is physically impossible to have two pulls a day, each with that capacity. What they do in practice is to take a portion out at one stage and a portion at another. I quote that part of the hon. gentleman’s speech because it is an excellent example of the unreliability of his comments. As I sat quietly chuckling about the stupidity of his remarks and the avidity with which he grasped onto the interjection by the hon. member for Mundingburra I wondered whether the significance of the words “per pull” had anything to do with it. I wondered whether instinctively the association with oil interests might have come into his mind. I leave it to the House to judge. The quotation demonstrates the complete lack of knowledge exhibited by the Leader of the Opposition in one of the worst speeches I have ever heard him make. I am glad that he has come into the Chamber because when he was in Government and I was in Opposition I would always come in to hear him speak. I liked to listen to him because usually I could take a lot of notice of what he said. I am bound to say that when he was in Government I regarded him as being reliable in his comments. If his demonstration in the debate on this Bill is an example of what he is going to be like in Opposition

I fear we shall have to alter our judgment and realise that his comments are now thoroughly unreliable.

Mr. Hanlon: That is what the Liberal Party are saying about your leadership.

Mr. MORRIS: They are quite entitled to.

The hon. member for Baroona was also voluble. The hon. member spoke about the tremendous disadvantage that would result from releasing these persons to permit of non-attendance on fully automatic refrigeration machinery up to 50 tons. The hon. member went on to quote the example of a fire which occurred at Cunnamulla in a refrigeration machine, and suggested that that was evidence why we could not permit these machines to be unattended. I have gone to the trouble to discover what I could about this accident at Cunnamulla. The hon. member told us that as a result of this accident at Cunnamulla some people were killed and it was used as an example why we could not leave these machines unattended. The unit reported to have exploded and caused the fire is similar to a large number used in the ice-cream, smallgoods, fish and meat trades. It is of factional refrigerating tonnage and not subject to the provision of the Machinery Act which the hon. member introduced. The hon. member told us in 1951 that he was so interested in it that he even wrote the Bill himself.

Mr. Power: On the advice of the Chief Inspector. The fact that that accident happened justifies our stand on this occasion.

Mr. MORRIS: This accident occurred in a plant somewhat larger than a domestic plant in 1954. If it justifies the hon. member's action in opposing this Bill today surely it justified his action in 1954 in amending the Act to prevent such a thing happening again.

Mr. Power: I was not the Minister in charge then.

Mr. MORRIS: I do hate hypocrites. Here we have the clearest example of an hon. member who then wrote the Bill, who knew all about it, and even went to the experts to get advice. I do not know whether the hon. member's composition was good, but it was amended in a few places. He still did not introduce an amendment to overcome the very thing that he now, for political propaganda, claims to be dangerous.

In the debate that took place in 1951 the hon. member for Mackay said he would not agree to exclude machines of 5 tons and the hon. member for Baroona took a similar stand. At page 643 of "Hansard" 1951-1952 Vol. 201, the following appears:—

"Hon. W. Power (Baroona—Secretary for Mines and Immigration) I move the following amendment:—

'On page 13, after line 15 insert the following paragraph:—

“(v) Refrigerating machinery used for air conditioning machinery and

having a capacity not exceeding twenty tons providing the refrigerant used is non-toxic; or ‘ ‘ , ’ ’

The hon. member then said—

“This amendment is purely formal.”

And it was carried. The hon. member is the one who is adopting the attitude of the hypocrite. A few other cases were quoted by the Leader of the Opposition and his followers as reasons why fully-automatic machinery should not be lifted out of the ambit of the Bill. Opposition members have not given one instance of an accident with fully-automatic machines. It is true that they did mention the explosion of an ammonia tank in a 5-ton automatic plant, but let me explain it.

I refer now to the explosion of an automatically controlled refrigeration plant at the Rocklea abattoirs in 1951, when it was stated the whole of the abattoirs were burnt. The facts are that a fire started in the office upstairs, and it burnt for two hours while the building was on fire. As it proceeded, the fire got to the refrigeration plant. Because of the heat of the fire, the building collapsed and the ammonia tank exploded.

That is the one example given by the Opposition of an explosion in automatic machinery.

A further accident at Trails Ltd. was mentioned. I was interested in that example. I thought it might have been a fully-automatic machine, and I asked for the particulars. It occurred in 1945, long before the Act was introduced. It was not a fully-automatic machine. It was a hand-manipulated machine. At that stage fully-automatic machines were scarcely in operation.

The Inspector's report states—

“As instructed, I visited Trails Ltd. to investigate an accident to a 16-ton compressor, at the above ice works. The accident occurred on the 22nd instant, and was caused by the machine taking over a quantity of liquor, which caused the metal around the cylinder cover studs to fracture, and allow a large quantity of ammonia to escape.”

