

Queensland



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[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 1959

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

QUESTIONS.

INCREASED TELEPHONE AND POSTAL CHARGES

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

“In view of the fact that (a) big groups of large and small business and industrial organisations as well as individuals in Queensland have vigorously protested against the heavy and unjust increases in telephone and postal charges and (b) the Government, being the largest business and biggest employer in Queensland, will suffer most through these increases,—

(1) Has an estimate been made of the added cost to the Government of the new charges, and, if so, what is the estimated cost?

(2) Despite his reported commendation of the Federal Budget, has the Government made or does it propose to make any protest to the Federal Government against the increases?”

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

“(1) No.”

“(2) When the true effect of the increase in telephone and postage charges is assessed any action which my Government considers necessary will be taken.”

PRINTING OF NEW ELECTORAL ROLLS

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

“In view of the advantage and necessity of having the new electoral rolls for the altered electoral districts printed as expeditiously as possible, will he indicate what tentative date has been fixed for the issue of the new rolls and whether, because of the urgency factor, he will issue instructions for the utmost expedition in their preparation?”

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

“The Electoral Districts Act of 1958’ prescribes that electoral rolls of electors in each and every electoral district determined by the Electoral Commissioners shall be prepared by the Principal Electoral Officer in accordance with the requirements of ‘The Elections Acts, 1915 to 1958.’ By reason of the provisions of the Elections Acts, such annual rolls will contain the names registered up to the 31st December next and therefore cannot be printed before that date. The expeditious preparation of the rolls will receive the earnest consideration of my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, who is responsible for the supervision and control of the Principal Electoral Office.”

PRICE OF ORANGES AND RE-IMPOSITION OF PROFIT CONTROL

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

“In view of the discontent of citrus growers in his electorate of Landsborough and in other districts, and the statements in the Brisbane “Telegraph” of September 8 by the Palmwoods citrus grower, Mr. Granville Parker, president of the Maroochy Fruit and Vegetable Growers’ Council and president of the Palmwoods Fruit Growers’ Association, that (a) Citrus growers in his area were receiving only 1½d. to 1¾d. each for oranges which are selling in Brisbane shops for 9d. each, (b) Retailers are charging 500 per centum over what growers receive, (c) The Government should consider some form of profit control, will he consider the re-imposition of the controls abandoned in 1957, which experience proved to be beneficial to grower, agent and consumer?”

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

“(a), (b), (c) No, as the controls previously in operation were completely ineffective.”

OPEN SEASON FOR OPOSSUMS

Mr. A. J. SMITH (Carpentaria), for Mr. FOLEY (Belyando), asked the Minister for Agriculture and Stock—

“In view of the Press report of September 9, 1959, indicating prices for opossum skins ranging up to 67s. 6d. each at recent Melbourne sales, will he investigate the desirability of an open season for opossums in Queensland next winter?”

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani—Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads), for Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick), replied—

“The opening of an opossum season in Queensland requires a considerable amount

of investigation. However, this is already being done and the Department will be in a position to make a recommendation in due course as there are factors that have to be given consideration."

INCLUSION OF PORT ALMA IN ROCKHAMPTON ELECTORATE

Mr. GARDNER (Rockhampton) asked the Premier—

"To cover Port Alma, the Deepwater Port for Rockhampton, which is the only port in the State that would be alienated from its central controlling interests at Rockhampton and because Rockhampton's community interest would be best served by Port Alma's inclusion in a Rockhampton electorate, particularly in view of recent developments, and would present no difficulties in numbers on the roll, will he give consideration to amending the Electoral Districts Act by amending Clause II (a) as prescribed in the Act covering Provincial Cities Zone so that the meaning of Clause 12 (a) and (b) can be given effect to?"

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

"A prerequisite to the action suggested by the Honourable Member should be the extension of the Area of the City of Rockhampton to include Port Alma within its boundaries. As this does not appear to be immediately practicable, the most suitable procedure would be for interested bodies or persons to make representations to the Electoral Commission, within the prescribed time, to have Port Alma included in the Callide Electorate which is an electorate closely associated with the City of Rockhampton."

FLASHING LIGHTS AND BOOM GATES AT RAILWAY CROSSINGS

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

"(1) In view of his undertaking given to this House in reply to my question of March 20 last—'It is proposed next financial year to provide flashing lights at the railway crossings at Blackwood Road, Mitchelton, and Samford Road, Ferny Grove, also to provide boom gates at South Pine Road, Alderley, and Wardell Street, Enoggera,' will he advise whether the recent published statement attributed to the Secretary to the Railway Department, following an accident last week at the Wardell Street, Enoggera crossing, is correct that boom gates would not be installed at that crossing nor at South Pine Road, Alderley?"

"(2) In view of the extreme danger hazard created by the Enoggera and Alderley Crossings, will he also advise the House

what are the reasons for the Department's refusal to carry out his undertaking given to this House on March 20 last?"

"(3) If the Secretary's statement is correct, can Honourable Members of this House place any reliance on the veracity of the Minister's replies to questions?"

"(4) Will he also advise when work will commence on the duplication of the railway line between Mitchelton and Keperra together with the plans to bridge the Dawsons Parade, Grovely Crossing?"

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

"(1, 2, 3 and 4) In his political keenness to cast some doubt on the veracity of an undertaking given by me in March last to the effect that boom gates would be provided at Wardell Street, Enoggera, during the 1959-1960 financial year, rather than, I believe, motivated by a sense of duty to ensure improvement for the safety of the public, the Honourable gentleman has not carefully read the Press report to which he has made reference. If he will in calmer moments again read the report he will see that the whole of the information published was not attributed to the Secretary of the Railway Department, and that in relation to the incorrect portion of the report the journalist apparently assumed that there would be no boom gates at Wardell Street because they were not included in a list of boom gates contained in a report published in the 'Telegraph' late last year. There is no present intention of duplicating the railway line between Mitchelton and Keperra or to erect a bridge at Dawson Parade, Grovely Crossing. However, let me assure the Honourable Gentleman that what this Government promises it faithfully fulfils, and although we have not yet brought down the 1959-1960 Budget, Cabinet has already approved of the expenditure necessary for the provision of boom gates at Wardell Street, Enoggera, and orders have been placed for the necessary equipment."

HOUSING COMMISSION HOUSES AT MADSEN AND FITZSIMMONS STREETS, GROVELY

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

"(1) Will the Queensland Housing Commission make available for rental the two timber dwellings at Madsen and Fitzsimmons Streets, Grovely, being built by day labour at a cost of £5,618 or are these two homes being constructed for sale?"

"(2) If they are to be sold, can he advise what the Housing Commission's selling price will be?"

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo) replied—

"The Commonwealth Government, having required houses in the Grovely area, these two dwellings will be allotted to the Department of the Army to meet the

requirements of Clauses 7 and 13 of the 1956 Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement."

SOOT NUISANCE, TOWNSVILLE REGIONAL
ELECTRICITY BOARD

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

"Is he aware that the emission of soot from the chimneys of the Townsville Regional Electricity Board power-house at Townsville is still causing distress and damage to people and properties in the vicinity and, if so, will he fully inform the House of any measures that can or will be taken to further minimise this nuisance?"

Hon. E. EVANS (Mirani) replied—

"I refer the Honourable Member to my letter to him of January 13, 1959 which fully explained the measures taken and under consideration to minimise the effects of grit emission from the Townsville power station. On that occasion I informed the Honourable Member that I had asked the State Electricity Commissioner to re-examine the possibility of a further reduction in the emission of soot and grit from the regional board power stations. I also informed him as follows:—"The position is that the most up-to-date arrester equipment has been installed at very substantial cost at those power stations where the problem has occurred, and every attention has been given to station operating procedure to keep soot and grit emission to a minimum. It is doubtful if further improvements can be effected excepting at very high cost indeed, and the Commissioner informs me that even the most expensive and elaborate electrical systems which are economic for only the largest power stations are not more than 98 per cent. efficient and the amount of matter which escapes to atmosphere can be considerable. As you are no doubt aware, the problem is one associated with coal fired boilers throughout the world, and in most countries expert attention is being given to improved methods of prevention. In Australia, a technical Committee of the Electricity Supply Association of Australia on which Queensland has two representatives is dealing with the matter, and the report of this Committee, which will have application to the position in all States, will be carefully considered when it is received. As far as the position in Townsville is concerned, I am advised that the installation of expensive arrester equipment and improved methods of operating these have reduced the trouble to the minimum which may be expected from economic methods of treatment for a station such as Townsville. I am also advised that the position is being constantly studied, and that one of the Queensland representatives

on the Electricity Supply Association of Australia Committee dealing with this matter is a Senior Technical Officer of the Townsville Board, so that there will be direct participation by that Board in studies of further remedial measures.' I am not aware of any increase in the nuisance since that advice was given. It is difficult to reconcile any such suggestion with the fact that as a result of transmission of power from Kareeya hydro-electric station to Townsville the daily burn of coal at Townsville power station is now only about one-fifth what it was when the station was in full production. However investigations are still proceeding and the matter will be further considered when the Commissioner's report is received."

BRIDGE OVER JOHNSTONE RIVER TO SERVE
INNISFAIL ESTATE, FLYING FISH POINT

Mr. BYRNE (Mourilyan) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

"Will he advise if the Colonial Sugar Refining Company has in recent years lodged any objection with him or the Sugar Board to the construction of a bridge across the Johnstone River which bridge would serve the residents of Innisfail Estate, Flying Fish Point, &c., who are now obliged to depend upon an out-of-date punt to obtain access? If any objection has been lodged, has he or the Sugar Board made any decision in relation thereto?"

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Coorparoo) replied—

"I can discover no sign of any objection, such as that referred to by the Honourable Gentleman, having been lodged by the Colonial Sugar Refining Company with either the Sugar Board, the Director of Local Government, the Main Roads Department or the Treasury Department. If the honourable gentleman has any further information to add, I should be glad to receive it from him. I can say that only yesterday the Department of Harbours and Marine received a request from the Johnstone Shire Council seeking information as to minimum clearance heights which would be sought by that Department should a bridge be built across the Johnstone River. That is the only information that can be discovered in any way touching the subject matter of the question raised by the Honourable Gentleman."

EXAMINATION OF FERRY PUNT FLYING
BETWEEN INNISFAIL AND INNISFAIL ESTATE

Mr. BYRNE (Mourilyan) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

"In view of the recent disastrous accident to the barge "Mourilyan" at Mourilyan Harbour involving the loss of three lives, will he agree to arrange for an early and thorough examination of the old

punt now conveying passengers from Innisfail to Innisfail Estate in order to ascertain if such punt is in proper repair and condition and suitable for the purpose, thus allaying the feelings of users as to its safety?"

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Cooorparoo) replied—

"The punt providing a ferry service in the Johnstone River between Innisfail and Innisfail Estate is surveyed annually and the current certificate expired yesterday, September 9, 1959. The survey is carried out by a departmental officer stationed at Flying Fish Point (Innisfail) who will take steps to make the necessary survey before the license is renewed."

SUGGESTED STANDARD RAILWAY FROM BOOGAN TO MOURILYAN HARBOUR

Mr. BYRNE (Mourilyan) asked the Minister for Transport—

"Would he agree to pay an early visit to Innisfail and Mourilyan Harbour to see for himself the difficulties associated with the road transport of sugar in bulk and to ascertain for himself whether the construction of a 3 feet 6 inches line from Boogan to Mourilyan Harbour is not a better and more reliable proposition than road transport?"

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

"The transport of sugar to Mourilyan Harbour has been the subject of considerable investigation by both the Sugar Board and this Government, and quite recently because of the Government's desire to secure increased haulage tonnage for the Queensland Railways a special investigation of the economics of the construction of a 3 feet 6 inches gauge line from Boogan to Mourilyan Harbour was carried out by very competent officers of the Sugar Board and the Railway Department and their report was placed before Cabinet. Cabinet agreed with the Committee's finding that the building of this railway line was not warranted in the light of circumstances prevailing. Cabinet's decision was based on the fact that notwithstanding the line would be a payable proposition so far as the Railway Department was concerned the following factors militated against the proposal—(a) the high capital cost of the work, and the resultant annual interest involved; (b) the excessive extra capital costs that would be imposed on, (i.) the mills (£68,500); and (ii.) the bulk sugar terminal (£143,500); (c) the deleterious effect on existing cane harvesting arrangements; and (d) the cancellation of some cane land assignments."

CONFERENCE TO DETERMINE WAGES TO BE PAID TO BUILDING TRADESMEN AND LABOURERS IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Mr. DONALD (Bremer) asked the Minister for Public Works and Local Government—

"In view of the following statement contained in the Industrial Court's judgment of August 7, 1959, 'Whether the same employer pays one section of its employees the minimum rate (£3 15s. 0d.) margin and another section above the minimum rate (£5 2s. 6d.) is a matter for the employer and not the Industrial Court,' will he meet representatives from the Queensland Building Trade Group to discuss the possibility of granting an increase of 27s. 6d. per week to building tradesmen and 17s. 6d. per week to builders' labourers, employed by his Department, to bring their wages up to those enjoyed by workers in similar occupations and having the same qualifications employed by the Railway Department?"

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

"No. Payments are made by Government Departments to Building Trades employees in accordance with the provisions of the respective awards covering their employment and in no case is a Building Tradesman paid a wage above that prescribed by an award of the Industrial Court. In this matter there is a number of interests involved in addition to Governmental interests. Therefore a sectional negotiation would be most inappropriate."

RAILWAY TRUCKS AND FILLING MATERIAL FOR PORT ALMA AND RECLAMATION WORK

Mr. BURROWS (Port Curtis) asked the Minister for Transport—

"(1) Has any offer been made to the Rockhampton Harbour Board and/or private contractors of filling material from the Railway land at Bajool to be used by an Oil Company for reclamation work at Port Alma and in building a road from Bajool to Port Alma?"

"(2) If any offer or arrangement in connection with this material has been made, has the Department considered the scarcity of this type of material in the area and the possibility of its being required for railway purposes?"

"(3) What royalty is to be paid, if any material is to be taken from the land in question, and what charge has been fixed for the Departmental loading facilities on the job?"

"(4) Has the Department agreed to token freight rates on filling material to be carried on the Port Alma Branch equivalent to 3s. 8d. per ton for the full journey and 2s. 3d. per ton to the Seven Mile and to provide special wagons for the purpose of reducing the contractor's

handling costs? If so, is this being done with a view to subsidising the road from Railway funds as distinct and in addition to the normal subsidy from the Treasury Department notwithstanding the fact that the construction of such a road will greatly reduce Railway earnings and activities in the Central District?"

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

"(1) No."

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

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

"(4) For conveyance of filling material in full train loads of 400 tons net, a special rate of 3s. per cubic yard has been quoted for delivery to any point up to seven miles and 5s. per cubic yard for any point beyond seven miles to Port Alma. The spoil is being loaded into steel hopper wagons which is the type of wagon which can be most readily spared for this work. Having regard to the quantity of spoil being carried and its conveyance in train loads, the rates quoted are profitable ones and are not subsidy rates as stated by the Honourable Gentleman. In reply to that portion of the Honourable Gentleman's question in which he asks 'what charge has been fixed for the departmental loading facilities on the job,' it is quite evident from the fact that as the Department has no loading facilities whatsoever on the job the Honourable Gentleman has little or no knowledge of the subject matter of his questions, and in allowing himself to be a blow ripe he is being actuated either by some personal parochial obsession or by ulterior motive in regard to the progressive steps being taken to develop Port Alma."

RAILWAY PASSENGER TRAFFIC, ROCKHAMPTON TO PORT ALMA, AND RAILWAY SHUNTING CHARGES

Mr. BURROWS (Port Curtis) asked the Minister for Transport—

"(1) How many passengers were carried on the Bajool-Port Alma Branch of the Railway Department for the year ended June 30, 1959, departing from Rockhampton?"

"(2) What is the normal adult fare, Rockhampton to Port Alma, and is any concession granted for gangs of watersiders and other workmen travelling from Rockhampton to Port Alma?"

"(3) What charge is made to the Rockhampton Harbour Board in respect to the running of its motor trolley on the Port Alma Branch and have proper precautions been taken in respect to the competency of persons operating this trolley to observe safety rules?"

"(4) What are the respective shunting charges made by the Railway Department at Port Alma and Gladstone jetties?"

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

"(1) 7,024 passengers who worked at Port Alma, plus a special excursion carrying 1,811 passengers, a total of 8,835."

"(2) The ordinary second-class adult fare is 8s. single. No concession is granted to gangs of watersiders and other workmen travelling from Rockhampton to Port Alma, but it is understood that watersiders do not pay their own fares."

"(3) A charge of 3d. per mile is made to the Rockhampton Harbour Board for the running of its private motor trolley between Bajool and Port Alma. This trolley is only run when there is no train service and is not permitted to run without Departmental authority. Each driver of the motor is tested and, when qualified, is issued with a permit to drive the motor trolley."

