

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 1960

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Legislative Assembly

FIRST SESSION OF THE THIRTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

Appointed to meet

AT BRISBANE ON THE TWENTY-THIRD DAY OF AUGUST, IN THE NINTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II., IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1960.

[VOLUME 2]

WEDNESDAY, 2 NOVEMBER, 1960

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. D. E. Nicholson, Murrumba) took the chair at 11 a.m.

QUESTIONS

APPOINTMENT OF HON. V. C. GAIR AS INDUSTRIES ESTABLISHMENT AND EXPANSION OFFICER

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) asked the Premier—

“(1) Do the provisions and regulations of the Public Service Acts apply to Mr. V. C. Gair in his employment as liaison officer in the Department of Labour and Industry?”

“(2) Is the appointment of Mr. Gair subject to appeal by experienced officers in the Department or elsewhere in the Public Service?”

“(3) What is the position of Mr. Gair in respect of the Public Service superannuation scheme?”

“(4) Has Mr. Gair been given a blank cheque for expenses and, if not, to what figure is his expense account restricted or alternatively what is the nature of the limitations imposed?”

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

“(1) No. By Order in Council dated October 27, 1960, the occupant of the position of Industries Establishment and Expansion Officer, Secondary Industries Division, Department of Labour and Industry, has been excluded from the operation of the Public Service Acts, 1922 to 1958.”

“(2) As the occupant of this position is excluded from the provisions of the Public Service Acts, the prescriptions of those Acts with respect to appeals do not apply in this case. Moreover, the appointment is not a permanent one but is for a term of three years and is terminable at any time before the expiration of the term of appointment by the giving of one week's notice on either side.”

“(3) The question as to whether the appointee to this position may contribute to the Public Service Superannuation Fund is one for determination by the Public Service Superannuation Board. In terms of the Public Service Superannuation Acts, the Board must be of opinion that the employment is of permanent character.”

“(4) The terms of appointment provide for a spending allowance of £250 per annum to cover regular entertaining and incidental expenses associated with the position. Special entertaining expenditure subject to authorisation by the Minister for Labour and Industry would be met on the production of accounts or vouchers. When absent from Brisbane overnight, travelling allowance is payable.”

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

"In view of (a) Mr. Gair in a signed article in 'The Courier-Mail' of July 26, 1957, having referred to him as 'the hum-bug from Mt. Coot-tha,' having stated in the same article that the present Premier and his Deputy were weak and incompetent and bunglers and that they would reduce the State to bankruptcy, if elected to office, and (b) the fact that he had declared his distrust of Mr. Gair on an important issue when he said at Townsville that Mr. Gair was only a sham fighter against Communism, as reported in 'The Courier-Mail' of July 4, 1957, on what grounds can he expect industrialists and potential investors to display any confidence in or hope to negotiate successfully with two Government representatives who have publicly stated their contemptuous regard for each other?"

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

"To avoid again hurting the tender susceptibilities of the Honourable Member or of his Leader and Deputy Leader, I refer him to my answers to his Leader yesterday, November 1."

PURCHASE OF MOTOR VEHICLES FOR POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

"(1) Is it the intention of the Police Department to renew its fleet of motor vehicles by the purchasing of new vehicles?"

"(2) If so, (a) what type and make of vehicle is to be purchased, (b) what will be the cost of the vehicles, and (c) how many vehicles will be purchased and from whom?"

"(3) How many Police vehicles will be replaced and what is the estimated return to the Department on the replaced vehicles?"

"(4) What is the average age of the replaced vehicles?"

"(5) How many of the vehicles replaced will be of a model later than 1956?"

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

"(1) Of course it is, as and when such action is considered advisable; otherwise, in the course of time the Police Department would cease to be mobile and repair costs crippling."

"(2) (a) The present policy is that where replacements are made, the new vehicles will be either Ford Custom 300, Falcons, or 4-wheel drive, according to projected use. Most of these will be Falcons, which contain a larger Queensland content than

other vehicles which were under consideration, consequently much Queensland employment will be provided thereby. (b) In accordance with quotes received by State Stores Board. (c) It is anticipated that approximately 285 conventional type vehicles and a few (the number not at this stage being known) 4-wheel drive vehicles will be purchased this year, the Fords from Ford agents, others as yet not known."

"(3) As the Honourable Member specifies no period of time, it is impossible, even with the best will in the world, to answer this question. In any case, I do not propose to give estimates on a matter which can change according to unknown future factors."

"(4 and 5) See answer to No. (3)."

BRIDGE OVER SANDY CREEK, DIMBULAH

Mr. GILMORE (Tablelands) asked the Acting Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity—

"(1) What progress is being made with the bridge over Sandy Creek in Dimbulah township?"

"(2) Will the bridge be completed before the wet season?"

Hon. O. O. MADSEN (Warwick) replied—

"(1) Authority was obtained on September 17, 1960. The job has commenced. Excavation for one pier and one abutment is complete. It is expected that the foundations will be completed before the wet season."

"(2) No."

INSTALLATION OF SELF-SERVICE PETROL PUMPS

Mr. HUGHES (Kurilpa) asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

"In consideration of the fact that a ratio of one person in every 37 owns a motor vehicle and that Brisbane in particular is a car conscious city, will he approve applications for the installation of 24-hour self-service petrol pumps thus enabling motorists to benefit by such a desirable service?"

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

"The legal position with respect to self service petrol selling machines is already engaging the attention of my Department. Information is being sought as to the position in the other States and in due course consideration will be given to petrol being sold through these machines outside the hours when petrol may be sold from service stations. There are many situations which arise when such pumps could be of great service. Naturally, however, much careful investigation would precede any decision."

STAFF APPOINTMENTS, TOWNSVILLE GENERAL HOSPITAL

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs—

“With reference to the Townsville General Hospital, is it intended to replace the gardener and the builder’s labourer who were appointed wardsmen following the recent retirement or resignation of two of these people or is the rumour correct that these positions are to be left vacant in accordance with the recent publicised economy drive?”

Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga) replied—

“I understand that the Hospitals Board does not intend immediately to replace the gardener and the builder’s labourer who have been appointed to vacancies on the wardsmen staff. I cannot offer an opinion as to whether the rumour mentioned by the Honourable Member should be given credence.”

MARRIED FEMALES, CLERICAL STAFF, TOWNSVILLE GENERAL HOSPITAL

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs—

“Has it been the practice at the Townsville General Hospital to terminate the services of a female member of the clerical staff when she marries? If so, is it intended (in all fairness to the girls and women who have had to abide by the ruling in the past) to continue the practice in the future without favour to any one person?”

Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga) replied—

“(1) Yes, it has been the practice to terminate the services of female members of the clerical staff of the Townsville Hospital upon their marriage.”

“(2) Yes. The only exception would be if it became necessary temporarily to retain a married woman in a clerical position to meet the needs of the Hospital Service.”