“Nobody was injured, but a new cylinder block will be required.”

“At the time of the accident two machines were running, this 16-ton one and a 56-ton one. The machines are on a common section header and it was found necessary to stop the large machine for a few minutes, and this is when the accident occurred. Men were working near these machines, and it is just possible that an expansion valve was inadvertently knocked open.”

“First Class Refrigeration Drivers were employed by this firm on shift.”

The small machine was given the job of carrying not only its own load but also the load of the 56-ton machine. Even a mere novice in engineering could realise what would happen.

There have been many changes in refrigeration machinery in the last seven years. I repeat that fully-automatic machines were scarcely in operation at the beginning of the war. Because of the changed and new conditions, the Act very rightly was amended.

In passing I point out that in 1915 the law required those who drove a car to have not only a certificate of competency as a driver but also a certificate entitling them to take charge of an internal combustion engine. Subsequent to 1915 it was recognised, with the development of cars, that such a certificate was not required. It is not now required. Indeed, many people, if they were required to hold an engineer's certificate to take charge of a 50 or 60 h.p. internal combustion engine in addition to a certificate of competency, could not comply with those conditions. Most people today have faith in their machines. They wisely choose not to touch the engines of their cars but to leave that work to specialists. That is the position under this Bill. There is no great need to retain the existing provision in the Act, any more than there is need to insist on the safety practice of carrying a red flag and walking in front of a steamroller, a car or a railway locomotive, a precaution that was required 50 or 70 years ago.

Mr. Duggan interjected.

Mr. MORRIS: Might I quote what the hon. member for Baroona said in relation to that question in 1951? He said, "We do not take any notice of the other States, we often lead and they follow." That is my answer to the hon. member.

This practice of either willingly or in ignorance building up a fear amongst the people because of an alteration to legislation is not quite justified. I do not mind any legitimate criticism of a Bill but when the Opposition or a section of it try to instil into the minds of even a few people a fear of legislation then I say it is not a good principle. I resent very much any suggestion from hon. members opposite that we on this side of the House are not interested in the industrial safety factor in the community. I go further and say that in the last 12 months the Government have done more for industrial safety in Queensland than any previous Government did over 20 years. Whilst I recognise that the general question of industrial safety is not truly relevant to the Bill I do not intend to pursue it, but in view of the stupid statements made from the other side of this House I propose on the introduction of my next Bill to deal fully with the general question of industrial safety by elaborating on what I said a moment ago.

Let me say that a few days ago the Premier received a deputation from the Trades and Labour Council—and I mentioned this a while ago—in regard to safety in relation to electrical appliances. The Premier was interested. He is specially

interested in anything at all dealing with industrial safety. He listened to the deputation and asked that the details be studied and said that if there was anything my department could do to increase the safety factor by making conditions more safe within the electrical industry, it should be done. The details of that discussion are being considered by the Chief Inspector of Machinery so that we can still further improve industrial safety in this State. I repeat that on that occasion when representatives of the Trades and Labour Council were with the Premier talking about safety in industry, not even then did they mention any objection to this Bill. I say, without fear of contradiction, that there is no opposition to the Bill either in industrial circles outside or anywhere else. The letter I read showing that they made no objection whatever when they had an opportunity is proof positive of that. I deplore the fact that the Opposition, who can be progressive and constructive if they wish, faced the task before them by building up unfair, untrue political propaganda to instil fear into people by saying that a danger exists when in fact it does not exist.

This is good progressive legislation, progressive like the removal of the need to carry a flag before a steamroller.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time (Mr. Morris's motion)—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 36.

Mr. Ahearn	Mr. Madsen
" Anderson	" Morris
" Chalk	" Müller
" Dewar	" Munro
" Evans	" Nicholson
" Ewan	" Nicklin
" Gaven	Dr. Noble
" Harrison	Mr. Pizzev
" Hart	" Rae
" Heading	" Ramsden
" Herbert	" Roberts
" Hewitt	" Smith, P. R.
" Hiley	" Taylor
" Hodges	" Tooth
" Hooper	" Watson
" Jones, V. E.	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Knox	Mr. Bjelke-Petersen
" Lonergan	" Richter
" Low	

NOES, 20.

Mr. Baxter	Mr. Hilton
" Burrows	" Houston
" Clark	" Jones, A.
" Davis	" Lloyd
" Diplock	" Power
" Donald	" Smith, A. J.
" Duffey	" Thackeray
" Duggan	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Gardner	Mr. Adair
" Graham	" Hanlon
" Gunn	

PAIRS.

AYES.

NOES.

Mr. Gilmore
" Connolly

Mr. Gair
" Jesson

Resolved in the affirmative.

The House adjourned at 1.3 p.m.