"(4) Port Alma—£1 16s. per hour, plus 10 per cent. on Saturdays (plus Award rates of wages for two men subject to minimum wages charge for thirty minutes); on Sundays and Award holidays, the charge is increased by 50 per cent. (plus Award rates of wages for two men subject to minimum wages charge of thirty minutes). Gladstone Jetty—A haulage charge of 3s. 3d. per ton is made in the case of traffic to and from country stations. 5s. 9d. per ton for traffic only between the Jetty and Gladstone Station, minimum £1 5s. 3d. per shunt. In the case of shunting on Gladstone Jetty, this is done by the ordinary shunting engine employed in Gladstone Yard. In the case of Port Alma, it is necessary to send an engine there specially."

PAPERS

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

Report of the Literature Board of Review of operations under the Objectionable Literature Act of 1954, for the year 1958-1959.

Report of the Government Analyst and Chief Inspector of Explosives for the year 1958-1959.

Report of the Government Gas Engineer and Chief Gas Examiner for the year 1958-1959.

Report of the Registrar of Friendly Societies.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Order in Council under the Criminal Code. Proclamation under the Offenders Probation and Parole Act of 1959.

Regulations under the Offenders Probation and Parole Act of 1959.

Order in Council under the Southern Electric Authority of Queensland Acts, 1952 to 1958.

Balance-sheet, &c., of the Coal Mine Workers' Pensions Fund for the year 1958-1959.

Report of the Queensland Coal Board for the year 1958-1959.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Hon. V. C. GAIR (South Brisbane) (11.28 a.m.), by leave: I wish to make a personal statement. Mr. Speaker, I thank hon. members for giving me the opportunity of making this statement.

During the course of the Address in Reply debate yesterday the hon. member for Warrego, during his speech, stated that I and my supporters had participated in the New South Wales election campaign, and that I received a fee from the Democratic Labour Party for an appearance on T.V. I was not in the House when that statement was made otherwise I would have exercised my right to rise to a point of order. Both statements are unfounded and completely untrue. My appearance on T.V. was quite independent of the election campaign which did not commence until a few weeks later. I appeared on T.V. in response to an invitation received from the particular station in December. The suggested time of appearance in January was not convenient to me as I was absent from Brisbane holidaying with my wife and children who were on school vacation. When the invitation was repeated and when it suited my convenience I went to Sydney and appeared on T.V. My statement regarding Mr. Cahill which was reported in the Press was in reply to several erroneous statements made by that gentleman from the same station a few weeks previously concerning the political crisis that occurred in Queensland in 1957, when the hon. member for Warrego and associate members of the Opposition scabbed on the Labour Government.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—FIFTH ALLOTTED DAY

Debate resumed from 9 September (see p. 236) on Mr. Wordsworth's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Mr. BAXTER (Norman) (11.30 a.m.): Before His Excellency the Governor delivered his Opening Speech, Opposition members hoped to be given some indication of what was going to happen this session, but the Speech was totally bereft of any meat. Like the cupboard, it was bare. It did not even provide substance for thought. So bare was it that the mover of the Address in Reply departed in his speech from the principles of the debate, and the seconder could advance no arguments in support of the policy of the

Government. The reason is not hard to find—the Government have not honoured their promises to the people. They have even created a state of chaos for those they represent, those engaged in private enterprise. By poor administration, they have brought about a situation worse than we have experienced for very many years. They have betrayed the faith reposed in them by the very persons they represent, those engaged in private enterprise. Industry today is experiencing frustration, a lack of confidence in the Government, and its leaders are afraid to undertake further development, despite the statements of the Minister for Labour and Industry. Those who supported the Government at the last election are not as jubilant now as they were when they made their choice. Indeed, it could be said that the Government have completely lost the respect of their supporters.

The Government, through their inability to maintain control of economic factors, have destroyed the economic stability that Queensland has enjoyed for many years under successive Labour Governments. The quickest way to destroy economic stability is to create unemployment and destroy the purchasing value of money, and that is just what the Government have done.

The Premier and his Deputy, during their election campaign of 1957, painted a most glowing picture of conditions that would exist in Queensland if a Country-Liberal Government were returned. Indeed, some of the statements of the Deputy Premier will go down to posterity, statements such as this, "I would like you all to look at the glowing vista of development that lies ahead of Queensland. What can be and must be achieved adds up to a most exhilarating story." It sounds very good. Then he went on to say, "Just think of the unexploited resources of the North and North-West, the glittering mineral wealth awaiting transformation into prosperity for all." What has happened? Queensland has even been deserted by those to whom the Deputy Premier alluded in affectionate terms as "my powerful friends in the Federal sphere who will look after us in Queensland with the advent of a Country-Liberal Government." He said that they would give us money to bring about unheard of employment and development in Queensland. What has happened? This Rip-Van-Winkle toured the Commonwealth and overseas, but he did not know the true situation in Queensland. The only people out of step were those whom the Deputy Premier so affectionately called his colleagues in Canberra—his so-called colleagues who represent Queensland on the basis of five to one against Labour. They did not have sufficient interest in Queensland to assist the State Government in getting a loan for the re-construction of the Mt. Isa line. They voted most emphatically against the allocation of money to Queensland, and in favour of giving it to

Western Australia to expand a portion that is absolutely beyond development and a continuance of a pouring of money into the Snowy Mountain Scheme as a gift, because that is really what it amounts to, and Queensland lost any possible chance of an allocation despite the very pleasing statements of the Deputy Leader of this Government.

Even the Premier himself in his Policy Speech said—

"We pledge ourselves to maintain the 40-hour week, the working week will, in the course of time, be shortened."

He has kept that promise. The working week has been absolutely cut out so far as the unemployed are concerned. They have no working week. Many members of the Government will tell us that there are no unemployed in Queensland, but the Press tells us there is the best part of 1,200 waiting to collect relief. The people in the city who run food kitchens each afternoon will tell us that there are hundreds lining up each afternoon to get food from the kitchens. The Government have failed to maintain full employment without which no State can have economic stability. As it has been said that the value of a country is the value of the land, so it can be said that the prosperity of a country can be measured by the people employed in it. I say most emphatically that the Government have not honoured their promise to the people to provide full employment with the mythical millions that the Deputy Leader said he would pull off the trees with the help of his very good friends in Canberra.

Mr. Davies: They deliberately deceived the electors.

Mr. BAXTER: That is quite true. For a time they were able to pull the wool over the eyes of the people, but today the Deputy Leader does not extend an invitation to the people to look down the glowing vista of development that lies ahead in Queensland. It does not exist. The people to whom he was then speaking were employed; today they are not.

Mr. Davies: He only deceived the minority of the people.

Mr. BAXTER: We have proved that the Government are a minority Government. Nobody can dispute that statement. The electoral returns prove conclusively that hon. members opposite are a minority Government. The glowing vista that the Deputy Leader of the Government spoke about has turned into a mirage.

The Minister for Justice made a public pronouncement that the Government would not abolish price controls. However, he has done everything possible to reduce the purchasing power of the worker's wages. Only recently a statement by him that the Government were quite satisfied with the result of the abolition of price controls was published in "The Courier-Mail." Their satisfaction,

however, is derived only from the fact that their action has brought increased profits to those whom they represent. The worker has had no benefit at all. On the contrary, the abolition of price control has resulted in increased unemployment.

Mr. Dewar: Why?

Mr. BAXTER: Many butcher shops in Brisbane that employed seven men 12 months ago are now employing only three. The hon. member for Chermiside asks, "Why?" He is a Young Liberal; he would not understand. I have given the reason. Working-class people cannot afford to buy as much meat as they did previously, with the result that the butchers cannot employ as many men. In passing, I remind hon. members opposite that a man who loses his job has to wait for three weeks before he can get Social Service benefits.

As I say, the hon. member for Chermiside is a Young Liberal, and Liberals do not change their political colour. During the dark days of the depression a Liberal of the old school, Mrs. Irene Longman, represented Bulimba in this House. What did she say about the workers when the predecessors of hon. members opposite reduced the basic wage? She said, "They can live on a pound of shin beef. They can make soup from it today, and stew from it tomorrow. If they want fruit, let them eat carrots. They are cheaper than apples and oranges." The workers cannot afford apples and oranges today.

I have said that Young Liberals do not change their political colour, and that applies particularly to the hon. member for Kurilpa. He had the audacity in this Chamber only the other day to say that the workers of today were well fed and well clothed. How would he know? He is only a part-time parliamentarian. His main occupation is that of barrister. He appears in court at least two or three days a week, and earns more money there than here.

Hon. members opposite have not changed from the political colour of their predecessors, and in 20 years' time their sons will have the same outlook, that of the English Whigs in the days of Penn.

Mr. Power interjected.

Mr. BAXTER: The hon. member for Baroona would not know the difference. Let him keep quiet because the name of the person I was alluding to is spelt "P-e-n-n", not "P-i-m-m".

The self-same Liberal Government of today that professed to be so very interested in looking after the working-class people took away from them the right to have price control and the grading of meat and created a situation such as we have not seen in Queensland since the black years of 1929 to 1932. Unemployment was bad then but it is almost as bad today. However, the members of the Government would not know.

They are in the Chamber not to represent the people but as a hobby, a sideline, for their own particular business interests. This is where they are trying to get the necessary money to pay their income tax without interfering with their normal outside income. (Government laughter). You can see their actual demeanour when a man like the hon. member for Kurilpa will rise and say that in his opinion the workers are properly fed and properly clothed. It is most unfortunate. That sort of thing is bringing about a feeling among business people that they have made a mistake in putting what was thought to be a businessman's Government into power in Queensland. They have lost all confidence in them and fear the Government are becoming too arrogant and inclined to abuse their authority and power. The worker is the salt of the earth, not big enterprise. The hon. member for Chermiside has interjected. He is one of the biggest industrialists about the place. He is tied up, you know, and not too happy about the Country Party member who said this: "Oh, let us paralyse industry. Stop the industry of the State. We are not interested."

Mr. Dewar: Who said that?

Mr. BAXTER: The hon. member for Fassifern. Then when the hon. member for Warrego queried some of his statements on land, he had the audacity to say this: "We have the numbers. We will do as we like. We do not care what you say about it." What an attitude for a Cabinet Minister to adopt! It is the duty of the Opposition to keep the Government on the straight and narrow path but we cannot keep these on the straight and narrow path because they are power-drunk and quite irresponsible.

Take the statement, "We are going to re-claim an area of land away up on the North Coast." This is not down on the South Coast in the district represented by the hon. member for Southport. He is on the wrong side of the book; he is in the back cover; he is pushed out. So they are going to re-claim some land and develop an area up North. The present occupants of the Treasury benches have a great idea of looking after the assets of the State. They are going to pay £180,000 odd to have a road built with all the side streets and drainage and so forth. But this is what they are really going to do and this is what they have not told the public—another little piece of slick political sales talk. They have not told the people that they are going to give away 500 acres of land to a certain company; but we know. The Surveyor-General's Department has told us that it would be equivalent to five building blocks to the acre, taking into consideration the drainage, shopping centres and everything else, and that will mean 2,500 blocks in all. It is all very well for them to give this gift to the company on a silver platter, as it were, this leasehold land, our children's heritage, and then try to pull the wool over our eyes by saying, "Oh yes, probably it will be

valued at £100." The hon. member for Southport let the cat out of the bag in an interjection when he said, "I will make a guess that it will be closer to between £200 and £300." Apparently the hon. member for Southport made a good guess because Mr. Creighton on a small valuation cruise up there said that the land would be worth around about £2,000 or £3,000.

Mr. Dewar: Per block?

Mr. BAXTER: The Government are pulling the wool over everybody's eyes. Apparently hon. members opposite are going to carry out their policy of giving away the State's heritage by converting the tenure to freehold. If the person who gets the land receives only £500 a block he will make £1,250,000.

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. BAXTER: The hon. member for Merthyr cannot even add up. That is another indication of the type of people occupying the Government benches.

Mr. RAMSDEN: I rise to a point of order. I have not even opened my mouth yet.

Mr. BAXTER: It means that £1,250,000 has been handed to somebody on a silver platter. When a royal commission makes an inquiry some time in the future it will be interesting to find out who is the real beneficiary. The land is in a certain area and has been given to a certain firm. There is another matter that should be recorded. The man who was to get the contract for this road in the first place was notified in the 11 a.m. mail on Friday to call in on Monday morning to finalise the contract. But when he got there he found that over the week-end they had decided that a certain firm should take over, and he was done out of his contract. It is a coincidence that the hon. member for Capricornia came home for the week-end, but that is the type of thing that is going on! The Government are giving away the State's heritage; the land should be there for the benefit of the people. They should not be required to pay any more than £200, £300, or perhaps £400 a block for land up there.

Mr. Dewar: You said £2,000 or £3,000 a little while ago.

Mr. BAXTER: I will say more in a minute. That is how the Lands Department is administered by the hon. member for Fassifern.

Hon. members opposite are very good at political talk on housing. Political salesmanship reigns supreme within their ranks. But what is the real housing position today? When the Treasurer and Minister for Housing took office he rushed in with that pleasant, bland smile of his saying, "Let's get organised in the Housing Commission. We will straighten things out." As an example of his organisation let me refer to

a family in East Brisbane that cannot get a house. There were three adults and two children living in a bedroom and a kitchen-diningroom combined. When they applied to the Housing Commission they were told that there were no houses available for them, that they were not living under hardship conditions and could not get a house, and that they should get a flat. The people have tried to get a flat but they have been turned down by the landlords, who support the Government, because they had children in the family.

Mr. Dewar: Do you think it was any different when your Government were in power?

Mr. BAXTER: I can say without fear of contradiction that the hon. member for Carnarvon and the hon. member for Haughton who administered this department over a period had a very humane approach to this matter. They would have immediately eliminated the hardship being endured by this family and procured accommodation for them. I have no hesitation in saying that the present situation would not operate under the administration of either of those hon. members. Nothing is being done to remedy the present unsatisfactory position. What happens when an applicant applies for a rental home? Although the Government have been in power for two years, and although they promised that adequate provision would be made, the applicants are told that no houses are available. Sometimes when an applicant is going out someone at the end of the counter says, "If you have £250 we will sell you one." The other day a man pulled the £250 out of his pocket and said, "Right, supply me with a house anywhere you like." The reply was, "We will not have one for nine months."

A Government Member: That is wrong.

Mr. BAXTER: It is not wrong. I know the man who said it. He lives in Norman Park. He had the £250 to pay the deposit.

Mr. Ramsden: He was pulling your leg.

Mr. BAXTER: No. There was a witness with him. I only make statements that are correct.

In "The Courier-Mail" of 24 November, 1958, the president of the Real Estate Institute had this to say—

"The increasing numbers of homes and flats made available for renting has relieved the pressure on those people waiting for the cheaper type of dwelling."

Next day a reporter from "The Courier-Mail" made some investigations and he wrote an article which appeared in the newspaper the following week. It reads as follows:—

"Last week I failed to find any sign of the glut of flats claimed to exist in Brisbane by estate agent, Mr. F. E. Jones, in the Fair Rents Court. Five flats I found last week were within the rental I can

afford, but each of the owners refused to let their premises to me when they learned I had a six-months old baby. A self-contained flat advertised for £4 15s. per week: the owner said, 'We only take married couples.'

"A brick flat with two bedrooms advertised at £5 10s. per week, an agent told me, 'I'm sorry. One of the conditions of letting is no children allowed.'

'You have a child—Oh, I see—I'm sorry, we don't allow children,' said the owner of a £5 5s. a week southside flat. Other flats advertised which would have been suitable for a married couple with a child were far beyond the reach of the average wage earner.

"Some were advertised at £7 7s., £8 8s., £10 10s. and even £12 12s."

I have here a further article by Brian Harris of 30 July, 1959. He also conducted a survey, and came to the same conclusion. He said the position is worse now than two years ago, that it is impossible to get flats, that landlords claim rents are too low, and they do not receive an adequate return on capital, that houses are difficult to obtain at a rental of less than £8 a week, that some very poor flats from £3 to £6 a week are available, that more expensive ones are more plentiful, but that houses at less than £7 a week are almost unprocurable. Those are the statements of a "Telegraph" reporter. Despite those comments, the Government still maintain that we enjoy improved conditions, that plenty of houses are available today. The Government are experts in the field of political salesmanship. They evidently went to a good school to acquire that ability.

The Policy Speech delivered by the Deputy Premier in the City Hall on 2 July, 1957, provided further evidence of their ability in political salesmanship. He said, "We will maintain the Housing Commission rental homes for people who require them." He added—

"Housing Commission tenants who desire to purchase the homes they occupy will have the opportunity to do so on a non-profitable basis, deposits to be low enough to enable all people to become home-owners. In certain circumstances the deposit shall be as low as £25."