ALTERATION OF CONDUCTORS’ CABINS, AIR-CONDITIONED TRAINS

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) asked the Minister for Transport—

“Is he prepared to accept the suggestion that the cupboard be removed from the conductor’s cabin in the air-conditioned trains, the present seat extended and a sliding door instead of a swinging door installed in order to allow conductors greater room in these cramped quarters?”

Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga—Minister for Health and Home Affairs), for **Hon. G. W. W. CHALK** (Lockyer), replied—

“I am assured that the seat provided, which is 3 feet 3 inches wide as compared with a seat of a width of 18 inches for a first class passenger, is comfortable and adequate for the purpose for which it was provided, and that the provision of a sliding door is unnecessary.”

STERILISATION OF USED RAGS FOR SALE

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough), for **Mr. BENNETT** (South Brisbane), asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs—

“(1) Does the Department of Health and Home Affairs insist that all rags in Queensland be sterilised before being sold for cleaning purposes?”

“(2) Are all used-rag sellers in Brisbane compelled to install proper and adequate sterilising equipment?”

“(3) Does he insist that cleaning-rags sold to factories processing foodstuffs be sterilised before such sale?”

“(4) Did he receive a letter, dated September 30, 1960, from Mr. N. E. Winn and, if so, has the letter been dealt with?”

“(5) What decision was made by him in reply to the submissions made in Mr. Winn’s letter?”

Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga) replied—

“(1) No.”

“(2) No.”

“(3) No.”

“(4 and 5) A letter dated September 30, 1960, was received from Mr. N. E. Winn. A decision regarding the submissions has not been made pending a reply to a letter of October 14, 1960, sent to the State Health Department, New South Wales, requesting information regarding the implementation of the regulations concerning Rag Dealers and Flock-makers, made under the Noxious Trades Act of that State.”

CO-ORDINATION IN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT JOBS

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough), for **Mr. BENNETT** (South Brisbane), asked the Minister for Public Works and Local Government—

“In view of the long delays occasioned when men are transferred from one job in the Public Works Department to another because no materials are available when they arrive on the new job, will he insist on greater co-ordination in the Department to ensure that materials are ready and available before the arrival of the men to work on the new projects?”

Hon. L. H. S. ROBERTS (Whitsunday) replied—

“I am not aware of any long delays caused by unavailability of material when men in the employ of my Department are transferred from one job to another. If the Honourable Member for South Brisbane will name specifically the job or jobs on which such delays are supposed to have occurred, a full investigation will be made and appropriate action will be taken.”

APPOINTMENT OF MR. E. P. BEDWELL AS
LIAISON OFFICER, DEPARTMENT OF
LABOUR AND INDUSTRY

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough), for **Mr. BROMLEY** (Norman), asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

“(1) In respect of his statement in the House on October 12 that Mr. E. P. Bedwell had been appointed a liaison officer in his Department, did he not attempt to mislead the House when he added—‘Further, subsequent to this appointment, I have at their request, fully discussed this matter with members of the Executive of the Queensland State Service Union?’”

“(2) Was not this meant to imply that the Union had been satisfied with the appointment, whereas the truth was that the Union had strongly opposed the appointment on the ground that applications had not been called in conformity with normal practice in the Public Service?”

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

(1 and 2) I would refer the Honourable Member to the words ‘subsequent’ and ‘at their request’ in the quotation in his question. Surely no right-minded person can interpret my statement referred to as an attempt to mislead the House.”

STATE GOVERNMENT FELLOWSHIP HOLDERS,
GOVERNMENT DENTAL SERVICES

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs—

“(1) How many dentists who have graduated with the assistance of State Government fellowships are at present employed in the State Government dental services?”

“(2) How many dentists who have similarly graduated have defaulted in their contract with the Government during the past three years?”

Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga) replied—

“(1) Twenty-four.”

“(2) One.”

STATE GOVERNMENT FELLOWSHIP HOLDERS,
FACULTIES OF DENTISTRY AND MEDICINE

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) asked the Minister for Education and Migration—

“(1) What number of State Government Fellowship holders are presently enrolled in the Faculties of Dentistry and Medicine?”

“(2) Is it the intention of the Government to increase the number of these fellowships in 1960-1961?”

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier), for **Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY** (Isis), replied—

“(1) The award of State Government Fellowships in these faculties is not the responsibility of my Department.”

“(2) The Honourable Member might direct his inquiry to my colleague, the Honourable the Minister for Health and Home Affairs.”

VOCATIONAL TRAINING, GRADES VII AND VIII,
PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) asked the Minister for Education and Migration—

“As it is the intention to discontinue vocational training as from next year for Grade VII in primary schools and to retain such training in Grade VIII, does he not consider it more desirable in view of the fact that the fewer interruptions possible are essential during scholarship year to delete vocational training for Grade VIII pupils and retain the training for Grade VII?”

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier), for **Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY** (Isis), replied—

“If Grade VIII pupils do not attend classes in Manual Training and Domestic Science they are required to devote an equivalent period to Craft Work in their own schools. It has been decided, as a matter of policy, to provide instruction in Manual Training and Domestic Science for Grade VIII pupils. A considerable proportion of the children continue with these subjects in secondary schools. If this type of instruction were given in Grade VII and discontinued in Grade VIII there would be lack of continuity.”

DISTRIBUTION OF SALK VACCINE

Dr. DELAMOTHE (Bowen) asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs—

“In reference to his statement on Salk Vaccine published in ‘The Courier-Mail’ of October 29, 1960,—

(1) What is the number and percentage saturation of the six months to fourteen years old age-group?

(2) What are the similar figures with regard to the over fourteen years age-group?

(3) How will the vaccine be distributed to local practitioners?

(4) When will the four-in-one vaccine be ready for distribution?

(5) Does he consider that the campaign has been effective?”

Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga) replied—

“(1) It is difficult to give the number percentage saturation of the six months to 14 age group who have received salk vaccine. Since the campaign commenced in 1956, the 14 years old who were immunised in that year have now advanced to 18 years. The figures for the six months to 18 years age group to August 28, 1960, are:—First injection, 470,003, 87.22 per cent.; second injection, 439,613, 81.58 per cent.; third injection, 407,730, 75.66 per cent.”

"(2) Comparable figures for the 19 to 44 years group are:— First injection, 282,020, 56.43 per cent.; second injection, 270,355, 54.10 per cent.; third injection, 233,564, 46.73 per cent. and there is only a small number of persons 45 and over who have been given protection."

"(3) Vaccine in the metropolitan area will be distributed by the Commonwealth Department of Health in co-operation with my Department. In the country it is hoped that distribution will take place by the Local Authority, in co-operation with my Department."

"(4) The Commonwealth Health Department are endeavouring to make the four-in-one vaccine available for distribution on February 1, 1961."

"(5) In 1956-1957, the year when immunisation commenced, forty-five cases were notified. In 1957-1958, five cases were notified, in 1958-1959 five cases were notified and in 1959-1960, five cases were notified. I consider the campaign has been most effective, but I would state that unless parents see that their children are completely immunised and adults see that they also become immunised, it is inevitable that the low incidence of the last three years will increase."

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:—

By-law under the Harbours Acts, 1955 to 1959.

Order in Council under the Explosives Act of 1952.

Regulations under the Harbours Acts, 1955 to 1959.

Regulations under the Workers' Compensation Acts, 1916 to 1960.

Order in Council under the Mines Regulation Acts, 1910 to 1958.

Report of the Brisbane Milk Board for the year 1959-1960.

Report of the Audit Inspector on the Books and Accounts of the Brisbane Milk Board for the period from August 5, 1959 to August 29, 1960.

GOVERNOR'S SALARY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (11.26 a.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

The reason for the introduction of this Bill was fully explained in the introductory stage. The Governor's salary is being increased from £5,375 to £6,500 per annum.

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (11.28 a.m.): The Bill provides for an increase in the salary of His Excellency the Governor. If we

judge by the work that he does, or tries to do, there cannot be very much quarrel with the fact that the Government would like to give him a rise in salary. However, I should like to make a few general remarks on salary increases that have been granted and that probably will be granted to several people.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I hope the hon. member will not develop his argument on the lines of general salary increases. The Bill contains only one principle, that is, to increase the salary of His Excellency the Governor.

Mr. AIKENS: I am trying to tie up with my remarks on this Bill a statement attributed to the Premier that appeared in the country edition of "The Sunday Mail" last Sunday in which he said that it would be difficult for private members of this Parliament to justify any increase in their salaries. I should like to know just what difference the Premier sees between the work done by the more or less zealous private members of this Chamber and the work being done by the Governor.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I cannot allow the hon. member to proceed in the manner in which he is proceeding. He will confine his speech to the measure before the House or resume his seat.

Mr. AIKENS: I will take your tip, Mr. Speaker, and resume my seat before you make me.

Motion (Mr. Nicklin) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

INSPECTION OF MACHINERY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry) (11.32 a.m.): I move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Inspection of Machinery Acts, 1951 to 1958, in certain particulars."

I introduced a somewhat similar Bill a few days ago and on that occasion I prefaced my comments by saying that, as it was a slightly technical Bill, I did not propose during my introduction of it to answer questions as the subject matter had been covered fully in my prepared speech. That is the position in respect of the present Bill also. I do not propose to break off to answer questions, because I think my speech contains the answers to all questions that may be asked. However, questions will be noted and subsequently, if I

think my introduction does not provide an answer to some of them, I will deal with those questions, although not at this stage of the Bill.

The Inspection of Machinery Act has been the subject of recent very careful examination with a view to ascertaining what amendments appear to be necessary thereto, and it has become evident that a number of provisions urgently need amendment to conform to present-day conditions.

Possibly the most notable example is Section 10 of the Act, which sets out what is required concerning the keeping of and preparation of reports by inspectors of machinery. It states that an inspector shall keep full minutes of all his proceedings and report them to the Chief Inspector with such other particulars and information as the Chief Inspector shall require, and further that he shall be provided with a record book relating to the machinery, to be kept by him in a manner prescribed, such book to be open to inspection upon payment of the prescribed fee by any person, but that no person other than the owner of any machinery shall be entitled to a copy of, or extract from, any entry relating to that machinery. It also states that every inspector who fails to keep such a record book shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding £50 and, in addition, to forfeit his office. That provision is in the present Act.

Another provision also presently in the Act states that the inspector shall make and furnish a report concerning the machine inspected by him during the preceding month and that it shall be in such a form and contain such particulars as the Chief Inspector directs. The provisions of this section were inserted in the Act in 1915 and have remained there ever since.

I ask hon. members to note very carefully that these provisions have been in the Machinery Act for 45 years. I was therefore amazed when it was brought to my notice that in actual practice the provisions as prescribed—as explained by me a moment ago—in this section have never been complied with by the Chief Inspector of Machinery and/or his officers. No record book has ever been provided to inspectors and no prescription has ever been made by the Chief Inspector as to the manner in which any such record book should be kept. The procedure followed actually has been that when an inspector is on patrol he carries a notebook in which he records all matters relating to his inspections. He then writes his various reports from the information in his notebook and keeps a carbon copy of each report. These reports, from both town and country inspectors, are then filed in the Brisbane office of the Chief Inspector of Machinery and are records of these inspections.

Whilst the original provision was for the inspection of record books without charge, in 1925 the present section was inserted to provide for the payment of a prescribed fee

for the inspection of record books which, as I have mentioned previously, are not and never have been in existence. Further, no fee for such inspections has ever been prescribed.

Upon this position being brought to my notice last year I gave instructions for all the provisions in the Inspection of Machinery Act to be examined with a view to amendments being made wherever it was considered necessary. The legislation that I now seek leave to introduce is a result of that examination.

We now have, as hon. members are aware, a new Chief Inspector of Machinery and Scaffolding, Mr. Hillless, who is also Chief Safety Engineer and Chief Inspector of Weights and Measures. Mr. Hillless assumed duty in January of this year. The Chief Inspector has informed me that the present procedure in operation regarding records and reports is adequate and sufficient for satisfactory administration and that there is no necessity for record books to be issued to inspectors as required by the legislation, and that in these days it would be practically impossible to implement the present legislative requirements.

Inquiries made in other States have revealed that in Western Australia, South Australia and Victoria only owners or persons nominated by the owner may peruse the records or take copies of any subject matter at all. In Tasmania such records are open to inspection by the public and any person may take copies thereof, whilst in New South Wales there are no provisions whatever for the inspection of such records, or the taking of extracts or copies thereof, by anybody.

Owing to the increased common law claims on industrial accidents, legal representatives are constantly seeking permission to peruse inspection reports relating to accidents with machinery, or on machinery. Under the existing wording this is possible not only by the legal representatives, but by any private person. It is felt that it is undesirable to permit indiscriminate inspections of such reports, which are confidential in nature, from the inspector to the Chief Inspector and contain views which, under certain conditions, as hon. members could well imagine, could result in an action for defamation or libel against the inspector or the department. I might mention that, in the case of fatal accidents, a copy of such report is made available to the Police Department.

At the same time it is considered that information and copies of reports should be available to either the injured party or the owner of the machinery in the case of serious bodily injury or loss of life or, indeed, both.

It is therefore proposed to repeal the present provisions of Section 10, which have been inoperative for many years, and insert new provisions requiring machinery inspectors to report in writing to the Chief Inspector

all inspections and examinations made by them under the Inspection of Machinery Act, and in such a manner and with such particulars of information as the Chief Inspector may direct. A copy of such reports will be filed in the office by the inspector who makes the inspection and such copies shall be kept for a period of not less than 5 years. It is proposed also that, upon payment of the prescribed search fee, these reports or copies of them may be inspected by the owner of the machinery concerned or by a prospective buyer or the solicitor of either of them.