Tenants of Housing Commission homes have been told by the Commission that as they have been satisfactory tenants for a certain period they may buy the home in which they are living. They are told by the Commission that it will accept as an initial payment the sum of £25, but that in order to make up the full deposit of £250 they will be obliged to pay over and above rental the sum of £1 a week until the difference between £25 and £250 is paid. The rent may be £4 a week. The tenant would then be called on to pay £5 a week. For the period in which that extra payment has to be made the purchasing value of the weekly income of the family is reduced by £1 a week. There is not a family today who can afford to lose £1 a week from

the weekly pay envelope. That is the catch the Deputy Premier did not mention when he said that deposits in certain circumstances would be as low as £25. In saying that he attempted to pull the wool over the eyes of the people. The amount of £25 is virtually a deposit on a deposit. At the moment working class families are compelled to restrict their purchases of meat, and as a consequence the turnover of small butcher shops is falling. I mentioned one butcher shop in which seven people were formerly employed which today employs only three persons. There is an example showing that the Government have not been able to maintain economic stability in Queensland. The Deputy Leader of the Government said that people could buy homes on a non-profiteering basis. That is a very interesting situation which once again proves their political sales ability. I quote particulars relating to a Housing Commission house valued at £3,508. The land is valued at £400 and there is the deposit of £250. Repayments cover 30 years, and the interest rate is 5½ per cent. For that house the monthly instalments would be £17 19s. 9d., or £4 9s. 11d. a week. It is most interesting to note, in view of the Deputy Leader's statement, that the home the tenant purchases for £3,508 on a 30-year basis has actually cost £6,725. It will be seen that the prospective purchaser is paying £2 2s. a week interest. He actually pays £2 7s. 11d. a week in rent plus £2 2s. in interest. In interest he will pay £3,227. If we take a similar case with repayments over 40 years the position is worse.

I quote this extract from a book entitled "Rebuilding Britain—a 20-year plan," by Sir Ernest Simon—

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

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

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

I say again that the Government have not lived up to their obligations according to the speeches of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Government. Unemployment is something that should be viewed with alarm; it should not be spoken of complacently as members of the Government speak of it. Unemployment is breaking the morale of the people, it is bringing about a feeling of frustration and a loss of confidence in industry, and with that state of affairs we cannot get the improvement the State is justly entitled to.

(Time expired.)

Mr. RAMSDEN (Merthyr) (12.9 p.m.): I support the motion of loyalty moved so ably by the hon. member for Mulgrave and seconded by the hon. member for Nundah. The loyalty of the people of Queensland to the Throne has been strengthened by the devotion to duty which has been demonstrated every day by His Excellency the Governor, Sir Henry Abel Smith, since he assumed office as the representative of Her Majesty. Sir Henry's boundless energy in travelling the length and breadth of the State and his personal interest in the people have indeed made them his people and endeared him to every Queenslander who appreciates a job well done, and indirectly has strengthened our allegiance and loyalty to the Throne.

In this centenary year, I believe that our bond with the Throne has been further strengthened by the gracious presence of Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra of Kent, who has accomplished such an excellent and admirable task. Her tour has endeared her to everyone in the State. She came to us as the personal representative of the Queen for our centenary celebrations, and we are all thrilled to know that one so young, so charming, and so natural was chosen to represent the Royal family at our 100th birthday celebrations. Her visit has strengthened immeasurably the allegiance of this State to the Throne, and cemented still further the bond that exists between Queensland, which is only 100 years old, and the Old Country, which is so old in years and tradition. We are indeed grateful to Her Royal Highness for the great pleasure that her visit gave us.

Now that the Royal Visit is over, we turn our thoughts to more mundane matters. In passing, I should like to make reference to the speech made yesterday by my colleague, the hon. member for Buranda. I do not wish to take up very much time on the matter, because what he said was adequate. He made certain remarks about the celebration of V.P. Day by the executive of the Legion of Ex-Service Men and Women, and his speech was reported in today's Press.

Just before I came into the Chamber this morning, one of the senior vice-presidents of the Legion, Mr. Vic Warnes, rang me and said he was very distressed at the accusation by the hon. member for Buranda that he was a Communist. I pointed out to him that he had not been accused of being a Communist.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. RAMSDEN: The howl is coming from hon. members opposite. They will howl more in a moment.

I have known Mr. Warnes for many years and I know that he is not a Communist. At the same time, for many years I have told him that if he hunts with the hounds he cannot howl if he is accused of being one. He told me this morning that Mr. Collins, the President of the Legion, had been called by His Excellency the Governor to Government House last Monday to discuss the matter. He told me also that Mr. Collins

had given His Excellency an assurance that in future V.P. Day will be celebrated in a spiritual way and that all reference to politics will be left out. If that is not a tacit admission that what the hon. member for Buranda said yesterday was correct, I shall resume my seat. I leave the matter at that, because I think the hon. member for Buranda covered it adequately yesterday.

In his Opening Speech, His Excellency spoke about the great development that we in Queensland are entering into in this, our second century. The "knockers" on the other side of the House, true to their self-appointed role of prophets of doom and depression and in the manner of their extreme Left-wing relatives overseas, try to undermine the confidence of the people of this State by decrying it as one of misery, poverty and unemployment. They are completely oblivious of the great facts of this day and generation and ignore the fact that more people are employed in Queensland now than in any other period of our history. They try to create the impression that poverty is rife when in fact most families in the State now enjoy such conveniences as refrigerators, washing machines, and motor-cars. All these are signs of depression, in Labour's view! I point out that the official figure for the new registration of motor vehicles in the State for the year ended 31 December, 1958, was 18,294. There were 376,357 vehicles of all types registered on 31 December, 1958. With a population of 1,417,404 that means that in Queensland there is one motor vehicle to every 3.7 persons, adults and children included. Surely that is a great sign of poverty; it shows just how poverty-stricken we really are! Over the last few weeks the Opposition have refused to accept the truth of our great development. They close their eyes and ears to such news items as one that appeared in "The Courier-Mail" on 6 August, 1959. If they read it they have been remarkably silent about it. If they did not read it, they ignore the facts. The heading was "United Kingdom cash flowing to Australia." The article went on to say—

"More British capital was flowing into Australia than to any other country, a British Government trade official said yesterday. He is the Minister of State for the Board of Trade (Mr. J. K. Vaughan-Morgan) who was speaking at the civic reception given by the Acting Lord Mayor, Alderman Crawford. He said the flow of funds to Australia had brought some of the most important British firms to Queensland. He had learned much about Queensland's ambitions for her future development in the industrial field when the Deputy Premier (Mr. Morris) was in London a year ago with the State Development Mission. Mr. Vaughan-Morgan said Britain was proud to have contributed to Queensland's development over the last century. 'We attach the greatest importance to our trade partnership with Queensland,'

he said. Britain is Queensland's largest market for her exports and Queensland is a valuable market for British goods."

Hon. members opposite totally ignore such developments as the prophesied extension into Queensland of a continental chemical engineering firm, which, it was reported only a few days ago in the Press announcement, will mean an investment of between £3,000,000 and £4,000,000 in the State. All this is a sign of the poverty and misery that hon. members opposite would have us believe that we are suffering. In their role of political Jeremiahs they are crying out poverty when there is no poverty. They close their ears to the words of Mr. Roy Macartney, manager of Television Station BTQ7 reported in "The Courier-Mail" of 8 September. Addressing the Australian Association of National Advertisers Convention at Broadbeach Mr. Macartney said that 5,000 licences for T.V. were issued in Brisbane during August and between 2,300 and 2,400 in the last fortnight. He was confident that the original estimate that 12,000 T.V. sets would be sold by October would be exceeded. He went on to prophesy that at the present rate of progress the saturation point of 200,000 television sets in the area would be reached in two years instead of the original estimate of three years. So much for these Jeremiahs of doom who appear in the House wearing the mantle of misery issued by their political bosses of the Q.C.E.

And what shall be said of the hon. members now on the cross-benches? The hon. member for Baroona, once Lord High Panjandrum of Prices, not able to reconcile his new status of humble back-bencher with his previous position of all-powerful overlord of Queensland industry and commerce, has developed an inferiority complex over price fixing which no psychiatrist will be able to obviate until this Government have been in office for at least another term. By that time he will have seen that he has been whipping a dead horse for many years.

A Government Member: He will not be here.

Mr. RAMSDEN: He will read about it in the paper. He will become adjusted to his present position in the community and will no longer be the irrational person he is now every time he hears the word "prices" mentioned in the chamber.

I do want to clarify the position for hon. members with the same views as the hon. member for Baroona and the Leader of the Opposition who would have us believe that the merchants of the city and State are a bunch of avaricious scoundrels whose one hobby, if it not be prevented by Government action, is to sit down and scheme just how they can put the screws on the consumer for yet another penny and make even greater or more unjustified profit margins than before. If such a picture is correct then one would imagine that these soulless, greedy rascals would meet in secret conclave where none

would see them assemble, and further one would not imagine they would put their innermost secret decisions to paper, decisions which must, if read by others, condemn them for the evil fellows they are. But what is the truth? Who are these men? Who are these Captains of the Retail Trade?

They are the top executives of such firms as Allan & Stark, McDonnell & East, Bayards, Waltons-Sears, F. Tritton Pty. Ltd., Barry & Roberts, Cribb & Foote. In other words they are the executives of the major retailing firms in Brisbane who would, if they so desired, have very little trouble in establishing a price ring which could in practice bleed the public white. But do they? I submit that they do not. I make that submission for the very good reason that they are no secret society of bandits but a group of responsible citizens who realise their responsibility in helping to arrest inflationary trends.

I have with me extracts from copies of the actual minutes of the Retailers' Association of Queensland. I should like to put some of them on record because they give the lie to those who claim that without price control private business and trading goes wildly irresponsible. The following is an extract from the minutes of the meeting of the council of the Retailers' Association of Queensland held on 19 February, 1959—

"The President said that the price decontrol measure effective from the 7th February was the most heartening news ever experienced in the retail trade in Queensland where price control in some form had been in operation since 1921. However every precaution should be taken to ensure that the liberty now gained be retained, and he considered that no action should be taken by the trade which could result in price control being reintroduced. All sections of the trade expressed their views in regard to this matter and it was evident that the trade would support the exercise of caution in the initial stages of decontrol even though there were many anomalies which had previously been referred to the Commissioner of Prices and were not rectified which warranted some immediate action. It was therefore moved that the Association reaffirms its policy that there be no increases in prices at the present time."

The minutes go on—

"In discussing this motion many councillors expressed the view that this decision should not apply in the merchandising of women's fashion shoes, which had been the subject of negotiations with both the Minister for Prices and the Commissioner of Prices since December, 1957, and finally an amendment was moved that the fixation of price on women's fashion shoes be a domestic matter."

It may be asked—Did they salt their minutes? Perhaps one could say they did had I only quoted from one day's minutes, but I shall read minutes of meetings month

after month when the subject of price control came up. The following are the minutes of the meeting of 19 March, 1959:—

"The Secretary reported on action taken with and replies received from Southern supply organisations in connection with the decision of the previous meeting to exercise caution and not to increase prices at the present time. Correspondence from the Brisbane Chamber of Commerce expressed the same views held by the Council and asked for information of the action taken by the Retailers' Association to hold prices. The secretary was instructed to reply to the Chamber of Commerce giving details of the resolution passed on 19 February. The query was raised as to whether the Commissioner of Prices could demand information on items which had become decontrolled. The meeting was informed that while decontrol had been effected the Profiteering Prevention Act still remained, and under the provisions of the Act the Commissioner could demand, and the retailers must supply, any desired information. This was confirmed in a legal opinion obtained by the Association some two years ago."

Mr. Power: Are they not confidential?

Mr. RAMSDEN: There is nothing confidential about the matter. There was no need to make them confidential. They were supplied to me because they knew that I would read them here.

The following are the minutes of the meeting of 30 April:—

"A brief report was submitted regarding price control, and particular attention was drawn to the fact that the recent Basic Wage Declaration revealed that clothing prices had decreased on the "C" Series Index, even though full decontrol was in force since 7 February, 1959.

Some concern was expressed at the movement of footwear, and it was pointed out that the steep increase being experienced in this commodity were as a result of a world-wide shortage of hides which had no connection with the price decontrol issue. Even had prices remained under control, the increases experienced would have occurred. The report was received."

Again on 4 June, when yet another meeting was held the Council noted that the system of watching over unnecessary price rises was working well. It was felt that footwear had reached its peak, and that the position in regard to footwear should be now stabilised.

So much for the Opposition's unbalanced and untrue mental derangements which they have given voice to in the vain and empty hope that if you pump out your evil propaganda often enough and loud enough, eventually you must get some of the people to believe you.

Mr. Aikens: It is easily seen that you do not do the family shopping.

Mr. RAMSDEN: I might not do the family shopping but I pay the family shopping bill. I believe that what I have read from the minutes of the meetings of the Retail Traders' Association gives the lie direct to the allegations made by hon. members opposite who are trying to stir up class hatred. I have given a realistic picture of what actually takes place at meetings of the top executives of the biggest business houses in Queensland, a picture stripped of the mental phantasies of the Leader of the Opposition, who in moving earlier in this session a motion of no confidence in the Government tried to paint a gloomy picture of soaring prices deliberately upsurged by the business houses of the community and urged on by the Government.

Mr. Mann: Don't you believe it?

Mr. Aikens: Is that not so?

Mr. RAMSDEN: I am sorry for those with the intellect of the interjector who asked, "Don't you believe it?", and for the hon. member for Mundingburra who indicates by his incessant chatter that he cannot understand plain facts. I should be wasting time if I endeavoured to convince them of the true position.

The top executives of business houses are responsible men who realise that they have a duty to themselves, to their fellow men and to the State. They are not activated by a class-hate complex, as some hon. members opposite seem to be. They are not men with unbridled tongues and greed complexes so consuming that they will act only in a selfish interest and without due regard for the welfare of the people whose goodwill they must keep if they are to stay in business. Let us look at the matter from a purely selfish viewpoint. Even if they wanted soaring prices under decontrol, what fools they would be while the Profiteering Prevention Act still operates, to adopt such a policy, when they would know that the Government could clamp down on them.

Mr. Davies: By how much has the basic wage risen since you have been in power?

Mr. RAMSDEN: I shall answer that question shortly. The business people to whom I have referred are continuing to control themselves, as a careful consideration of the minutes I have placed on record will show. They are in fact still practising control of prices through their own channels, and indeed they have obtained the co-operation of southern suppliers to this end.

Mr. Shaw, the Secretary of the Association, made available to me files of correspondence between the association and the southern suppliers on price control, and I must tell hon. members that there has been no conspiracy to jack up prices. In every case the writers have expressed concern that there should be no sudden and unjustified price rises which would create further upsets of the price structure. These are the actions of men who, as the Leader of the Opposition

and the hon. member for Baroona, would have us believe are the villains of today, villains, I remind hon. members, who express in their official records their "concern at the movement of footwear".

Mr. POWER: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member has stated that I would lead the people to believe that all in the business community are villains. Never at any time have I expressed that opinion but I do say that some people in industry are continually exploiting the workers by ignoring the principles of price control.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to accept the statement of the hon. member for Baroona.

Mr. RAMSDEN: I accept his statement, although I do not think I can be blamed if I do not understand him in view of the way in which he expresses himself.

Mr. Shaw has told me that the members of the association were very hurt by the statements of the Leader of the Opposition. He said, "We could not have been hurt more by Mr. Duggan if we had not played the game, but we have played the game and we take the opinion expressed by Mr. Duggan to be an outright, downright insult."

I think I have proved to all reasonable men that the top executives of business houses in this State are men of integrity, although I cannot prevent it if some choose to use the same tools as their Leftist friends in order to stir up class hatred and distrust. If they study in Hansard the statements I have made this morning, they will find that they are factual, and cannot be denied.

In answer to an interjection by the hon. member for Maryborough, the House will recall that my colleague, the hon. member for Kurilpa, pointed out early in the debate that the basic wage had risen in the two years following 1950 under Labour rule by £3 17s., whereas in the last two years under this Government the basic wage has risen only £1 2s. The Leader of the Opposition wrongly claimed that this was an all-time record. Under Labour for the two years following October, 1950, the basic wage rose 50.4 per cent., whilst under this Government the basic wage has risen not to an all-time high but by 8.3 per cent. Either the Leader of the Opposition does not understand figures or he is deliberately misleading the people for his own purposes.

I quote the following extract from "The Courier-Mail" of 6 August under the heading of "Retail prices stayed down"—

"Retail prices linked to the "C" series index rose overall by only .1 per cent. during the June quarter of this year.

It was the lowest rise recorded since the March quarter of 1957.

The figures are revealed in a Census and Statistics Bureau bulletin, released today.

The index figures are those which, last month, resulted in no adjustment to the State basic wage.

In the food and groceries section of the index, prices went down by .9 per cent. due mainly to a substantial fall in potato prices during the period.

Clothes up

The bulletin says that there was a "substantial increase" in onions and eggs, but that it was more than outweighed by the potato price fall.

Items in the clothing and footwear group recorded a slight upward movement, but meat prices varied little.

There was an overall decrease in retail prices of .1 per cent. in Toowoomba and .2 per cent in Townsville. Rockhampton prices increased overall by 1 per cent. and those in Bundaberg by .2 per cent.

The weighted average for the five towns—Brisbane, Toowoomba, Rockhampton, Townsville and Bundaberg—resulted in no increase since the March quarter."

Whom are we to believe? The Bureau of Statistics with all the data at its command or the Leader of the Opposition and his Party? They tell a story that they do not believe themselves.

Mr. Hanlon: You are not suggesting that the "C" Series Index covers the normal requirements of a family?

Mr. RAMSDEN: I am glad the hon. member for Ithaca came in on that one because for many years under Labour a false standard regarding the C series index obtained and to prove my point I quote the Government Gazette of Tuesday, 30th June, 1953—

"Maximum Prices—Sales by Retail Traders.

4. Notwithstanding anything contained in Prices Order No. 509, the provisions of the said Order shall not apply to goods of the class and description specified in the first column of the Schedule to this Order, the cost of which exceeds the amount respectively set opposite such goods in the second column of that Schedule applicable to the transaction in question.

Given under my hand, at Brisbane, this twenty-ninth day of June, 1953.

A. T. Fullagar,
Commissioner of Prices."

And then there is a schedule which follows showing the way Labour got round the position. Now the Opposition try to tell us that the "C" Series Index does not give a true indication as to the cost of living.

Mr. Aikens: Will you read us the whole list?

Mr. RAMSDEN: I will do better than that. I will lay this copy of the Queensland Government Gazette on the table of the House so that every hon. member can read it for himself.

(Whereupon the hon. member laid the document on the table.)

Mr. RAMSDEN: I should like to deal further with foodstuffs, but my time is limited. If I find that I have the time, I will revert to that subject.

Mr. Power: How are you getting on with Alderman Buchan now?

Mr. RAMSDEN: It is obvious why it is so hard to drive anything into the skull of the hon. member for Baroona.

I turn my attention now to education. I should like to congratulate the Government on the great advances that have been made in education and the development of schools that has taken place since we became the Government. I believe that there is a need for a new concept of education. Indeed, in these days of automation and technical development there is a great need for a wider and deeper educational system. At one time it was only the professional man who felt the need of a good education. Then the white-collar worker felt the need for it, and now even the labourer who sweeps the streets needs a good education, because, instead of pushing a broom, he drives a huge machine.

I was rather upset at something that I read in the Press some time ago. When the Commonwealth Government decided to reopen the Australian Embassy in Moscow, I read in the Press that in the whole of the Australian diplomatic service there were only three people who could read or write Russian and speak it fluently. I submit that to understand any people we must understand their language. In order to see into the inner recesses of their minds, we must steep ourselves in their literature. That cannot be done well enough through translations; it must be read from the original.

Recently I had the misfortune to spend some time in a hospital at which a large number of New Australians were employed. I got to know them fairly well. They consisted of Germans, Czechs, Latvians, Estonians, Poles, French, Chinese, Italians, and Rumanians, each of whom could read, write, and speak Russian.

Mr. Aikens: You will be accused of being a Comm.

Mr. RAMSDEN: I remind hon. members that—

Mr. Aikens interjected.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member for Mundingburra to cease interrupting so that I can hear what the hon. member for Merthyr is saying.

Mr. RAMSDEN: In land content, Russia covers one-sixth of the area of the world. If we add the lands of the satellite countries behind the Iron Curtain and the countries where the Russian language is spoken and understood, the total becomes staggering. In days gone by a person who could not read Latin and Greek and speak French or German was not regarded as being educated. Today, if we are to understand the depth and

inscrutable beliefs of the Oriental mind, which now threatens the peace of the world, and if we are to comprehend the materialistic philosophy of Russian Communism, which threatens to engulf the democratic life of the free peoples of the world, we must study the language, the history, and the literature of those people until we can see world problems through Russian eyes and Russian minds. Then, and only then, will we be able to understand why it is that they can speak peace in China and invade Hungary; why they can speak peace in Europe and at the same time bring about bloody revolution in Laos.

The Oriental mind of Russia is the great enigma of our age, and we shall never understand it until we make ourselves familiar with its language and steep ourselves in its literature. Then we shall be able to withstand the assaults of this materialistic philosophy and do more to establish world peace, a peace not on Russia's terms but one that Russia cannot afford to destroy. I plead most sincerely for the teaching of Russian in our secondary schools. The need for French, I believe, has passed. The need for Russian has been with us for some time and I do hope that the Government of Queensland will give the lead to the other States of the Commonwealth in what can become a matter of vital importance. Some of the other oriental languages, such as Indonesian, might well be considered in this new approach to education. If we are going to have a virile diplomatic service we must have one which in diplomacy does not depend on interpreters but which is capable of speaking, writing and thinking on equal terms with the top political leaders and negotiators of the U.S.S.R.

Having made that point I shall return, if time will permit, to the subject of foodstuffs prices because I want this to go on record. Since the decontrol of a number of items on 1 August, 1958, and the subsequent lifting of control from a further batch on 2 February, 1959, there have been major retail price increases within a few commodity groupings only, chiefly—biscuits, canned meats, small-goods, and toilet and laundry soaps. These retail increases followed manufacturer or wholesale price rises. In no case was the retail percentage mark-up altered from what had existed under price control.

Mr. Power: Rubbish!

Mr. RAMSDEN: The hon. member can say "rubbish." It is furthermore almost certain that these increases would have occurred even if price control had still been in existence, even if the hon. member for Baroona had still been cracking the whip.

Mr. Aikens: Don't you believe in controlling the manufacturer?

Mr. RAMSDEN: If the hon. member for Mundingburra can tell the Queensland Government how to control the manufacturer who operates his business in Victoria, then I will stand corrected. But let me make this point: price control in effect and in fact is done by

the B.C.C. B.C.C. Stores Pty. Ltd. is the firm that controls grocery prices in Queensland. All goods retailed by the B.C.C. are retailed by it at a price less than that allowed by the Prices Branch. That is a complete answer to the nonsense we hear from the hon. member for Baroona.

Mr. GARDNER (Rockhampton) (12.49 p.m.): At the outset I want to express on behalf of the citizens of Rockhampton that sense of loyalty that I believe is very essential to be extended to the Throne, and at the same time to pass the compliments of the Rockhampton people to His Excellency the Governor and Lady May for the wonderful job they are doing for the State. It is quite true that the Governor has travelled over many parts of Queensland and is thoroughly conversant with many phases of life in the State. The people of Rockhampton and district have been particularly pleased with the number of visits he has paid them.

On behalf of the citizens of Rockhampton, I congratulate the committee that made the necessary arrangements for the visit of Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra of Kent. They showed great enthusiasm and put on a great display of loyalty and did their very best to demonstrate to Her Royal Highness that there were very loyal subjects in that part of the State.

On behalf of the citizens of Rockhampton I extend sincere thanks and express appreciation to the Royal Tour Committee for a job well done.

The Governor's Opening Speech was somewhat disappointing because of its brevity. However by carefully studying the Opening Speech hon. members could read between the lines the significance of its brevity.

As the parliamentary representative for Rockhampton I join with His Excellency in expressing appreciation of the great development that has occurred in the State in 100 years. Particularly do I endorse His Excellency's reference to the early pioneers. Many citizens today, particularly young people, find it very hard to realise the difficulties and hardships experienced by the pioneers.

Much of the State's development stemmed from 40 years of office by State Labour Governments. It is with pride and pleasure that we can look at the great work done over that long period. Labour administration brought improved social and industrial conditions to the people of Queensland, conditions that were unheard of prior to Labour's assumption to office. When Labour first took control of this Assembly away back in those early days conditions for the working man were very unfavourable. When the Labour Government went out of office in 1957 we could look back with pride at the march of progress under 40 years of Labour administration. When it is remembered that that period of 40 years included two world wars and a depression it makes Labour's achievements even more commendable. The people of Queensland should never forget these facts.

They should never forget the toilers and pioneers of the early days who made sacrifices and were prepared to work for the common good to bring about better conditions for the working people throughout the length and breadth of the State. Despite the bitter opposition they encountered in the early days Labour Governments did a great job for the State.

I realise that there are those who are not prepared to concede many concessions to the worker, people who would not be prepared to agree to what was done by Labour Governments over 40 years. But there are many in the community, particularly small wage earners, who realise the great progress that has been made under Labour Governments. I recall my boyhood days. I am fully aware of the great industrial and social reforms that have been made in Queensland.

There are one or two items in the Governor's Opening Speech to which I wish to refer. Reference was made to the letting of a contract for 91 stainless-steel carriages for Brisbane suburban traffic at a cost of £2,000,000, and the purchase of 10 rail-motor trains at a cost of £500,870. I was very disappointed that there was no reference to any purchases for the improvement of the Central or Northern railways. It is true that the bulk of the population is in the metropolitan area, but it is only fair and reasonable that the people of Central Queensland should receive equal treatment. The diesel train from Rockhampton to Brisbane that is supposed to take 16 hours never reaches its destination under 17 or 17½ hours. The time is long overdue for the provision of an air-conditioned train for the Rockhampton service. Steel carriages may be required for the suburban service, but the needs of Central Queensland should receive equal attention. I was also disappointed that no reference was made in the speech to the construction of a new railway station at Rockhampton, the foundation of which was laid in 1929. Thirty years have passed, but no progress has been made.

Mr. Herbert: During how many of those years was Labour in office?

Mr. GARDNER: It is true that criticism can be levelled at past Governments, but I point out that the present Minister stated that the railway station was like a Chinese pagoda. The Central Queensland and Northern railway systems are paying lines. I understand the difficulties encountered in administering the department, but I hope that these urgent needs of Central Queensland are not to be overlooked. It is in the interests of Central Queensland that something should be done. I know that everything is not easy for the Minister in charge of the department who is battling against the menace of road transport. I have read of workshop construction at Redbank and Banyo, but the promises that work would be started in other areas should be carried out. The provision of an air-conditioned train from Rockhampton

would be a great benefit to the people in the Far West. People from Winton travel through Rockhampton to Brisbane but the journey from Rockhampton to Brisbane takes 16 to 18 hours. The train is drawn by diesel engine, but the carriages are 40 to 50 years old. These are matters that warrant earnest consideration by the Minister.

The Federal Government are unfair in their treatment of Queensland. They have tried to sidetrack the Queensland Government on a very vital issue, but it is only in keeping with their attitude towards Queensland when Labour Governments were in office here. I am not impressed by Mr. Menzies' review of the negotiations for the rebuilding of the Mt. Isa line. I am satisfied the Queensland Government have done all in their power to carry on the work started by the Queensland Labour Government. The Government want a loan on the best possible terms for the reconstruction of the Mt. Isa line to keep pace with expansion in industry in that area. Why should the Government have to approach the World Bank for this money? The Federal Government raised the possibility of a loan from the World Bank as a side issue in order to prevent consideration of the real issue, their responsibility to finance projects in Queensland just as they have financed the Snowy River scheme, the Leigh Creek scheme in South Australia and the standard gauge line of 4 ft. 8½ ins. from Albury to Melbourne. Queensland has been treated as a lone wolf. We have to beat the southern octopus, as it were, if we are not to be frustrated at every point.

The Government have acted in a gentlemanly manner, even after the publication of Mr. Menzies' statement. I think it would have been better if they had launched a broad attack on the Federal Government in an effort to secure equitable treatment for Queensland, and the Mt. Isa project.

We have been sidetracked. I am satisfied that a loan from the World Bank will never come to pass, and that the Queensland Government's intention of commencing this work alone will mean that other much needed work will be left undone. The reconstruction of the Mt. Isa line is a tremendous task. Although I compliment the Government on their courage in tackling it, I am not unmindful of the fact that other worthwhile projects will have to be neglected.

The days of the Brisbane Line are gone for ever. Developmental work must be undertaken throughout the State, and funds must be provided. When in Cairns, the Minister for Development in a clear and concise statement expressed his dissatisfaction with the attitude of the Commonwealth Government. The great majority of the people want to know what project is being fostered in this State by the Federal Government. We cannot point a finger to one single project. The Federal Government and particularly southern interests do not seem to realise that the northern part of Australia is Australia's

frontier and bastion. It is territory which stands between Australia and the people who might make an aggressive move towards this country. That fact should be driven home to the Federal authorities. There are approximately 300,000 people north of what is commonly known as the Brisbane Line but that number can go to the wind so far as southern interests are concerned. If war broke out tomorrow there would be no shortage of funds for a war effort. Once more I say that if we can find money in time of war we should find it in times of peace. Developmental work in this State goes begging for the want of help from the Federal Government. Central and Northern Queensland can be developed to the full, and if we are to develop Queensland to the full we shall have to bring in to this State sufficient migrants to make it an economic proposal. As a Queenslander I say that the time has arrived when some sort of a developmental committee should be set up within the State to make strong representations to the Federal authorities to encourage industry in this State with concessions and grants.

When we analyse the composition of the Federal Government we find that of the 124 members in the House of Representatives only four live in the top part of Australia. The top half is the Brisbane Line and it represents about 10 per cent. of the population. Federal Ministers are inclined to sidetrack the issue, but it is interesting to know that in this morning's "The Courier-Mail" Senator Maher, a gentleman who used to be in this Parliament, ridiculed the statement by Mr. Holt on the loan for the reconstruction of the Mt. Isa line. The newspaper article is interesting reading. Whilst he does not agree that the Central Reserve Bank should be used for the project he criticises the attitude of Mr. Holt and the Federal Government on what Mt. Isa means to Queensland in particular and Australia generally. I repeat clearly and emphatically that I appreciate what the State Government intend to do with the reconstruction of the line but I think expenditure in this direction will reduce expenditure on other works in this State. The responsibility for the financial help rests on the shoulders of the Federal Government.

Mr. Mann: Don't you think the project could be financed by the Commonwealth Bank?

Mr. GARDNER: Of course, and there is no need to worry about the World Bank at all. Is it any wonder that people in this State are clamouring for the creation of new States, so as to get away from Canberra control. The potentialities of North and Central Queensland are tremendous and immense development could take place there. Let me remind hon. members that, as in World War II., it is the people in the northern parts of Australia who stand between those in the South and the aggressor.

I was amazed at a recent statement by Sir Arthur Fadden shortly after he had completed many years of service in the Federal Parliament. Speaking at the Banana Festival at Murwillumbah, he is reported in "The Courier-Mail" of 27 August as saying—

"Australian States were too large, and much of them was too far from the seats of government."

I agree. This is what he has said within the last month—

"It was a staggering fact that in the exact northern half of Australia—above the city of Maryborough—fewer than 500,000 people were settled, and in that area there was no permanent seat of government or administration. Australia could not afford to ignore the fact that while many Asian countries were friendly, there was one bloc on the mainland which aimed to dominate both the Pacific and the world."

Sir Arthur Fadden is rather late in the day with that observation. He was in power when a Labour Government of this State made representations to his Government for a better deal for Mt. Isa and Queensland generally. He was one of the hardest Federal Treasurers that the Queensland Labour Government ever had to deal with.

We hear a good deal today about decentralisation, and we cannot blame the people for petitioning for new States. The present State Government are sympathetic; they have promised to hold referendums on the subject. Even the Liberal Party carried a resolution at its recent conference in favour of such a step.

I raise the matter because of the failure of the Federal Government to give Queensland, particularly the central and northern areas, the consideration that it deserves. In this modern age we must look ahead. If we allow ourselves to get into the doldrums by failing to overcome the problems that confront us, some other nation will take over the development of this continent. It will then be too late for us to do anything about it.

Central Queensland has made remarkable progress over the last few years in its potentialities and naturally I am interested. The Fitzroy basin and the Central Highlands have developed enormously. During the last three days articles by Mr. Cornish on the development of the Central Highlands have appeared in "The Courier-Mail". He has spoken in glowing terms of the huge increase in the production of wheat, sorghum and mylo in that area. Many people criticised the development of that area because it was started by a Queensland Labour Government in association with the British Government, but today it has developed into a wonderful grain-growing and cattle-fattening area. This in turn will mean that, in addition to the oil and coal development in the area, we will in due course be faced with the problem of expansion for production in the Dawson

and Callide Valleys. I have advocated in the House, and in outside organisations, the development of a deep-water port for Rockhampton. I am very proud that the Government faced up to their responsibilities and appointed a committee of inquiry into Port Alma. Their report justified my prediction. I said that all we desired was a fair deal and an opportunity to present our case to any committee and success would be assured. I am proud to be able to say that the committee of inquiry agreed with the recommendations and that the Rockhampton people, the Rockhampton City Council and private enterprise were able to co-operate and contribute a substantial amount towards the project. The City Council guaranteed £60,000 and also gave a guarantee on interest and redemption payments on wharf charges when the port is constructed. With another £12,800 privately subscribed, that means £72,800 for the project. I am happy that the Government have approved of a £50,000 loan for the Harbour Board, with a £20,000 subsidy. That is a first step to having the road completed. The Labour Government agreed to the first section of it.