In addition, reports relating to an accident involving serious bodily injury to a person shall likewise be open for inspection to the injured person, the widow or widower, or personal representative of a deceased person whose death was caused by the accident, or the solicitor of any such person. Furthermore, upon payment of the prescribed fee, such person shall be entitled to be furnished with a copy of, or an extract from, any report or copy that is open to inspection by him as previously mentioned.

Provision is also made that, in order that the Chief Inspector and the inspectors concerned may be suitably protected, they shall not incur any civil or criminal liability as for defamation by the publication of any defamatory matter in any reports furnished in the performance of their duties. We are making this much more open and therefore it is necessary to give them this protection. But this protection shall not exclude the Chief Inspector or the machinery inspector concerned in respect of any such reports from action taken under the Public Service Act concerning any contravention or failure to comply with the provisions of these Acts.

I might mention that it is proposed to continue the present administrative procedure of allowing the legal representative to interview the inspector who investigated any accident, and, if considered necessary, the inspector concerned can be subpoenaed to attend the court.

Obviously, it is bad for provisions to remain on the Statute Book unless they are going to be observed. As I mentioned previously, it is indeed astounding that the present Section 10 of the Act, which was included in legislation in 1915, has never been enforced. However, it is now proposed to remedy this on the lines already mentioned.

Mr. Hilton: The reports that were furnished provided all the information required. You admitted that yourself a while ago.

Mr. MORRIS: I pointed out that Section 10 of the Act required certain things to be done and that they never had been done and I also pointed out that it has not been considered necessary that they should be done; but we are tidying up the law so what is required in the Inspection of Machinery Act can be and will be carried out. That is the whole basis of it.

With the continual growth of air-conditioning in Queensland, owing to its subtropical and tropical climate, it is extremely difficult, with the present restricted nature of the Inspection of Machinery Act as it applies to refrigeration, to satisfactorily operate this plant economically. In addition, a considerable technical advance has been made in the application of fully automatic controls to refrigeration and air-conditioning, and the Act must be brought up to date and into line with present-day skills.

On several occasions I have had brought to my notice the wish of people erecting buildings in Queensland to include air-conditioning in them. Under present provisions, to do so would not only entail a fairly heavy cost in the installation of the machinery but also in employing attendants for that machinery. As this is a State in which air-conditioning is quite an important factor, a factor that becomes more important as one gets farther away from the southern part of the State, I think this matter must be attended to, and the sooner the better.

The present Act, under Section 15 (6) (b), requires an attendant for all refrigeration machinery having a capacity exceeding five (5) tons, excepting refrigeration machinery used for air-conditioning and having a capacity not exceeding twenty (20) tons, provided the refrigerant is non-toxic.

The use of non-toxic gases in commercial refrigeration is extending, and non-toxic gases are used completely in air-conditioning. I dealt fairly fully with the question of toxic and non-toxic gases last year, I think it was, when introducing another Bill. Generally speaking, non-toxic gases are used in air-conditioning. Indeed, we do not know of any air-conditioning plant in which a toxic gas is used.

Important advances in technical skill are having the effect of making these plants fully automatic in operation, and so taking care of any faults that may occur.

An amendment to the Act in 1958 made a concession to fully automatic plant by exempting refrigeration machinery for ice-making with a capacity not exceeding fifty (50) tons from the necessity of employing an attendant, subject to such conditions as the Chief Inspector deems fit.

I remind the Committee that when this legislation was before Parliament in 1958, certain hon. members asked what the 50-ton capacity really meant. One hon. member said by way of illustration that it would be a machine capable of producing 50 tons of ice. That is not correct, and I shall give the technical explanation in case any hon. member should make the same mistake on this occasion.

The term "one ton of refrigeration" is based on capacity for heat extraction, and does not necessarily mean the production of a ton of ice in any particular time. One ton of refrigeration is actually considered to be the capacity of a plant that will convert

one ton of water at zero degrees centigrade to one ton of ice at zero degrees centigrade in 24 hours. In British units, it is the equivalent of 224 British thermal units a minute. That is the explanation of the phrase "5 ton capacity," "10 ton capacity," or "50 ton capacity." It is not the capacity of producing any particular weights.

Hon. members will recall that the present Speaker, as the hon. member for Murrumba, spoke authoritatively and at some length during the second-reading debate in support of the 1958 amendment. I say "authoritatively" because his views were backed by some 20 years' experience as a qualified refrigeration mechanic. He stated that that amendment to allow automatically-controlled refrigeration machines up to 50 tons' capacity for ice-making to be operated without an attendant was in keeping with modern trends in industry. It is considered, therefore, if such concession can be made to refrigeration for ice-making, the exemption can be extended to all fully-automatic refrigeration machinery whether used for industrial or commercial refrigeration, or air-conditioning.

It is not considered that any alteration should be made to the present provisions of the Act covering manually-controlled refrigeration, except to raise the exemption from 5 tons to 10 tons. I recall very clearly the discussion in 1958 which revolved around the safety of fully-automatic machinery. I think it was explained at some length on that occasion that the technique of providing fully-automatic machinery had been developed almost to the stage of perfection.

Owing to the improvement in refrigeration-compressor design, it is considered that raising the exemption from 5 to 10 tons will assist the small operator and still be consistent with safety. Future trends for plants of this size will be to have them controlled automatically. The improvement in compressor design as mentioned earlier will mean that the modern 10-ton compressor will be no larger in size than the old type 5-ton plant. This considerably increases the safety factor. Various other design features, such as new types of room coils and better design and layout of the systems, have also increased the overall efficiency of the modern plant.

To give exemption parallel to that of 50 tons for fully-automatic refrigeration, the exemption of fully-automatic air-conditioning plants will also be raised from 20 tons to 50 tons. Some relief must be given to owners to reduce the cost of operating air-conditioning plants if any assistance is to be given to the installation of such plants in businesses and other places throughout Queensland. I hope that this will encourage a very wide extension of the installation of air-conditioning plants.

Whilst the basis of air-conditioning is essentially refrigeration, the use to which the refrigeration is put is totally different. The control of temperature and humidity is

the essential part of air-conditioning, and it must be done automatically as it is impossible to control them within the necessary narrow margins by manual means.

It is customary for all maintenance and repairs to air-conditioning plant to be done under contract arrangements by installing firms. Failure of an air-conditioning system results in inconvenience and discomfort to persons although it occasions no loss of food-stuffs or other perishables. It is therefore proposed to amend Section 15 of the Act to give effect to the foregoing.