Ampol Petroleum (Q'ld.) Pty. Ltd. showed that the actions of the Harbour Board and the Rockhampton citizens were justified when it decided on a bulk oil installation at Port Alma costing £250,000. It is spending a great deal of money in Rockhampton, too, on its bulk terminal and service stations. That augurs well for a buoyancy of revenue for the Harbour Board and justifies our advocacy to the Government and the Committee of Inquiry. The mere fact that Ampol are prepared to spend a quarter of a million pounds speaks for itself. Thiess Bros. have made application for land—another indication of the faith such organisations have in the area and the possible great development of the Fitzroy Basin in the future. There will be outstanding development once the Nathan Gorge Dam is constructed.

We have done good work for the Longreach-Rockhampton road. It is true that production is useless if the goods cannot get to the ports and the markets. The Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads has arranged for surveys. He has spent a good deal of money on Gogango Range and I hope that the Estimates will contain the wherewithal for the construction work to provide access over the worst parts of the Zamia Range. It will take time but it is worthwhile. We want development and we must have road construction to get the best results from the expenditure.

Mr. Evans: Pilbeam has not helped you much in that.

Mr. GARDNER: I agree with the hon. gentleman, but I am speaking for myself. We have been agitating for some time, but I believe that we are now nearer to the development we want than ever before in our history. If that can be brought about Central Queensland should have the green

light for progress. We cannot always be arguing that nothing is being done. Despite some early disputes with the Government, the Rockhampton people generally have arrived at the satisfactory conclusion that they can give evidence before a committee of what is wanted for the development of the project. I firmly believe that it will come to fruition and be of benefit for all concerned.

In the few minutes I have left, let me express my regret at some of the comments made yesterday about the Queensland Labour Party, particularly by the hon. member for Warrego. I am a Labour man. Because I am a member of the Queensland Labour Party it does not mean that my ideals have changed. I disagree entirely with some of the comments made by the hon. member for Warrego. While he was commenting on the remarks of another speaker, he said that the members of the Queensland Labour Party were a party with no Labour ideals. Of course, this morning's "Courier-Mail" contained a comment by the Leader of the Opposition under the heading of "A Swan Song," referring to the speech made by the hon. member for South Brisbane. The Leader of the Opposition claims in this article that the only effective alternative to the Nicklin-Morris Government is the A.L.P., which is pledged to the basic principles of Labour. I do not think many people outside the Labour movement or inside the Labour movement today would be foolish enough to believe that the disruption in the Labour movement was created and maintained by people who are not acceptable to the great bulk of Australians. I say that emphatically. I would say that the Leader of the Opposition does not believe in the philosophy of Gerry Dawson, Alex Macdonald, Ted Hanson, or any other members of the Communist Party. If he is honest with himself, there is no hon. member amongst them who will not admit that the infiltration tactics were engineered and manoeuvred by the Central Committee of the Communist Party. I know they will not like to hear me say that, but it is true. Yesterday the hon. member for South Brisbane made statements about the A.M.I.E.U. and the A.R.U. in the days of Tim Moroney, George Rymer, and Frank Nolan. There will be no change. Surely hon. members of the Australian Labour Party are not going to tell me that the A.R.U. are any different from what they were in those days!

Mr. Duggan: The Secretary of the D.L.P. in New South Wales—

Mr. GARDNER: I am not worried about the D.L.P., but the Communist Party is crueLLing the Labour movement in this country. A statement was made on 26 May this year when Mr. Duggan and his colleague came back after the Federal Executive meeting that they were going to ban unity tickets. They may have had all the sincerity in the world, but it is no use

passing pious resolutions unless action is taken. Immediately after that two organisations that came into the Labour movement—the A.M.I.E.U. and the A.R.U.—objected to the unity tickets resolution.

Mr. Burrows: The A.M.I.E.U. were in for years.

Mr. GARDNER: Yes, and they were out for years. Mr. Maxwell, who was the Federal candidate for Capricornia, made a statement in the Rockhampton "Bulletin" on 27 May, 1959. He said that his union's policy would not allow politics to support the decision not to allow unity tickets. On 2 June, 1959, a statement appeared in the Press regarding a meeting of the A.R.U. It said—

"The meeting, with one dissentient, opposed outside interference in trade union elections."

The following statement also appeared—

"We believe that no political party has any right over union officials and union ballots, and we will resist with all our force any attack on our democratic rights to elect whatever candidate we so desire no matter to what political party they belong.

We remind the A.L.P. —"

I draw particular attention to this—

"— that the union officials are elected on their ability and not political conviction and are the choice of the rank and file and must be accepted by the Labour movement.

We also believe that the present action of the Federal A.L.P. conference on the question of unity tickets was brought about so as to draw attention away from the controversy aroused by the action of the Federal Parliamentary Labour Party members on the salaries question."

Here are people who are in organisations affiliated with the Labour movement. The rank and file are asking that the Labour movement should have unity. How can unity be achieved if after a Federal resolution is carried officials in Rockhampton and other organisations in Victoria absolutely refuse to carry out the terms of the resolution? The same thing is going on today in the Q.C.E. which was prepared to cut the head off the then Premier and lose the Government over it. Today Bukowski and the A.W.U. are outside the pale of the Labour movement. Bukowski said—and said it emphatically—that the Australian Labour Party was riddled with Communism and sectarianism and was not being run in accordance with the reformist policy of the old Australian Labour Party.

I mention these things because rank-and-file members come to me every day and say, "What are we going to do about it?" The rank and file have never had a chance to have a say since 1956.

Mr. Mann: Do you want to get back?

Mr. GARDNER: I am not particularly anxious to get back and I will not go back while the Communists are there. The last thing I would want to do would be to get back into the Australian Labour Party and be subjected to the dictates of the Communist Party and have Communist policy carried out by the A.L.P.

A.L.P. Members interjected.

Mr. GARDNER: Hon. members cannot deny it.

An A.L.P. Member: You had to apologise.

Mr. GARDNER: I do not have to apologise to anybody. I did not apologise to Bukowski or Egerton. I was prepared to apologise but they sent me out.

An A.L.P. Member: Was Gair on it then?

Mr. GARDNER: So was Duggan. I ask anybody—what advice can you give to the rank-and-file member of the A.W.U.? Bukowski criticises the Australian Labour Party nearly every day. I am not going to worry about that, because the best judgment is that given by the electors. If a good sound case is put to the electors, they will give their judgment. That is the only way in which we will get justice in this country.

(Time expired.)

Mr. CONNOLLY (Kurilpa) (2.46 p.m.): I desire at the outset to associate myself with the expressions of loyalty to the throne and the person of the Sovereign which have come from the proposer of the motion, the hon. member for Mulgrave, and from the seconder, my friend, the hon. member for Nundah. Further, with most hon. members, I desire to pay tribute to the admirable work being done by His Excellency the Governor and his good lady in their official capacities. It is true that the representatives of the Crown have no active part in the administration of modern, democratic parliamentary government, to the extent that the Crown is separated from party politics, but it is equally true that in a detached sense the Queen, her representative in Queensland or the Governor-General exercises a profound influence for good by sage and mature advice.

I think I speak for most hon. members when I say that some tribute should be paid to His Excellency for the liberal hospitality extended by him to us when on occasions we have met under his roof either hon. members opposite or other gentlemen in the community who are separated perhaps in ordinary life by what they conceive to be a lack of communal interest. We find when the exigencies of good manners have us mixing in those circumstances, and this is a valuable lesson to all of us, that we all share much more in common than the points of difference in detail that separate us in politics or other matters.

Many words of appreciation have been spoken in this Chamber about the visit of Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra of Kent. I think it would be sufficient to say that I associate myself with hon. members on both sides of the Chamber who have expressed their appreciation of her visit.

This may well be the last Address in Reply of this Parliament, and to me it seemed not to be inappropriate to look back over the last two years. They have been most eventful years for the Government and their supporters. I thought from my personal viewpoint that I should look at the first words I spoke in this Chamber when I had the privilege of addressing hon. members. I am conscious that it is indeed a privilege to be associated with hon. members on both sides who bring to the deliberations of this Chamber mature views in the interests of those they represent.

When I was first returned, I decided to unburden myself in a way that may have displeased some people of some views I had formed on the administration of the State, and particularly of the law of the State.

Mr. Aikens: And the Liberal Executive pulled you into line over it.

Mr. CONNOLLY: The hon. member is mistaken. If anybody had tried to pull me into line, I would have spoken as forthrightly there as I speak here.

On looking back I find that many of the matters which I thought called for correction have been corrected. I think it is true to say that hon. members will do well to bear in mind that the process of persuading a department of State to a different viewpoint is not an easy matter. It is not easy to change the way in which it carries out its duties. It is a process of attrition. I imagine that every Minister of the Crown does not always find it possible by the simple signing of a memorandum of instruction to persuade those who have done business in a certain way for 10 or 20 years to change their ways. I feel at liberty to observe here today that there is still room for improvement in certain respects in the way in which departments carry out their duties. I am referring, of course, to the legal aspects of the matter.

Mr. Davies interjected.

Mr. CONNOLLY: It is difficult to get plain English into the mind of the hon. member. I said that I appreciated how difficult it was. If we had somebody of the calibre of the hon. member in the chair it would take him many a long day to change his views. It is more than a matter of saying to the under-secretary of a department, "I should like the department to do this." I see the Leader of the Opposition smiling; he does so because he knows that what I am saying is correct. For a Minister to change the attitude of the department he has to give his direction about 15 times and, to use a colloquialism, put on a turn.

I have drawn attention to the way in which conduct of the Crown in the courts has been vastly improved, but there is one matter which excites my attention and I commend it to the Attorney-General. It is whether it is necessary when an inferior tribunal like the Industrial Court—and I want hon. members to understand by that expression I mean a tribunal not of the standing of the Supreme Court—is challenged in the courts for that court to retain counsel to say, "We were right and you are not complaining justly." Is it not a little beneath the dignity of the members of the court to retain counsel to say that the court's decision is right?

Mr. Aikens: The Railway Appeal Court did that the other day.

Mr. CONNOLLY: I know. I was instructed to appear.

Mr. Aikens: Did it lose the case?

Mr. CONNOLLY: It did. It was entirely wrong about the point from the beginning. I was instructed to appear for it and in the exercise of my duty I did. I am delighted it lost. However, let us get down to common sense. Is it desirable that members of the Industrial Court should instruct the Crown to retain counsel to appear and argue over the correctness of its decision when there is already a party appearing before the Supreme Court arguing in that sense anyway? One party persuades the Industrial Court to make a decision along certain lines. The other party is aggrieved and obtains an order nisi for a writ of certiorari so that the matter is brought before the Supreme Court. It is desirable, of course, that the Supreme Court hear both sides of the question, but why does the Industrial Court have to go along to the Supreme Court by separate counsel at considerable public expense and press for the correctness of its decision?

Mr. Burrows interjected.

Mr. CONNOLLY: That is not a valid reason. As the hon. member probably knows, a judge of the Supreme Court presided over the original hearing, because the President of the Industrial Court is also a judge of the Supreme Court. There should be a feeling in the public mind that once a court determines a matter, it has finished with it and is no longer concerned with the correctness of its decision.

Mr. Aikens: Are you referring to the case in which the A.W.U. took the Industrial Court before the Full Court?

Mr. CONNOLLY: I should prefer not to refer to any specific case. It has occurred on a number of occasions. We must look at this matter from the point of view, not of people informed on the law but of the general public. It is quite wrong that they should believe that any court is bound up with its decisions and wants to be right.

Mr. Aikens: The Industrial Court feels that it is divinely appointed and celestially anointed.

Mr. CONNOLLY: No court can be right all the time. The Supreme Court itself is held by the High Court to be wrong about a dozen times a year, and the High Court is frequently over-ruled by the Privy Council. Courts are composed of human beings and, like anybody else, they can go wrong. All judges adopt this attitude: "I have given the matter my best consideration. If I am wrong, I should like to be corrected."

Mr. Hiley: If the court intervenes with its own counsel, doesn't it expose itself to the hazard of costs?

Mr. CONNOLLY: In my view, which is well supported by authority, it does. There could be no more unseemly a spectacle than having members of a judicial tribunal ordered to pay someone else's costs because they argued unnecessarily.

I do not want to labour the point. I have said in the past that this attitude has stemmed from a feeling in some quarters that the Crown can do no wrong, and that it is incumbent on the officers of the Crown to close the ranks in an effort to prove that the Crown and its instrumentalities are always right. If errors are made in the field of public administration, it should be everybody's desire to have the matter ventilated and wrongs redressed.

I have in the past made some observations about the Statute Book. Two years is not a very long time, and I think all hon. members will agree that since this Government took office the parliamentary sessions have been heavy. And on this occasion we are promised, at least by the newspapers, another heavy session. We all know that a great deal of work has to be done behind the scenes before any legislation is brought before the Chamber, but there are still a couple of matters that cry out for legislative reform. I have spoken of them before, and I venture to do so again. Maybe it is impossible to do anything about it during the current session, but it cannot be allowed to continue much longer. I refer to the law relating to the resumption of property in the State and the compensation that is payable for it. I have observed in the past that we have some very bad legislation on the statute book—very unfair legislation—which cannot be supported in terms of propriety by anybody. The Public Works Land Resumption Act is the principal statute that provides for the resumption of land and for the payment of compensation. I do not want to weary hon. members with details of the provisions of the statute, but, broadly, they run along these lines: you must make the claim within a certain period. I think under that Act it is a year. It has been varied up and down for years, but I think at present it is stable at a year. This is the part I object to: if you do not make the claim within a year your claim is absolutely barred. Your property passes to the Crown but your claim is absolutely barred. The reply of the Ministry, or of the administrators who stand behind and

advise the Ministry, is, of course, always, "We would not do anything really as naughty as that. It is barred in point of law, but we would make an ex-gratia payment. We would give you what we think the land is worth." In common fairness, the administrator has his view and the citizen has his view of what it is worth. The true value might be expected to lie somewhere in the middle. In other words, you are at the mercy of the administration if you do not make your claim within a year. That is bad enough but this iniquitous statute goes on with further provisions.

Mr. Duggan: Before you make your second point—can you advance any reason why the claim should not be submitted within the period of 12 months?

Mr. CONNOLLY: No, I do not suggest for a moment that there is any reason why the claim should not be submitted within a limited period. It is very much to the disadvantage of the parties for claims to be lying dormant for many years.

Mr. Aikens: It is worse than that. You must notify the Land Court within 60 days.

Mr. CONNOLLY: All right. Let me tell you about this. The hon. member is spoiling everything. I agree that the claim should be made within a limited period, but it ought to be in the discretion of the court to say, "If you make your claim after a year it is in our discretion whether we will hear it or not." If you have made it after 20 years and the unfortunate department says, "We can no longer really amass any evidence to answer this claim because it is all dead and gone. We no longer have any evidence", perhaps the court might say, "We will consider your claim statute-barred." There ought to be a discretion. At present the court has no discretion.

Mr. Power: Do you know of any cases where the court had declared a claim statute-barred?

Mr. CONNOLLY: Yes, I do. The department will always pay something. I would not suggest for a moment that any Government Department in Queensland, or any Minister, would be so unprincipled as to say, "Your claim is statute-barred; you do not get a penny." They pay you what they think. I know at least one Minister—I think it is the Minister present in the House at the moment—who has said, "It is perfectly true that the claim is statute-barred but I will allow an arbitrator to declare the true value." With all respect to the Minister I say it ought not to be in the discretion of any Minister alone. It ought not to be in the discretion of the Administration. You ought to have the right to go to the court. I want to develop this a little. That is the first step; you must make your claim within a year. You having made your claim, the department then has some period of time in which to make you an offer. Let us say it is 30 days. I forget

the exact period. Having received the department's offer, pursuant to the Act you are required to say within so many days—let us say another 30, quite a limited period, might be 60—

Mr. Aikens: Sixty days.

Mr. CONNOLLY: I thank the hon. member. You are required to say within that time whether you accept the offer or not. Now here is the rub. If you fail by one day to answer the department's offer within the limited time stipulated in the Act, your claim is absolutely barred.

Mr. Aikens: Absolutely.

Mr. CONNOLLY: That is just silly. You having rejected the department's offer, as you may do as a citizen, your next move is to institute proceedings in the Land Court. That you must do within, I think, another 60 days, and even at the stage where both sides know of the existence of the claim and are getting their cases ready for trial—nobody is misled; nobody is in the dark about it—if you do not file your papers in the Land Court within 60 days, again your claim is absolutely barred. That situation is not tolerable or acceptable in a civilised community. That is bad enough, but many of the departments, for reasons I do not pretend to understand, even though the Public Works Land Resumption Act is sufficiently wide to cover resumptions by any public authority, have passed special Acts for themselves. I think the Co-Ordinator-General has laid down a period of three months within which to make a claim. If you are a small country solicitor of limited experience, not accustomed to resumption matters, you have a vague idea that the time for making a claim is a year. You might say to your client, "We will get our evidence together and make our claim. We have a year to put it in." But you find that you are nine months out of time because the resumption was made under the Co-Ordinator-General's Act. At least four or five other Government departments have written special provisions for themselves in relation to resumptions, into their own Acts. You need to be an expert in this field of the law.

Mr. Power: Does not the notice of resumption say under which Act the resumption has been made?

Mr. CONNOLLY: It may.

Mr. Power: The solicitor should read it.

Mr. CONNOLLY: It may. It is all very well for the hon. member for Baroona to voice his dislike of the legal profession like that, but very often a client comes in on market day and says to his solicitor, "By the way, Jack, the department says that they are going to resume a bit of land." The solicitor asks, "Where is the resumption notice?" The client might say, "The wife has it" or something else—in any case he does not produce it.

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Mr. Power: The solicitor should ask him to send it in.

Mr. CONNOLLY: There is the departmental mind speaking. Is there any hon. member in the Chamber, including the hon. member for Baroona, who does not make mistakes? What we need is a provision under which the court could say, "An honest mistake has been made here; nobody has been prejudiced and we will extend the time."

Mr. Hiley: Is not the answer a single resumption code and a single code for all claims against the Crown?

Mr. CONNOLLY: Yes, it is. I hope that in the early life of the next Parliament it will be possible to introduce a single comprehensive simple compensation and resumption Act that will give a discretion in appropriate cases to excuse the mistakes of people who make them.

Mr. Davies: We are prepared to give the matter consideration.

Mr. CONNOLLY: I am addressing myself to the entire Chamber. If by any extremely fortuitous change of circumstances in their favour hon. members opposite were over here I hope that they will remember what I have said and introduce such legislation.

I am not suggesting for a moment that anything can be done in the life of the present Parliament but I urge the responsible Minister to consider whether the Common Law freedom of contract is not in some respects being abused in the century in which we live. If A and B have agreed together for a good consideration upon something, the court says, "We will enforce it because they contracted on relatively equal terms." If A does not want to contract he does not have to; the same with B. There are many respects in which that is no longer true. If you wanted to fly to Maryborough or Bundaberg at one time you could only fly by one airline company. Usually passengers buy tickets at the last moment and I do not suppose one in a hundred reads the printed words on the back of them. On the ticket issued by one of the companies you firmly bind yourself that no matter how negligent the company may be in dealing with your personal property you have no claim against it.

Mr. Aikens: Would that stand in law?

Mr. CONNOLLY: Yes, it would. It was decided before Mr. Justice Sheehy well over five years ago in a case in which a young woman was driven from the airline office to the aerodrome in a coach which was the property of the company. The coach was negligently driven and she was injured. It was held that she could recover nothing because she had contracted that the company would not be responsible for its negligence. A seventeenth- or eighteenth-century lawyer would say that she was free to do what she chose. But modern life is so complex that

we are not free. When we fly somewhere we do so because we have to get there in a certain time. We go by plane because it is the only way in which we can get there in the time at our disposal. If this is just you must take a calculated risk. Shall I allow them to carry me at my risk even though they may be proved to be guilty of negligence? Ought people or corporations be permitted to contract themselves out of an obligation in that way? I think not. I do not think, by my own unaided efforts that I can advance the entire answer. But these matters are worthy of investigation. I do think that the citizen is called upon to sign a vast number of papers which are carefully prepared by corporations who are selling goods and carrying passengers to exempt them from the incidence of their common law liability to an extent that is not desirable. Take insurance. Some insurance companies are extremely honourable and do not avail themselves of their rights. In many policies, it is provided that a claim must be made within three days, but the company with which I insure has honoured a number of my claims which were out of time. There are companies—perhaps those who deal with the worst risks—who will take any point. Hon. members may wonder why they do not hear of these cases in the newspapers. That is because there is in many of these policies an undesirable provision written into common form contracts in small type on the back and that is called the Scott v. Avery clause which says you simply cannot go to the court until you have gone to arbitration, that is, private arbitration. That means that the insurance company does not have to suffer the public obloquy of taking the nasty mean points, because it takes them in some private arbitrator's room. The Scott v. Avery clause has stood the test in courts. I very much question whether the clause should not be excluded entirely by legislation from all contracts in this State. I advance that thought for serious consideration by those whose responsibility it is to consider and initiate such matters.

When a person has to store goods, he usually has to store them in a hurry. Take the case of a bank clerk who is transferred to another town where he cannot immediately find accommodation. He decides to store his goods at one of the well known warehouses. He rings the warehouse and asks whether it can take them. He is told they can be taken and he packs his goods. Probably on the day he is leaving the van calls to pick up his goods and he is asked to sign a long document containing a good deal of small print. He signs the document without reading it. Then something goes wrong and he finds that the warehouse has contracted out of liability for negligence in the storing and handling of his goods, and that in any case the amount for which it is liable is merely an amount such as £5 or £10 per package.

I pose to hon. members the question whether people should be allowed to carry on the business of general warehousing on

the basis that they can contract themselves out of liability by including in contracts clauses in small type when frequently the people signing them do not know what they have done. Should warehouses be allowed to do that?

Mr. Power interjected.

Mr. CONNOLLY: It has been going on for years in this State. It is not something that has come about since 1957. I am not advancing my views in any political sense at all, but merely as a general matter of law reform. Broadly speaking, I cannot help thinking that there is room in Queensland for a permanent body to consider law reform, a body to go wider than the departmental attitude.

Mr. Aikens: Including the Criminal Code.

Mr. CONNOLLY: I think there is room for a body that would sit more or less permanently to consider questions raised by one of its members, a member of the public, or by a professional body. I suggest it should consist of members of the bench, both branches of my profession, officers of the Department of Justice, of course, and officers from the Parliamentary drafting staff.

I should like to see the setting up of a permanent Law Reform Committee to which any of us could take a point which appeared to be worthy of investigation.

My professional training is against the thought that because something excites my attention I necessarily have the answer to it. I do not think in that way for a moment, but I do believe that these matters are worthy of serious attention.

I have almost exhausted the time available to me, but before concluding, I think I should say that my attention has been directed by my friends to the fact that I have had the fortune or misfortune to figure on the front page of a newspaper. I would have been highly flattered at this attention to one so insignificant had it not been for the fact that on examination I found it was the latest issue of the official organ of the unfortunate hon. members who sit opposite. The reference is to the observation I made in the course of the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition to the Address in Reply.

Mr. Davies: At least you are stating your mind.

Mr. CONNOLLY: Let me make plain what my mind is because I hope that of all the things of which I may legitimately be accused, and there are many, the practice of not making plain what I mean is not amongst them. The view of the Liberal Party as I understand it, and it is certainly my view—

Mr. Aikens: With reservations.

Mr. CONNOLLY: With no reservations, that the fruits of the post-war prosperity in this country should be and indeed are being distributed more widely amongst the whole of the population.

The wider and wider distribution of profits from commerce and industry is a desirable objective and one to which we on this side are pledged. We believe that in those profits we should all share, and by that I mean, the whole community should share in the prosperity. The article was headed, "The worker is getting enough." That is not my attitude. I have said that the wage in Queensland is £18 or £19 a week and that under those circumstances it would be rank dishonesty and hypocrisy to say that our people were in a parlous plight. The Industrial Court is doing its job and striving energetically to relate wages to the needs of the community.

Mr. Hanlon: You mean that the average wage is £18 or £19, but not the wage of the big proportion of the people?

Mr. CONNOLLY: The average wage.

Mr. Hanlon: You did not say that before.

Mr. CONNOLLY: The average wage is £18 or £19.

Mr. Hanlon: That is not much help to the man on £13.

Mr. CONNOLLY: The average wage, statistically, is earned by most workers.

Mr. Aikens: No, it is not. You might be a good lawyer but you are a poor mathematician.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. CONNOLLY: It is my duty to emphasise, as a loyal member of the Liberal Party that it is our belief and objective to distribute the fruit of our prosperity as widely as possible among every member of our community.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba) (3.23 p.m.): I associate myself with speeches of other hon. members in expressing our loyalty to Her Majesty. I pay a tribute to the wonderful job done by Princess Alexandra of Kent during her recent visit to this State. We have never had a better ambassador for the State. The way she carried out her task won her the admiration of all. I associate myself with public gratitude for the way she carried out her duties.

With the hon. member for Southport I regret that the Princess was not given the opportunity of visiting the South Coast and I think the reason why she was not is tied up in some way with the desire to publicise the beauties of the North Coast. By being denied a visit to the South Coast, on her return to England she will not be able to speak of the beauties of the South Coast. The hon. member for Southport said that he would like to know the reason and I think that the reason is in my statement.

It is to be regretted that the Government Printer, or whoever was responsible, did not allow employees of the Government Printing Office to go down the street and pay their respects to the Princess when she was passing

through Brisbane. Personally I cannot understand the attitude of any departmental officer or member of the Government making any rule which would debar a member of the staff from witnessing the Princess's progress through the streets. I strongly protest against the action of whoever was responsible for denying the employees in the Government Printing Office the opportunity of watching the Royal Progress. I believe that they were told they could watch it through the windows of the building, but such a suggestion is ridiculous. There are only a few windows in the building, and if everyone had tried to look through them there could easily have been a serious accident. It is farcical when, on the one hand, the Government say to the people, "We want you to wave the flag for the Princess," and, on the other, somebody refuses the employees in a Government department the opportunity to do so.

Before I deal with the main subject matter of my speech, it is necessary for me to reply to some of the statements that have been made by Q.L.P. speakers during the course of the debate, particularly the personal explanation that was given this morning by the hon. member for South Brisbane. He said that he appeared on television in Sydney only by invitation. Why did he appear at all? It is apparent that the hon. member for Barooka was opposed to it, so that before the hon. member for South Brisbane went to Sydney it must have been well known that he intended to speak against the New South Wales Labour Government. It is ridiculous for the hon. member for South Brisbane to assert that he knew nothing about the election, because the hon. member for Barooka has told us that he opposed—

Mr. POWER: I rise to a point of order. I make it quite clear that I had no knowledge beforehand of the visit to New South Wales by the hon. member for South Brisbane. I do not know what the hon. member for Bulimba is driving at.

Mr. HOUSTON: I accept the hon. member's denial. I would not expect him to do anything else but deny what I have said.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Barooka made an explanation. He did not deny the truth of anything that was said.

Mr. HOUSTON: I accept his explanation. It is obvious that the television company who engaged the hon. member for South Brisbane thought so little of his appearance that the engagement has not been renewed. It was the hon. member's first and last appearance on television.

I refer now to the wrangling by Q.L.P. members on the subject of unity. Who wants this unity? There is complete unity in the ranks of the Australian Labour Party. It is only those outside our ranks who are continually crying out for unity. They want us to take them back for the very good reason

that unless we do, they know they are finished. The next election will show the truth of that statement. They think that if in some way they can convince the people that they should be with us, they might last just a little longer.

Members of the Queensland Labour Party accuse us of being Communists, but just prior to the general election in May, 1946, the hon. member for South Brisbane, who was then the Premier of this State, made a broadcast over Station 4KQ in which he said—

"The purpose of my talk tonight is to emphasise in concise form the issues that face the electors of Queensland in the impending election on May 19. Our opponents have sought to cloud those issues by irrelevancies couched in the double-talk with which they seek to confuse the electors.

"In the first place, they are up to their old tricks in trying to stampede you with the bogey of Socialism. With an unscrupulous and complete disregard for political decency they seek to make you believe that the Labour Party is hand in glove with the Communists. They tell you with unctuous tones, shedding crocodile tears, that the Labour Party of today is not the party it used to be, that we have ceased to be the great democratic party of 40 years ago.

I submit that you, as intelligent people, will not be deceived by such transparent humbug. The political forebears of our opponents, the Tories of 40 or 50 years ago, were just as vicious and splenetic in their attacks on the Labour Party then as the Tories are today.

The truth is, of course, that an unbridgeable gulf divides the political concepts which are the basis of Labour's philosophy and the alien creed of Communism. No one is more bitterly opposed than I am to Communism; no one has fought it more steadfastly. No less a witness than the Prime Minister himself, Robert Gordon Menzies, has testified that the Labour Party is no more Communist than he is."

That was the idea of the hon. member for South Brisbane in 1956 and today the set-up of the Australian Labour Party is no different except that a few of its members have left.

Mr. Gair: A lot of people have come into it who were not formerly in it.

Mr. HOUSTON: Only one union has come into the movement. It was a movement that they supported. I have heard the hon. member for South Brisbane himself say to the railway men, "You railway men, you supporters of the Australian Labour Party." They were his utterances in 1956 and in the years before that; but it suits him to change. Within 12 months of making the statements I read—which he has not refuted; he supported them and said they were true—within 12 months he is crying that we are Communists. In fact it got so bad that people

were wandering around the place lifting up stones and trying to find a Communist underneath each one. The hon. member for South Brisbane became so worked up by statements of this sort that he started to believe them himself. He mentioned the Secretary of the A.R.U. He was a great member of the Australian Labour Party for years. The Secretary has been a member of the A.L.P. since the 1920s, but it has taken the hon. member for South Brisbane a long time to cry out that he is a Communist. Why did he not say it in the late 1920s or the 1930s? It has taken him till now when he thinks he is going to gain political capital. The Q.L.P. are on the way out and they are trying any political trick whatever to cash in.

The hon. member for Bundaberg, when he was asked a question about the preference voting in the Federal elections, said, "I voted. I pleased myself." He did not come in and say he supported the anti-Labour parties; he is too cunning for that. I might even go as far as to say that he may have given his preference to Labour. I do not say he did, but he might have. He did not commit himself. But the hon. member for South Brisbane left no doubt at all. He said that he had given his preference to the anti-Labour parties. Menzies has not changed in the last few years and only two or three years ago the hon. gentleman was calling Menzies everything under the sun. If they really wanted unity the first thing they would have said was, "We know there are a couple of you whom perhaps we cannot get on with; we know there are a couple there who just do not meet the bill but we will show our sincerity and at least get a Labour Government in office." But no, what did they do? They voted against the Labour Government. It was not the defeat of the Australian Labour Party Government they were concerned about so much as the carrying out of a personal vendetta against members of the A.L.P. We will wait and see who else is going to try to get on the band wagon of unity. We do not want that kind of people trying to tell the fair-dinkum members of the Australian Labour Party what to do. If the hon. gentleman wants any further evidence of how they have declined let him have a look at the figures of the State election and the Council election. If he is still not satisfied let him look at the A.L.P. figures in Victoria. Every election the A.L.P. vote is improving and the D.L.P. vote is going down. Only a fortnight ago the local authority elections in Melbourne gave an overwhelming result in favour of the A.L.P. with the annihilation of the opponents of Labour which, incidentally, included quite a few Liberal candidates who lost their deposits.

I am sorry that the Minister in charge of police is not in the Chamber at the moment but I hope what I have to say will be passed on to him. I would ask the Minister to give consideration to providing suburban police stations with cars. In my electorate the Bulimba police station has a large area to cover. Fortunately we do not have any

criminal trouble in the area, probably firstly because of the type of people we have living there and secondly the very good job the police are doing. But I do think that a car should be made available to the police. It would be a great boon, not only for the comfort of the police themselves, but also for the comfort of those they have to take to the station for interviews. At present they have a motor-bike and sidecar and have to convey people to the station in the sidecar. I do not say they should be given a Fordomatic, but perhaps a Holden would be suitable for the purpose. They need a car that can be used on country roads.

I suggest that policemen be used on point duty for longer periods. At Woolloongabba and Normanby particularly, at all times throughout the day traffic hazards are created through poor or incorrect interpretation of the right-of-way rule. Wherever there is a five-way crossing you find that everybody stops. Everyone is trying to do the right thing. Finally, one motorist shoots ahead at the same time as a second motorist, with a consequent near-miss. With a policeman on point duty that would not occur.

It will not mean the employment of more police. A policeman is always standing on the corner. Why not have them directing the traffic. I know that the period on traffic duty is laid down, but relief should be provided. Woolloongabba and Normanby are two of the main places which I have in mind.

Another matter to which I invite the attention of the Government is the provision relating to the re-engagement of ex-policemen who are over 30 years of age. The Minister is aware of the case with which I am concerned. At present, if a man has been in the Force for 15 years and owing to circumstances resigns, and then applies for re-engagement a few years afterwards his application is rejected on the grounds that he is over 30 years of age. That is a waste of efficient manpower. For instance a tradesman or a motor mechanic who ceases to carry on his trade and conducts a shop for some time and then goes back to his trade is not regarded as being no longer a tradesman. I urge the Minister to give further consideration to the case I brought under his notice and to similar cases. Let us be realistic and interpret the law on the basis that a man's ability is not solely judged on his age.

The hon. member for Norman gave a very fine address on the matter of housing and I shall not cover that ground again. I do wish to refer to the lack of housing in the areas on the south side of the Brisbane River which include Bulimba, Norman and Wynnum. There are a number of industries in those areas where many people are employed. Every time a young couple applies for a home they are sent to Inala. That is ridiculous. There are large areas of land owned by private enterprise in the areas to which I refer. Surely it could be resumed in order to build homes for the

people who are engaged in that area. It is essential that homes should be provided within reasonable distance of these industries in order to reduce transport costs and travelling time.