It is also proposed that in providing for the extension to all refrigerating machinery of the exemption of fully-automatic refrigeration machinery not exceeding 50 tons refrigerating capacity at present limited to ice-making—hon. members will remember that that was a feature of the previous legislation—such exemption will still be subject to written application to the Chief Inspector, who, on inspection, may recommend the conditions under which approval may be granted to the extension of such exemption. Factors to be taken into consideration would be capacity, location, purpose, safeguards, quantity of refrigerant in the system, and the keeping of a plant log-book.

It is proposed also to amend as follows the provisions regarding certificates in respect of refrigeration—"Second-class refrigeration: This covers toxic or non-toxic refrigeration, whether manually or automatically controlled, over 5 tons and up to 30 tons to be changed to over 10 tons and up to 50 tons of refrigeration where manually controlled."

The operator would require to hold a second-class refrigeration certificate to operate this plant and would be eligible for such certificate on production of evidence of 500 hours' experience on any type of refrigeration over 10 tons of refrigeration except air-conditioning.

"First-class refrigeration is another category. This presently covers all manually or automatically operated toxic or non-toxic refrigeration over 30-tons capacity and in the proposed amendments would cover all refrigeration machinery, manually or automatically controlled, except air-conditioning over 50 tons capacity. The first-class refrigeration certificate would be issued after examination to operators of first-class machinery on proof of the following experience:—

- (1) Having been in charge of second-class refrigeration for 2,000 hours;
- (2) Having assisted on refrigeration machinery of first-class requirements for 2,000 hours;
- (3) Having been in charge of first-class machinery on board ship or outside the State of Queensland for 2,000 hours.

It is proposed that Section 55 of the Act be amended to include a new certificate to be known as an "Air Conditioning Certificate".

Air-conditioning machinery will cover all fully automatic non-toxic air-conditioning refrigeration machinery over 50 tons of refrigeration up to a limit as decreed by the Chief Inspector. Such machinery under 50 tons will not require any operator.

The operators of this machinery will require to hold the new "Air Conditioning Operators Certificate" and they will be eligible for such certificate on production of the following evidence:—

- (1) Proof of 500 hours' experience assisting on plant over 50-tons capacity;
- (2) If a holder of a second-class refrigeration certificate, or electrical fitter or electrical mechanic's certificate, proof of 250 hours assisting on plant over 50-tons capacity.
- (3) If a qualified fitter or refrigeration mechanic who has had 12 months' experience in the manufacture and installation on maintenance of air-conditioning plants, proof of 80 hours.
- (4) If men with experience outside the State of Queensland can prove 250 hours in charge of plant over 50-tons capacity or 500 hours assisting an operator in charge of plant over 50-tons capacity.
- (5) A written examination on the fundamentals of air-conditioning, such examination being conducted by the Board of Examiners; exemption from examination to be extended to those applicants who can produce evidence of having attended a course and passed an examination on air-conditioning conducted by a college or institution approved by the Board.

Hon. members may be concerned at the effect that these proposed amendments might have on the employment of labour. I refer to remarks made by the present Speaker, the hon. member for Murrumba, during the debate on the 1958 amendment when he quoted from the "Telegraph" a report of what was claimed to have been said by the Leader of the Opposition when speaking prior to that time at a trade-union congress. The "Hansard" report of the speech of the hon. member for Murrumba reads—

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

I am not quarrelling with his statement; I agree with it, and use it as a useful illustration. As I am and always have been interested in promoting employment and as the matter was still in my mind from the 1958 debate, I asked the Chief Inspector of Machinery to go very carefully into this aspect and report to me on the matter. He assured me that it is not expected that there will be any displacement of labour with either automatic boilers or refrigeration. His view is supported by inquiries that have been made into the number of refrigeration operators at present out of employment. I find

that at the present time there are no operators with refrigeration certificates only who are unemployed, and under the provisions of the Bill manual refrigeration is not affected in any way, so that there should be no displacement of labour in this field. I make the point, because it was raised in 1958. The matter has been thoroughly investigated and I place the result before the Committee.

Automatic refrigeration under 50 tons capacity is being exempted from the requirement of an operator, but the number of such plants at present in operation is small. As a matter of fact the Chief Inspector can find no record of any refrigeration plants under 50 tons operating automatically. In a number of cases the owner is the operator.

It is also intended under the provisions of the Bill covering automatic refrigeration under 50-tons capacity, that the exemption from the requirement to have an operator in attendance will be subject to such conditions as the Chief Inspector deems fit. That is required under the present Act covering automatic refrigeration for ice-making.

There will be no loss of employment with automatic boilers. I think there will be an increase in employment. The Bill will enable many people to install air-conditioning plants whereas previously under the Act they would not. I think the Bill will bring about increased employment.

The amendments do not provide for boilers being run unattended—I referred to that a moment ago—but allow for attendants on automatic boilers to be employed on other duties as well. Another amendment is required to assist in the provision of certificated operators for boilers of all sizes throughout industry. The reason that has made this necessary is that a number of industries are using process boilers of an automatic or semi-automatic nature for provision of steam in dry-cleaning, tyre-retreading, food-processing, and similar work.

It is not proposed to make any alteration to the Act which provides for the issue of restricted certificates for the operation of boilers up to and including five horse-power.

However, it is proposed to amend Section 55 of the Act to provide, in addition to first-class, second-class and third-class engine-drivers' certificates, four classes of boiler attendants' certificates, namely, first, second, third and fourth-class.

At the present time, it is the practice to issue engine-drivers' certificates endorsed "boilers only" where the operators are concerned only with boilers. It is logical, therefore, that a definite boiler certificate be issued with provision for an attendant to obtain a full value engine-driver's certificate after production of evidence of requisite engine experience.

Details of the requirements for the issue of the four classes of boiler attendants' certificates are contained in the Bill. As hon. members do not seem to be very interested

in the Bill, I will not go into details. I advise them that they can see the details in the Bill when they get it.

Mr. Davies: There is a bigger percentage of the Opposition present than the Government.

Mr. MORRIS: What I was referring to was that most members of the Opposition seem to be having private conversations. I am trying to give very full explanations and they are not simple—they are somewhat technical—and I am trying to make sure that everything in the Bill is brought to the knowledge of hon. members.

With the issuing of separate boiler certificates, it will be necessary to set out the requirements for engine-drivers' certificates, and these are also detailed in the Bill.

To enforce the Act as it at present exists would make it almost impossible for a second-class engine-driver to receive sufficient training to qualify for a first-class engine-driver's certificate. These restrictions are making it very difficult, both from the operator's point of view in obtaining a first-class certificate and also from the point of view of industry in obtaining first-class engine-drivers. The branches of industry that have the greatest cause for complaint at the present time are the sugar mills and the power stations.

I will move now to a different field from the one I have been dealing with. I advise hon. members that it is also proposed to amend the present provisions concerning motor-mechanics' certificates. The present Act gives no credit to the apprentice who has satisfactorily completed an apprenticeship to the trade of motor-mechanic with creditable passes at technical colleges or technical correspondence schools.