Mr. Windsor: If you have them too close they will get the fumes from industry.

Mr. HOUSTON: If the hon. member knew the areas to which I referred he would not have made such a silly statement. All the fumes are in the Valley area. There are no fumes on the south side.

Mr. Windsor: There is only the river separating those areas.

Mr. HOUSTON: The fumes to which the hon. member refers are from the oil companies. If houses were built two miles from the meatworks, the residents would not be affected in any way by fumes. Some of the resting paddocks could be developed for housing. Many resting paddocks are needed for cattle awaiting slaughter, but there are other paddocks that are used only during industrial trouble at the meatworks. In other words graziers and others who bring cattle to the meatworks are retaining those paddocks for use in times of industrial trouble. There is no reason why in those circumstances the cattle could not be held in areas further from the meatworks. The ground could be used as a housing estate, the houses to be occupied by employees in that industry. I do not suggest that the whole area could be used in that way, but the building of 400 or 500 homes would be of great benefit to employees at the meatworks and other local industries.

The hon. member for Fortitude Valley brought up the subject of smells. I am sorry the Treasurer has left the Chamber, because on another occasion I referred to the smell at Doboy Creek. I suggested 12 months ago that an officer of the department make a report on the smell from Doboy Creek. Today the smell is worse than ever. Apparently the officer was not prepared to go right to Doboy Creek for the purpose of examining the cause of that smell.

Mr. Windsor: I did not mention smells. I referred to fumes.

Mr. HOUSTON: I am sorry. To return to my point about smells, on behalf of the people of the Murrarie and Tingalpa area I ask that an officer of the Department of Harbours and Marine be sent to Doboy Creek for the purpose of reporting on the cause of the smell there. I will never know how the residents of the area are able to put up with it.

I shall now deal with my main point, the transfer of land to the Brisbane City Council by trustees of a school of arts. The Morning-side School of Arts is a typical example to illustrate my point. The trustees were very keen to improve library facilities for the people of the area. They approached the task in the correct way. They got in touch with the City Council which has a very good

library set-up and asked for its assistance. After negotiations the City Council intimated that it was prepared to provide its own building, library facilities and employees if the trustees could make available an area of ground adjacent to the School of Arts building. They were prepared to do that, and all parties were happy about the arrangements. They agreed to hand over part of the School of Arts reserve. But there is a catch. At the present time the trustees can borrow money, or in other words mortgage their ground and building for the purpose of maintaining the public hall and the other public facilities, but immediately they hand over some of the ground for a public library the Land Administration Board takes the view that it is no longer a School of Arts. Surely the library is included in the category of arts as there are many other features that could be similarly classified! The hall is used for dancing classes, by youth clubs and as a meeting room, as well as being used for concerts and similar activities. It is the only hall for public use in the area.

The Act should be amended or administered realistically so that, if part of a School of Arts reserve is handed over to the City Council so that the Council can build a public library on that ground, the balance of the land and building will be held by the trustees on the same conditions as the land and building were held prior to part of the land being given to the City Council for a library. To me, that is a common-sense approach, and does not interfere with anybody. The only difference is that it gives the trustees a chance to obtain money for further work in the area. The work has been brought about by the advent of sewerage into the district. At present there are the ordinary earth closets with which the trustees have had considerable trouble because of visits by larrikins from other areas. As sewerage is now available it will be necessary for the School of Arts Committee to get about £2,700 for the erection of the toilets and to give the building a decent face lift. This expenditure will be a sound investment and all that is required is the authority to use the grounds as security. I shall not go into the matter in any more detail, but if the Minister concerned would care to take an interest in it I have the details to substantiate my statement. A letter was sent to the Land Administration Board by the trustees on 9 July, 1959, asking for the procedure to be adopted. The reply by the Board on 31 August, 1959, contains the following peculiar wording—

“With regard to the mortgaging of the reserve, I have to forward herewith a form of application for liberty to mortgage the trust grant and to inform you that if the above action is taken, the Reserve for Recreation would not be available as a security under a mortgage. It would not be possible to surrender an

area as proposed for library purposes and retain the balance in trust for School of Arts purposes.”

If the trustees fill the form in they will not be able to put their plans into execution. I trust that the Minister will investigate the position and have the matter put right.

In my last two Address in Reply speeches I referred to technical education and perhaps the Minister might be getting a little tired of hearing me on the subject. It is one that has to be dealt with, and I know that the Minister appreciates my thoughts on it. The time is overdue for a look at our technical education system through a new set of eyes. I suggest that a committee be set up comprised of personnel from various walks of life to investigate the technical education set-up in this State. At the present time we are getting nowhere very fast; conditions today are little different from what they were years ago. We have made only little progress over the past few years. Men from industry and commerce, members of the trade-union movement, and technical teaching staff should be invited to form a committee to look into the whole question. As I said before, it is ridiculous to have a Technical Education Branch of the Education Department while the principal of the main technical college—the Central Technical College—is an academic man. I have nothing against the principal personally, but we should be able to get a more suitable man as principal of our main technical college.

I could deal with other anomalies and shortcomings associated with buildings, equipment, and the apprenticeship system, but time does not permit. The only way to tackle the problem is to set up a committee that is completely divorced from any departmental control. Not one member of the committee should be an high officer of the Education Department. I have a very high regard for the officers of the department, but they have reached the stage in life when their views are fixed. It would be much better to have the investigation conducted by completely independent people.

I hope that the Minister will give my suggestions some consideration. Mechanisation is already with us, and automation is just round the corner. While I was in the South recently I spoke to the principal of the Melbourne Technical College and other education authorities, and they told me something of what is being done down there in the fields of mechanisation and automation. The introduction of mechanisation and automation will mean that we shall require more semi-skilled and skilled workers than at present, and fewer unskilled workers. Technicians will have to be trained quickly and efficiently. They will not be young men. In the great majority of cases, because of a transfer from one industry to another, we shall be training men who have reached an

age at which it will be difficult for them to learn new methods. We must set up the facilities to make it as easy as possible for them to assimilate what they are taught.

I pass now to the Electrical Workers Act. I am raising these matters in the hope that when the Estimates for the Education Department are being debated, the Minister will enlighten us on the Government's attitude. I am mentioning the Electrical Workers Act mainly because of the recent advent into Queensland of television. Naturally there has been little trouble with television sets so far, but it will not be long before those who own sets will require the services of an expert repair man. They will want to be assured that the technicians who are working on their sets are capable and efficient. Whereas a trained and capable man might take only 10 minutes to ascertain the cause of trouble in a television set, or any other electrical or mechanical appliance, it might take an untrained man two or three hours. As most of the contracts covering the servicing of television sets provide for payment for repair work on the time occupied, in the interests of the owners we must see that all television technicians are properly trained.

Virtually no safeguard for the people is provided under the Electrical Workers Act. The section covering electrical work says that as long as a man is not engaged mainly on electrical work, he need not hold an Electrical Workers' Board Certificate. Television mechanics, who, after all, are electrical workers, need not have even an Electrical Workers Board certificates. I suggest that they and the radio mechanics should be brought under the same conditions as electrical workers, not with the idea of trying to bar anybody but to make sure everyone in the industry is trained. With a television tube costing £30, it is nobody's fun to have it blown or damaged when the householder has to foot the bill.

Mr. Nicholson: That is only the one tube. The picture tube is the one that costs that much.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is the one most likely to be interfered with through bad workmanship. I think the hon. member will agree with that.

Mr. Nicholson: Yes, but I just wanted to correct you when you said a valve costs £30.

Mr. HOUSTON: A picture tube. I suggest to the hon. member that he do not try to draw me out on electrical terminology. I think all hon. members know that the picture tube is the one that costs about £30. If we do not tackle the problem now before we have every Tom, Dick and Harry in the industry, it will be too late; we will have to do exactly what we did in the radio industry. We will just not be able to get round it. I ask the Minister to give the matter every consideration so that the people will not be taken down.

Mr. P. R. SMITH (Windsor) (4.2 p.m.): I wish to add my assurances of loyalty and devotion to my parliamentary duties to those of the hon. member for Mulgrave who was making his maiden speech on the occasion of his return to the House. I desire too, to add my assurances to those of the many speakers on both sides who have preceded me in making their remarks to the motion so ably moved by the hon. member for Mulgrave and seconded by the hon. member for Nundah. I agree with many of those speakers that His Excellency the Governor in his Opening Speech gave a stimulus to Parliament and that we would do well to exhibit some of his indefatigable effort. Apparently he is a man of resource and of great intelligence. What is more, in a short time he has made himself one of our more dearly-loved citizens. I think I can use the word "citizen" advisedly.

We have just seen the departure of Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra of Kent, a delightfully natural and charming princess, who, in the short time that she was here, made herself widely acceptable and captivated the whole State in a way that I say without fear of contradiction has never been done before. She gave to the Centenary celebrations a much needed uplift and, while she was here, one could sense pervading the populace a feeling of gaiety, which one should have when celebrating a birthday of any sort, and more particularly a centenary birthday. While there was gaiety, there were also responsibilities brought home to us. We were celebrating the efforts of the pioneers of 100 years ago and the achievements of their successors in the intervening years. We were not taking upon ourselves, or should not have taken upon ourselves, the liberty of celebrating anything that we have done. In the main the celebration of the centenary of the State is a celebration of the efforts and achievements of those who have gone before. That applies to the people who have gone through this Chamber before. In our efforts today or as from next year when we enter on the second century of the State we should be motivated in all our acts by the same high principles that we attribute to those who founded Queensland. If we were to keep that in mind and let it prompt our actions I am quite sure we would be laying a very good foundation and taking steps towards emulating and possibly surpassing the efforts of our predecessors. The celebration of the Centenary Year is a moment of a reflection, a moment when we should look back. We should consider what has been done and what might have been done, then look forward to see what can be done. At the present time we are the trustees of the future inhabitants of Queensland. It rests on our shoulders to see that the first faltering steps of the second century are directed along the right road so that our successors, the future inhabitants of Queensland in the

year 2059, can applaud and laud the efforts of the previous 100 years as we are now doing those of the last 100 years.

I am able to announce quite gleefully to the Chamber that the residents of my electorate were singled out for a very gracious greeting from the Royal visitor. It became known that Her Royal Highness desired a kangaroo. It so happened that one of my constituents had a young kangaroo. I was requested to and gladly passed on to Her Royal Highness the information that the kangaroo was ready, willing and waiting for her to come to take it away. It caused us all great distress to know that she could not accept it.

On Saturday 5 September the people of my electorate made a public demonstration of their celebration of the Centenary Year. We commenced activities in the mid-afternoon and at one stage there were about 9,000 people there. I was able to convey to those people Her Royal Highness's message of greeting. I can say without any shadow of doubt that there was no greater highlight in the whole day than the communication I had the honour to convey. The spontaneity and fervour of the celebrations that the people of Windsor displayed on Saturday assured me that we need not worry about the necessary spirit to lay the foundation for the second century. I am sure that in 2059—none of us will be here to see it—our successors will have a very happy Centenary Year as they look back.

Having discussed the gaieties and joys of the Centenary Year I wish to bring the Chamber back to a much more sober thought, to a matter that I trust will goad them into very serious consideration of things that are by no means joyful, but decidedly sad. I refer to a matter that I have previously raised in the Chamber and electoral redistribution notwithstanding I propose to raise in years to come. I speak of persons injured in motor vehicle collisions or accidents who wish to recover damages from either the wrongdoer or from some other source.

The article which I propose to read appeared in the "Sunday Mail" on 6 September, with the caption in large black letters—"Da Da will never come back." If there are any hon. members who have not read this article I hope they will do so because if there is anything that will impress on them the stark realism of the tragedies on the road this article will do so. The article reads as follows:—

"Each night at 6 o'clock Ludwig Szymkow, 18 months, toddles to the door to wait for a father who will never come home. The toddler calls, 'Da da' as he drums with his fists on the wall of his little galvanised iron home. His father, Stanislaw Szymkow, was killed by a hit-run driver in Mulgoa Road, Cecil Park, as he cycled home from work in the early hours of

5 July. Ten minutes later the hit-run car collided with another car and injured four more people.

This week, two months after the tragedy. Szymkow's widow, Maria, appealed for the driver to surrender to police. 'I have been living a nightmare,' she said, 'And the driver must be too.'

It would have been bad enough if the 18 months' old boy had been the son of a wealthy family, if the walls against which he beat his little fists were walls of a luxury home, but when you realise the circumstances and the conditions under which he lives this stark tragedy is emphasised. This boy is only one of many who are so left by those callous people who strike down somebody and drive on. He is only one of many who is suffering because of the deprivation of their breadwinner. It is all very well to think, it has not happened to me. We are here to think and to act for the welfare of the whole of the people; and I for one will never accept the proposition that any measure imposed on motor vehicles which would be unpopular with drivers is any answer to the institution of a nominal defendant or some other means whereby people like young Ludwig can have some hope in life.

Let me read from the "Telegraph" of Thursday, 3 September, and the "Courier-Mail" of 4 September. I shall not read other than the words of a departmental spokesman. I wish the Minister for Main Roads were here because this is a matter that concerns him. The following appeared in the "Telegraph" of 3 September regarding a case before the Traffic Court. Mr. Lenton, the Prosecutor for the Main Roads Department, said in court, "An unregistered vehicle on a public road was a public menace because there was no third party insurance on them." That is quite true. Mr. Lenton further said that some years ago it was usual for two unregistered vehicles a month to be reported, but now there were more than 80. In one year 960 unregistered vehicles would be traversing our roads. In that year could it be denied that one or more of those 960 cars would be involved in accidents? The same spokesman pointed out that 5,000 plates had been reported lost, stolen, or destroyed. It would be within the competence of any person to acquire one of those plates, or under the present law, two of them, attach those to a vehicle and drive in the streets with impunity, because his vehicle would appear to be registered.

The position which obtains in the case of Ludwig, sad as it may be, tragic as it may be, is not half as bad as the position of a boy of 18 months in this State who suffered similar loss, because in the State of New South Wales, as in every other State of the Commonwealth apart from Queensland, there is a nominal defendant who can be sued and who would provide money to ensure that the lad gets a chance in life.

In New South Wales Section 30 (2) of the Motor Vehicles Third Party Insurance Act provides—

“Where the death of or bodily injury to any person is caused by or arises out of the use of a motor vehicle upon a public street but the identity of the motor vehicle cannot after due inquiry and search be established, any person who could have enforced a claim for damages against the owner or driver of the motor vehicle in respect of the death or bodily injury may enforce against the nominal defendant the claim which he could have enforced against the owner or driver of the motor vehicle.”

That will be a consolation which the lad's mother will have in time, if she cares to use it.

But we look in vain for a similar measure of protection in our Act. We may be given the explanation that motorists do not want the imposition of any further tax in respect of their cars, and that they may not like an increase in their insurance premiums, but I have been a motor driver for some 22 years or more and, although I would not like to have to pay more, I can assure hon. members that whether I liked it or not I would feel much happier if my wife and four children at home were protected in the event of my being knocked down by a hit-and-run motorist on my way from this Chamber today. No-one should cavil at paying a little more. Anyone who raised that as a ground of objection would be taking a very narrow view. That argument should not be considered. The little extra he would be called on to pay would ensure for his family protection which he at the present time cannot give them. I should subscribe most wholeheartedly to the introduction of some scheme, simple enough in its own way whereby this protection could be afforded.

In the ordinary course of life people must be on the roads. In coming to this Chamber we expect to use public transport. We expect the bus or tram to bring us here, but the man who drives the tram or bus has to go to work. He has to get onto the roads to go to work, and he may be knocked down. The motorist is not the only one who is affected. The people who are knocked down by hit-and-run motorists or who want to recover damages are also affected. Any person who has to run the risk of suffering personal harm and is left without recourse has to be considered.

The police have a duty to discharge. It is shocking to hear that 80 unregistered cars a month use the roads. I shall reiterate a point made earlier to prove the inconsistencies that exist in regard to insurance in this State. We have read in the newspapers the statement of the spokesman for the Main Roads Commission about 80 unregistered vehicles a month.

These motor vehicles can be unregistered through two causes. They may never have been registered, or they may have been

registered until last month and their registration may have lapsed or may not have been renewed. This is the farcical situation we encounter: if during the period when the vehicle is not registered, or when the registration is not current, it is involved in an accident, and the driver is honest and says to his insurer, “Last night I knocked down a man,” there are certain consequences. The insurance manager looks at him, adopts a woeful expression, and says, “You are not covered, you know.” However, if he goes along to the insurance company, produces his renewal notice and says, “I was away last month; here is my money” and pays it over, the insurance company knows nothing about last night's accident. It does not know about it for some time to come, by which time the normal process of re-insurance has gone on. That man is covered. He signs a statement to the effect that he has not been involved in an accident occasioning personal injury. The person who is knocked down is protected because of the dishonesty of the man who went to the insurance company and said that he was not involved in an accident. The moment that the dishonest driver writes down that he has not been involved in an accident occasioning personal injury, the insurance cover is back dated to the last date of the previous policy, which means a continuity of insurance. The victim in the months to come issues a writ of summons and recovers thousands of pounds in damages which are paid by the licensed insurer. Then we come to the honest driver who goes to the insurer and says, “Last night I had an accident.” The insurer says, “you know you were not covered.” The victim in that accident is left high and dry, and to my mind the position is farcical. Why should the victim of an accident obtain a benefit because the person who hit him is a dishonest person? The person who is injured should be protected either at all times or at no time at all. When you put a premium on dishonesty you are encouraging the position that obtains today. I have tried to make it clear on previous occasions. I do not want there to be any dishonesty at all. I want a fair deal for as many people as we can provide for. As long as I am in this Chamber and as long as there is no provision in this State for people who are injured in an accident by a hit-and-run motorist and as long as there are unregistered vehicles on the roads, I will continue at every opportunity to press for the installation of a nominal defendant.