The Second Schedule of the Act is also at variance with the requirements of the Apprentices and Minors Act governing the employment of minors. The latter Act makes it an offence to employ a minor in, or for a minor to engage in, a trade or calling covered by the Act other than as an apprentice. One such trade is that of motor-mechanic. We have discussed this matter with the Minister for Education, who, as you know, is responsible for the administration of the Apprentices and Minors Act, and he is very much in agreement with the proposal.

Section 17 (2) of the Second Schedule of the Inspection of Machinery Act states that "An applicant for a 'B' Grade Motor Mechanic's Certificate shall have served an apprenticeship to motor engineering for a period of at least four years, or shall have worked for a period of at least four years as a motor mechanic in a reputable garage or workshop." This is wrong in two points. Firstly, an apprenticeship to motor engineering is five (5) years and it is not considered desirable to issue any certificate prior to completion of an apprenticeship. Secondly, an applicant who has not been apprenticed could seek a certificate at the age of 21 years, which is

the minimum age for issue. Such an application would be an admission on the part of the applicant and his employer of an offence against the Apprentices and Minors Act, as it is at the present time. No credit can therefore be claimed by any party not apprenticed for time spent at the trade before the age of 21 years.

An anomaly at present exists whereby an apprentice, after spending four years at college classes with creditable results, cannot be issued with a motor mechanic's certificate without further examination, whereas another applicant, after a short period of study and with doubtful practical training, can sit for an examination and be granted a certificate. To solve this, it is proposed to amend Section 17 of the Second Schedule to provide that an applicant for an "A" Grade Motor Mechanic's Certificate shall have held a "B" Grade Motor Mechanic's Certificate for a period of at least 12 months and, during that time, shall have been employed as a motor mechanic in a reputable motor garage or workshop where internal combustion engines are made, repaired or serviced; or shall have worked for at least six years as an adult as a motor mechanic in a reputable motor garage or workshop where internal combustion engines are made, repaired, or serviced.

An applicant for a "B" Grade Motor Mechanic's Certificate shall have served an apprenticeship to motor engineering for a period of at least five years or, if not apprenticed, shall have worked for a period of at least five years as an adult as a motor mechanic in a reputable motor garage or workshop where internal combustion engines are made, repaired, or serviced.

I might also add that it will be necessary to amend Regulations 54 (a) and 54 (b) governing examination requirements for "A" and "B" grade certificates to include provisos that the production of evidence of passes of a required standard at a Technical College or Technical Correspondence School may exempt the applicant from appointments from further examination.

These amendments can be made to the Second Schedule by the Governor in Council under Section 57 (1), but I wanted to give the explanation because then hon. members, if they refer to the Bill when they get it, will see the purpose and will understand the reasons for the amendments.

It is proposed that discussions be held between the Technical Education Branch and the Apprenticeship Office to determine a satisfactory standard of college passes to exempt applicants from further examination.

Mr. Houston: An apprentice who has served his time could be granted a "B" grade certificate?

Mr. MORRIS: Yes.

Mr. Houston: Is that right?

Mr. MORRIS: Yes.

Mr. Houston: How long is it after that before he can be granted an "A" grade certificate?

Mr. MORRIS: I think it is 12 months. He must serve five years, not four. In the existing provision in the Act reference is made to four years. He must serve five years before he can gain his "B" grade certificate. This is somewhat technical, and I repeat that I did mention the period.

I turn now to another field, still within the ambit of the Act.

We have carefully considered desirable amendments concerning the issue of plant operators' certificates, and it is proposed to amend Section 55 of the Principal Act to give the Board power to grant plant operators' certificates in three grades—first, second, and third class.

The testing of, and issue of certificates of competency to, operators of a multitude of internal-combustion-engine-driven and other plant are functions of the Machinery Department. These plant items include fork-lift trucks, tow motors, air compressors, wharf units, road graders, dozers, tractors, drag lines, excavators, mobile cranes, and dredging equipment.

The practice has arisen of issuing second class internal combustion certificates with appropriate endorsements. The second class certificate is essentially for large fixed plant in powerhouses, etc.

Since July, 1959, 1,045 second class certificates have been issued, and of these 953 have been in the above categories. A number of the balance have been for oil locomotives, only 36 being genuine second class certificates. The cost of these certificates, together with an exhibition copy, would be substantial, while the time taken by the Chief Inspector in signing 1,045 certificates, 1,045 exhibition copies, and the equivalent number of endorsements, could, I believe, be more satisfactorily used.

It is proposed that three certificates, called plant operators' certificates first, second, and third class, be introduced. Details concerning the authorities to operate covered by these certificates and the qualifications required to secure the issue of such certificates are set out in the Bill. It would take up too much time if I attempted to deal with them in detail at this stage.

These certificates will be issued as a result of a practical and oral examination only, consideration being given to the issue of the certificates by the inspector at the time of the test, when he will collect the fee and sign the certificate, or, alternatively, the inspector will issue an interim certificate having a currency of one month from date of issue authorising the operation of plant pending the receipt of the original certificate from the district office or head office. A monthly return of certificates issued would be supplied to the board of examiners for its information.

As hon. members are aware, "snap" inspections are presently being made of cars exhibited for sale in used car dealers' premises. These inspections were initiated recently.

Legal advice obtained from the Solicitor-General is to the effect that power is already contained in the present provisions of the Act to enable these inspections to be made. However, it is felt that the position should be put definitely beyond doubt, and it is therefore proposed to add in Section 11 a provision authorising machinery inspectors to enter the premises of any used-car dealer and inspect and examine any motor vehicle offered for sale on such premises.

Mr. Davies: Is the Minister aware—

Mr. MORRIS: In addition, it is also proposed to amend Section 44 of the Act—I think this is probably what the hon. member was going to ask—to provide that the Chief Inspector may require used-car dealers to effect such repairs to motor vehicles for sale as the Chief Inspector deems necessary to make the vehicle safe to operate on the road. I should imagine that that covers the point the hon. member for Maryborough was going to make.

The collection of fees for inspections of machinery has also been the subject of intense investigation since the present Government assumed office. A very antiquated procedure was being followed whereby debits were raised and forwarded to the persons concerned for amounts as trivial as 2s. upwards. If the amounts were not paid within a specified date the matter was pursued further by reminder notices. Eventually huge lists of unpaid amounts ranging from such small sums upwards were forwarded to the Solicitor-General to take the requisite action to seek payment by legal process of the amounts owing. Of course it will be realised by hon. members that this was a very costly procedure. It was time-consuming in numerous ways. It tied up the Solicitor-General's Department on minor matters that were too small to pay for the work that had to be done, apart from the time of the officers involved in this method of collecting fees. Added to that again was the cost of postage. It has been a very antiquated method and the cost of collection was out of all proportion to the amount of money collected. However, it has been going on. I suppose in many matters practices commence under perfectly suitable conditions, only to continue and grow until they become out of proportion to their value. I suppose that will always be so. However, this was one we discovered, and I think we are overcoming it satisfactorily.

As a temporary expedient I arranged for the Chief Inspector to make available an officer of his department to follow up the collection of a number of the outstanding amounts with a view to eliminating the costly and wasteful procedure that was being followed. At the same time I asked the Public Service Commissioner to examine the

practicability of implementing a system whereby most of these fees could be paid on the spot at the time of inspection of the machinery, motor vehicle, &c. I think hon. members will agree that most people would prefer to pay on the spot rather than go to the trouble of writing out a cheque for a small amount and posting it.

Mr. Houston: What would the 2s. be for?

Mr. MORRIS: I could not tell the hon. member that, but I know there were many amounts of 2s. and upwards. They range through a whole field of quite different types of inspections. I used the 2s. fee as an example. There are many varying fees, some of them very small. They were very time-consuming and no doubt they have caused the department 10 times as much work as they were worth, even if they were finally collected. In many instances after the time was spent on them they were not collected. It was a practice that obviously had to be changed, and it has been changed.

The Public Service Commissioner has reported that he is of the opinion that such a procedure is feasible, and discussions have already been held between the Chief Inspector of Machinery, the accountant of this department, and an officer of the Public Service Commissioner's Department, about the implementation of this very desirable method of payment of small amounts on the spot. Those discussions have not been concluded but they are proceeding satisfactorily. Because I am quite sure that they will be concluded to our satisfaction I am emphasising the need for these amendments. To enable any such modern and improved method of payment to be implemented it is considered desirable that legislative provision be made authorising its implementation. Consequently, it is proposed to amend Section 32 of the Act to provide that an inspector may collect from the owner of such machinery at the time of the inspection any fees payable by such owner for any inspection of it.

Hon. members may rest assured that in the implementation of any such procedure, any firms who because of their size incur considerable expenditure in this regard, or who for other reasons find payment on the spot impracticable, will still be able to meet their obligations by a more suitable method. We are trying to make the procedure more flexible and to produce more positive work on inspections rather than on the collection of fees and, at the same time, to knit it into the convenience of the public.

The hon. member for Bulimba asked me to what the 2s. fee related. I cannot tell him that but the overwhelming percentage of the small accounts would range from £1 to £2.

Mr. Houston: I am quite happy with that.

Mr. MORRIS: There is one other field I wish to mention. Section 15 (6) (d) refers to the "Board". Section 15 generally deals with persons who may lawfully be in charge of machinery. The board is an examining

body only and determines whether an applicant has the necessary qualifications for a particular certificate. It has no authority under this Act over the operative requirements for machinery. Those requirements are as authorised by the Chief Inspector or as prescribed by the Governor in Council. It is therefore proposed to delete the word "Board" and substitute therefor the words "Chief Inspector".

I suppose it will be thought that I have spoken at length. I have but I felt it was necessary to show in as much detail as possible the reasons for the amendments that are being made and where they occur. It is essential that, with the improvement in mechanical and automatic processes, safety legislation governing the use of machinery in this State be kept in line with such improvements so that, whilst ensuring that all necessary provisions for the enforcement of safety are provided for, industry generally is not retarded or hamstrung by outmoded or outdated provisions in legislation. At the same time it is very necessary to examine the effect of such amendments on the general community in the light of what is good for the whole community. That has been done. All these amendments have been investigated very carefully and thoroughly and I feel very confident that they are for the betterment of industry, the employees in it, and the people generally.

I have not traversed anything that is not in the Bill, but I have tried to give a fairly full coverage of the proposed amendments so that they will be more easily followed when the Bill is printed.

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) (12.30 p.m.): I inform the Committee that owing to an important engagement the Leader of the Opposition is unable to speak at this stage. No doubt he will deal with many of the matters covered by the Bill at a later stage of the debate.

I preface my comments on the Bill by referring to the Minister's statement that hon. members on this side of the Chamber were apparently not interested in it. I draw his attention to the fact that at that stage, and at present, Government members are far outnumbered by Opposition members. I wonder would that have been the position if we had been debating something of benefit to great industrialists or the grazing fraternity.

I take exception to the hon. gentleman's statement. Opposition members are always keenly interested in legislation covering safety measures which we think are very necessary and important, having regard to modern trends in industry. The Minister should have taken note of the state of the Committee before making his remark.

Mr. Morris: You are very touchy.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I assure the Minister I am not touchy. I personally do not care what opinion he holds of my party.

but I assure him that he cannot accuse Opposition members of not being interested in the welfare of workers.

Mr. Morris: I did not refer to any particular hon. member, but now I will tell you why I made that comment. Directly in front of me there was a group of members chattering among themselves, and their conversation was very distracting.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: If the Minister had looked behind him he would have seen empty benches.

Mr. Morris: They have done a considerable amount of work on the Bill and know its contents.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Will the hon. member now proceed.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I agree with the Minister that the Bill is very lengthy and involved. For that reason Opposition members would not care to concur readily in any of the provisions before making a detailed examination of the Bill. I pay a tribute to the Minister for his attempt to describe clearly many of the provisions, but at this stage, not having had an opportunity to study the Bill carefully, I could not deal adequately with it. I shall therefore confine myself to some general observations.

No hon. member could argue about the clause covering the supplying of information collected by inspectors to solicitors, to the injured person or to dependants in the case of fatal accidents. That provision will strengthen the Act and will remove an anomaly.

The Minister said that certain sections of the Act, particularly those covering the keeping of statistics and records, had been in existence for 45 years, and that they had not been reviewed or, for that matter, adhered to. His statement gives rise to the thought that we could well institute a system of periodical review of Acts, irrespective of the subjects covered by them. We could provide for the review of an Act within a specified time after it has been passed or amended. An admission that an Act has been in force for 45 years and has not been reviewed is very serious. The system could be strengthened by a regular periodical review—

A Government Member: A shocking indictment of Labour.

Mr. Hanlon: There is a responsibility on the administering officers to bring it to the attention of the administrator.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: It is all very well for the hon. member for Nundah to say it is a shocking indictment of Labour.

Mr. Knox: I did nothing of the sort.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: From the unintelligible mutter I heard, that was the best I could make of it. The hon. member for

Nundah has been singularly absent during any discussions on industrial matters. These things do not go back to any particular political party. There are officers administering these Acts and they should bring to the notice of the responsible Minister any need for revision. It is no good the hon. member for Nundah trying to gain political capital out of something that I feel is a bit over his head.

Mr. Rae: You only got that from another member, anyway. You would not have thought of it yourself.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: At one time I thought that the hon. member for Gregory showed a degree of intelligence, but after that remark I am afraid I will have to review my opinion of him.

Such a varied amendment of the Act brings into sharp relief the part that automation is playing today. We see the need for reclassification of certain employees in the machinery field. To elaborate on the Minister's remarks concerning automation, it gives added point to our contention that there is a need to re-train many persons in industry because of the advances being made in automation and the need for qualified operators for these machines.