Mr. Aikens: You deserve a lot of credit for that.

Mr. P. R. SMITH: Thank you.

Mr. Aikens: It is a pity you cannot convince your own members on the front benches.

Mr. P. R. SMITH: I hope that my pointing out to the House in general the articles in the Press and the fact that we have 80 cars a month unregistered on the roads will have

some effect. There will be no point in my providing a list of cases that I have. I hope the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads will make sure that some steps are taken to see that when number-plates are handed in the vehicles concerned are immobilised and that more severe penalties for offences are imposed. Make it plain that to drive an unregistered car makes the driver liable to a mandatory fine and you will see a lot of the cars disappearing off the roads. People will break the laws as long as they can and as often provided the offence does not hit their pockets, but once you get at their pockets offences will diminish with remarkable alacrity. I speak with a knowledge of cases in which I have appeared. I leave it at that.

I move on to the functioning of the district court, a very salutary innovation, if I may say so, although we had district courts with us before.

Mr. Aikens: The Supreme Court judges are having the loaf of their lives.

Mr. P. R. SMITH: The District Court judges are to be commended on the way in which they have applied themselves to their task and discharge their duties. If, over the years, their more senior brethren of the Supreme Court had so applied themselves, the law list in this State may have been in a far better condition than it is at the moment.

Mr. Power: Look out! They will be after you.

Mr. P. R. SMITH: Whenever I rise to my feet here I speak the truth. I do not care who wants to attack me on what I say. He will have to prove that I am wrong. I am always very sure of my grounds in anything that I say.

I am raising the subject of the District Court, because in our endeavour to simplify the processes of law we may have gone a little too far. In Supreme Court actions there is a good deal of formal procedure, but in the ordinary course of events there is provision for a writ of summons, statement of claim, defence, and so on, until the pleadings are commenced and then the entry of trial. No provision is made for that procedure in matters that are listed for hearing in the District Court. Once a defence is filed by the defendant, the action can be listed for hearing.

I am very happy to see that the Minister for Justice is in the Chamber. The fact that there is no provision for entry for trial in the District Court can cause very great inconvenience to both sets of litigants. For example, when the plaintiff starts his action, he may know that he is going out of the State for some months, or that one of his witnesses will be in hospital for a protracted period. In the case of a Supreme Court action, he would not enter the case for trial until he was sure that he was ready to proceed. Similarly, when the defendant gets notice of entry of the trial, he knows that the other party is ready to proceed and that it behoves him to get his case in order so that he can proceed

to hearing. In the District Court, however, the plaintiff will start his proceedings and the defendant will enter his defence, but the case can be called on for hearing at a time unsuitable to both parties. That means that one day of the Court's time is wasted. I referred previously to the way in which the District Court judges are applying themselves to their task, and it is a pity to see such men having even one day wasted. Their work is being stultified to a certain extent because at present the Act does not require that further step to be taken.

Mr. Power: That difficulty could be overcome by having the Registrar set down a date for trial.

Mr. P. R. SMITH: I am happy to see that the former Attorney-General has been studying the law of England. He may eventually get round to studying the law of Queensland.

We must review the machinery under which the District Court works. It is working very well now, but a little tidying-up would do no harm. We can hardly expect it to function perfectly immediately it is conceived. The Minister for Justice has always investigated very speedily any matters that have been brought before his notice, and I feel sure that at an early date there will be some alleviation of the difficulty that at present confronts both the District Court and the litigants in actions that are set down for hearing before it.

Mr. BYRNE (Mourilyan) (4.30 p.m.): I am glad of the opportunity that has been afforded members of the Parliament to reply to the address of His Excellency delivered some weeks ago. It gives me, as well as other hon. members, the opportunity of raising matters directly related to our electorates and to indicate any difficulties or problems that arise there. I hope to elaborate on that at some length as I proceed and to express some concern about certain happenings in Mourilyan.

It has been usual for me and other hon. members of my party on occasions like this to express our loyalty and devotion to Her Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. and, on behalf of the residents of the Mourilyan electorate and on my own behalf, I wish to join in the expressions of loyalty and devotion. I sincerely hope that her reign will continue for a great many years and that peace and contentment will be enjoyed by the peoples of this great Commonwealth. I sincerely hope, too, that the threats of war will vanish and that, during her reign, we shall enjoy that peace and contentment that we all wish for.

I speak as a loyal member of the Australian Labour Party. I do not belong to any other political party or association, and when I express that loyalty and devotion I express it as an hon. member of this Parliament and as a member of the great Australian Labour Party.

A.L.P. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. BYRNE: I want to pay a tribute to Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra who has been visiting us over the last few weeks, and to express the very high regard that the people of Queensland have for her royal person. I had the opportunity of bringing my own daughter to Brisbane to see the Princess and to get from her the expressions that she was able to give to us. Her reply was, of course, that she is a lovely lady and an excellent representative of Her Gracious Majesty.

As a direct representative of Her Majesty, that excellent gentleman His Excellency the Governor has rendered distinguished service to Queensland and has earned the respect and admiration of all Queenslanders. When he first came here I realised what a wonderful gentleman he was and I have never altered my opinion. His Excellency's desire is to meet the people of the whole of the State and doing so has taken him to places far beyond the cities—back into the heart of Queensland.

In his travels he has gained a first-hand knowledge of the difficulties and problems associated with the settlement of Queensland's 670,000-odd square miles. I am aware of the stress imposed on him because of his enthusiasm and his energy to visit all parts of the State. I express now, as I have on former occasions, some concern for His Excellency's health. He has had a busy time on the occasion of the visit of Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra. I know he will have a very busy time when he visits that important electorate of Mourilyan and the very important town of Tully. I hope I shall be able to be present at that function when I shall be able to tender to His Excellency the Governor that courtesy and consideration to which I think he is entitled, because as I said before, he is a gentleman of whom we should all be proud. He will be able to see the potentialities of my district. I have no doubt that when he returns from that great district he will be able to say to the Government, "This is a territory that needs development; it has been neglected for some time."

This brings me to the matter of the employment of people in North Queensland. It is a major issue affecting the people of North Queensland and the time has arrived when some voice should be raised in Parliament to help the people in North Queensland to get the full employment that they cannot get today. In this, our Centenary year, we must admit that the State has made remarkable progress—there is no doubt about that—consequent upon the efforts of the great Australian Labour Party that has occupied the Government benches for a great many years.

Mr. Hiley: In spite of the fact that they neglected Tully.

Mr. BYRNE: I am sincere in that. I would say that the output generally from this great State of ours is exceedingly good.

There is no doubt, of course, that the potentialities of the State have been exploited in some instances to the fullest extent and that there are others awaiting development. Queensland is capable of carrying a much larger population than it has today. The population is increasing in the southern part of the State but in North Queensland it is stagnant. That state of affairs must not continue. We must not have a great population in the southern part of the State with the northern part, where Australia is most vulnerable, in a state of virtual stagnation. Fortunately the southern part of the State is blessed with full employment. In the northern parts we do not enjoy that state of affairs. This unemployment position must be corrected. In this Centenary year, the indications are that although there might be considerable employment in the southern parts of the State unfortunately I can see no improvement in North Queensland unless some remedial measures are taken. Mourilyan is essentially a primary-producing electorate. Our essential industries are the primary industries of sugar and timber. Those industries provide seasonal occupations and at certain times of the year there is very full employment and at other times there are considerable numbers of unemployed. We find that efficiency in industry is a contributing factor to the lessening of the employment period. I refer to the new varieties of cane which are capable of producing 30 tons to the acre compared with varieties that produced only 20 to 22 tons to the acre. These new varieties enable the farmer to harvest his quota from a much lesser acreage than formerly, and he has not the same difficulties with cultivation which he had before.

Another contributing factor in the lessening of employment is that mills vie with each other on the weekly crushing of cane. Many years ago in the Babinda area it was difficult to crush 8,000, 9,000, or 10,000 tons a week, but today it is not at all difficult for the mills to crush 16,000, 17,000, 18,000 and even 20,000 tons a week. My point is that efficiency in industry is contributing to the unemployment position in North Queensland. Whereas we used to have a period of 26 weeks for crushing, we are now lucky if it lasts about 20 weeks. That means that when it comes to November or early December the mills close and the employees are out of work and there is no other employment in that area to which they can go.

Another contributing factor is the introduction of bulk handling of sugar. Whereas men were formerly employed in mills to bag, load and despatch sugar, mechanical implements now perform that work. Bulk handling facilities at ports such as Lucinda, Mourilyan, Townsville, and Cairns now perform the work formerly carried out by waterside workers. The installations at Lucinda were opened not very long ago by the Premier, and I had the honour of attending the ceremony. Today no

employees are to be seen at that port. I hope that the installation at Mourilyan Harbour will be opened next year, but after that time employees who now obtain their livelihood at that port will not be required. In Innisfail alone 130 waterside workers will be thrown out of work. The bulk handling machinery does not require the services of more than a few persons. Although efficiency in industry is desirable, other avenues of employment must be found for those who have been displaced. Unless the Government can provide employment for them, it will stand indicted as being incapable of looking after the employable people of the North.

I have referred to cultivation of cane-fields. New methods and new ideas have been introduced. Tractors, up-to-date equipment, bulldozers and so on enable a farmer to do the cultivation work on his farm, with the assistance of his family, whereas previously he had to employ men on this task. He does not require outside assistance. He can now do the work himself, with the assistance of his family. I have seen young boys and young girls driving tractors. The people of North Queensland have no doubt that having regard to improved efficiency in industry the employment position in the North will get much worse as time goes on. We do not cavil at new methods or improvements, but the Government have done nothing in the past few years to overcome the unemployment caused through improved efficiency in industry. It would seem that they desire a pool of unemployed persons on whom they can call in times of need. As their Parliamentary representative, I have kept in touch with the people, and I know their difficulties and troubles. Although at a certain period of the year there is full employment, for a great part of the year many people are not able to get work, and their children are not able to obtain work, either, to assist the bread winners of their families. It is all very well to quote statistics to prove that there is not a great amount of unemployment. Those associated with the industry should know that there is a considerable number of unemployed who do not register as such. I referred to the 130 waterside workers at Mourilyan who will lose their jobs because of the bulk handling of sugar. I am amazed to find the action being taken by shire councils in road-making projects. Where possible they get a contractor to do the work where previously it was done by day-labour. They might think, of course, that they are saving a good deal of money by employing contractors and getting the work done by contract, but they should realise that they are putting out of employment men who were formerly employed and lived in the district, men who built their homes in the district and invested their all, believing that they would continue in their jobs. Many shire

councils have become political in their outlook. They think that the less employment they give the better for themselves. The time has arrived when the Government should give very serious consideration to this state of affairs in North Queensland. Something more than conferences between employers and employees to see what can be done is required. We want immediate action to avert what I think will be a catastrophe towards the end of November and during December when sugar mills cease to operate and when possibly we will have a wet season and timber cannot be felled. Men will then be looking for work not only for themselves but also for the adult members of their families. There is not much advantage in a man's getting six or nine months work a year and realising that for the other three he is to be unemployed. He is up against it. What can he do? Where can he go? There is a tendency, I assure you Mr. Speaker, for men in North Queensland who previously worked for six or nine months a year to dispose of their properties and come south to engage in secondary industries where they will get full employment. That is the situation that has to be faced. It is realistic to say that there is an obligation on the Federal Government to do something; they are not playing the game as far as North Queensland is concerned, they have fallen down on their job completely. The task might be too big for a State Government but something will have to be done if we are to retain our population in the North. It is a shocking indictment on somebody that there are fewer people in North Queensland today than there were 50 years ago. What has caused that to happen? A proper outlook is necessary for the development of that part of the State, which is so vulnerable to attack by any nation that might think it has a better title to this country than we have.

I have said that some people in the North are selling their homes and shifting to the South. They are doing that because they can enjoy only partial employment in the North, whereas workers in secondary industry in the southern part of the State are assured of full employment. We must explore every avenue in an effort to find a solution of the problem. I believe that the Minister for Development, Mines, and Main Roads has the right idea. North Queensland can be developed through the mining industry. The whole of the country inland from the coastline between Cooktown and Townsville abounds in mineral wealth, and it could be developed to provide greatly increased employment. Its development would also increase present activities on the coast. I refer mainly to the Chillagoe, Mt. Garnet and Irvinebank areas, whose potentialities are so great that they must bring about great activity in the very near future. The Broken Hill Co. Pty. Ltd. and other concerns are

already actively exploring those districts, and I am certain that before very long they will be the scenes of great activity.

I believe also that a good deal of work could be provided for the people of North Queensland by a scientific study of uses to which the by-products of sugar, sugar-cane, and timber could be put. The C.S.R. Company has increased its profits considerably by putting the by-products of sugar and sugar-cane to some use, but much more investigation is needed. Only recently I read where some people in Mackay had submitted a proposal for the manufacture of paper from by-products of the sugar industry, which is all to the good.

It is a tragedy that people who have given long years of service to various industries in North Queensland, particularly the sugar industry, find when they are advancing in years that the industry that they have served for so long cannot now provide them with work. Associated with unemployment is the decline in the living standards of the people. With only part-time employment a man cannot support his wife and family in reasonable comfort and acquire all necessary amenities. I suggest to the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation that he consider opening up certain lands in my electorate that now seem to be tightly locked. There are many avenues for settlement and there is an industry, of course, that is gaining in considerable importance. I refer to the cattle-fattening industry. In my area we have the soil and an assured rainfall, but the Minister is not agreeable to opening up the land for settlement for the purpose. We have made representations for some time and it seems that the Mourilyan electorate is regarded as a kind of reserve that no-one should touch. If there is any way of putting men on the land and giving them an opportunity to bring it into production and earn money, it is wrong not to make it available. It should not be difficult to obtain land where settlement is required and where there are people capable of entering an industry that they know something about and can succeed in. I urge the Department of Public Lands to make a reassessment of the area with a view to providing settlement for those anxious to take up the land and exploit its possibilities by cultivating it and making production available from something that is not at present used.

Hon. members of this Parliament have listened to speeches by various eminent men and have heard various speakers over the radio pointing out the need to develop North Queensland, but apparently the counsels have fallen on deaf ears. They point to the millions of people not so very far away from North Queensland where the population is increasing to such an extent that they must expand. We are warned of the great hordes of people seeking that expansion, but what are we

doing about it? Nothing whatever! Even China, with its 15,000,000 increase in population every year, increases every eight months by a greater number than the total population of Australia. The time has arrived for the Federal Government to assist the State Government in the development of the North; it has been so outstandingly neglected in the past. I realise that the State Government can do little without the requisite finance. But one is entitled to be critical when he sees the great amount of money that is being spent in other States of the Commonwealth but cannot point to one major project in the northern part of Queensland that has been financed by the Commonwealth Government. We are certainly entitled to better consideration than we are getting today from the Federal Government. We might say that our position as legislators is no better than that of the ordinary shire council because we cannot do anything as we have not got the money to do it.

Let me divert for a moment and point out to the Minister for Transport that in my opinion there is a need to construct a 3 foot 6 inch railway line from Boogan to Mourilyan Harbour. Despite his reply to my question this morning that it was not advantageous to the State that a 3 foot 6 inch line should be constructed from Boogan to Mourilyan I am firmly convinced of the need for it. In a very wet area like Innisfail it may well be found that the bridges are not strong enough, that the roads are inadequate and that in the final analysis the road transport of bulk sugar to be shipped from Mourilyan might be more costly than rail transport. I ask the Minister for Transport to visit Mourilyan and make a thorough examination to see for himself the desirability, indeed the necessity in my opinion, of constructing this line.

Let me refer to the punt that is used on the Johnstone River. On various occasions I have expressed the opinion that the punt is unsafe and unsound. Of course, I accept the Treasurer's assurance given this morning that inspections are made from time to time and that the punt will be inspected again very shortly. But people up there tell me that the punt has capsized on a number of occasions and they regard it as unsafe. Recently there was loss of life in Mourilyan Harbour following the sinking of a barge. The time is opportune for the Treasurer to ensure that the punt used on the Johnstone River is quite safe so that no longer can there be any complaints about its safety.

(Time expired.)

Debate, on motion of Mr. Clark, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 5.11 p.m.