One clause relates to the necessity to keep to a minimum the cost of operating air-conditioning and refrigerating plants and makes provision for exemption because these machines are automatic. However, as these machines are automatic and would be subject to a certain degree of neglect in their maintenance, this gives rise to the necessity for a provision in the Bill for a regular inspection of automatic machines and the issue of certificates. Although certain of these machines do not operate with toxic gases, there are other hazards such as fire, and many other emergencies that are caused by serious breakdowns in the machines. I suggest that the Minister should give serious consideration to frequent inspection of automatic plant when exemption is granted under this clause.

I am sure that members of the Opposition are particularly pleased to hear that provision is being made in the Bill for inspectors of machinery to enter the premises of used-car dealers and inspect any of the vehicles for sale. For some time the operations of these dealers have warranted inspection by the department.

Mr. Morris: You mentioned that there should be some provision for regular inspections.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: For automatic machinery, yes.

Mr. Morris: In Section 29 of the Act—not the amending Bill—it is laid down that they must be inspected.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I agree with the Minister but the point I was trying to make was that, because they are automatic and do

not require manual attention, their maintenance could be neglected. Any automatic machinery should be subject to more frequent check than manually-operated machinery.

Mr. Morris: Section 29 lays it down that they must be inspected at prescribed periods.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I agree with that, but the point I was trying to make was that automatic machinery should be subject to more frequent checks than manually-operated machinery.

Mr. Morris: That is so. The Chief Inspector prescribes the times.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I was dealing with the subject of inspection by the department of vehicles for sale in used-car depots. Since the present Minister for Labour and Industry took office, the machinery inspection of vehicles on roads has become very rigid and purchasers of second-hand vehicles have found that, on registering them and taking them out on the road, they have been subjected to scrutiny by officers of the department. Some have been involved in heavy expense to rectify mechanical faults in cars that were sold to them by used-car dealers. The provision for regular inspection could perhaps be carried a little further. All used cars could be the subject of inspection and a certificate issued by the department to the effect that they are roadworthy and that they comply with all the machinery regulations. That would protect the purchasers. They would not run the risk of incurring heavy expense as the cars would have to be roadworthy before they were sold.

Mr. Morris: That is why we are inserting the new provision.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I agree wholeheartedly with that and I support any move to protect the purchasers of used vehicles from any such expense.

The Bill is technical and at this stage I shall content myself with stressing the points I have already made. I should like to make a thorough and detailed examination of the Bill before commenting further. I assure the Committee that I will peruse it in its full context. I therefore reserve further comment till a later stage in the debate.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba) (12.44 p.m.): As I have said on other measures affecting this department, as time goes on it is necessary for us to review various Acts and Regulations to keep pace with modern trends. The previous speaker said he was in full accord with the inspection of second-hand vehicles and I entirely agree with that view. It seems to me that all vehicles on the road should be roadworthy; otherwise they can be, and they have been, one of the greatest menaces to the public and a potential cause of injury or loss of life. Unless the vehicle is in good condition, with brakes working perfectly, signals functioning correctly and so on, it is a potential killer irrespective of the

ability of the operator or his sense of responsibility. I also believe that a copy of the inspector's report could be placed on the vehicle so that a person wanting to buy it could read the report. Taking into consideration the profits made by used-car dealers on these vehicles, I do not think it would hurt them to pay a fee that would cover the cost of the inspection of the vehicle.

I believe that only when these provisions are implemented will the public get a fair deal. Many used-car dealers are men of high standing in the community, people from whom one knows one will get a fair deal. I think they will welcome an inspection of their cars and trucks, because they know that their good name will be maintained. It is possible for a car to be traded in and sold within two or three hours, and the dealer concerned may not know the condition of that car. He takes it at face value himself, then passes it on. If he were compelled to have the car inspected, it might delay the sale for one or two days; but at least his name would be kept clean and, what is more important, the purchaser would know that he was getting value for his money.

I feel very strongly on this matter, and have for some time, so I welcome any legislation that will improve the position in regard to the sale of second-hand cars. I know that many people take advantage of the service provided by the R.A.C.Q. and other organisations for checking vehicles; but, unfortunately, many others, particularly those who have saved up to buy their first car, do not ask for a guarantee that everything is in order. I ask the Minister to consider making the inspection of second-hand vehicles compulsory. I know there would be some difficulty with a person making a private sale. I have no objection to a person selling privately, but I believe that he should be compelled to have his vehicle inspected so that he can say, "This vehicle is in first-class condition." Certain faults that do not affect the actual running of the car could be shown on inspection. We are not worried about the fact that the upholstery is a bit torn, or something like that. That is not what I have in mind. I am concerned only with things that could make the car a dangerous weapon, irrespective of who is operating it.

I am pleased to hear that the provisions in the Bill dealing with the issuing of certificates to motor mechanics are in line with recommendations that I made in this Chamber two or three years ago. The Minister may recall that when I was speaking on Education—he was in the Chamber at the time—I suggested that he and the Minister for Education and Migration should get together on the question of issuing certificates because I believed that apprentice motor mechanics were receiving one of the rawest deals in the field of apprenticeship and trade training. As the Minister now knows, we had lads serving their time and being given no incentive to obtain the best possible results. It is true that they served their apprenticeship and did a four-year college course. I

believe four years was mentioned in the Act because they did a four-year college course and what was virtually a five-year apprenticeship course. In the early days it was a four-year college course, with the extra year to gain added practical experience and knowledge. Now it is an apprenticeship course with a period for specialisation. Lads go through with the highest honours and find that, although they have been classified as the equivalent of an A grade mechanic, that applies only while they are working for the firm with whom they have served their time. Immediately they left they found themselves high and dry without an A grade certificate. Many young men who served their apprenticeship did not worry very much about obtaining their certificates, but when the Act was amended some time ago to provide that garages must display the grades of certificates held by their mechanics it became necessary for them to obtain their A or B grade certificates. Many apprentices obtain their B grade certificate by examination but do not worry very much about getting their A grade certificate, even though they are highly qualified. If the wording of the Bill is as watertight as the Minister suggests, it will mean that apprentices who complete a four-year college course will be granted a B grade certificate automatically, and after another 12 months of actually working in the industry they may apply for and be granted their A grade certificate.

Mr. Morris: It is 12 months. I confirm what I said a little while ago.

Mr. HOUSTON: I was not sure and I wanted to be sure before I spoke.

We need to make provision for those who have not had an opportunity to serve their apprenticeship. It is true that in many trades it is not desirable to bring in people who have not had the necessary basic training and education, but there are other trades in which they would be acceptable. With the extension of automation I think it will become necessary to allow for adult training, and probably that is what the Minister had in mind. We know what happened immediately after the war. Many young men who entered the Services at 18 or 19 were partly trained in trades during their war service. Upon discharge they were given the opportunity to work in garages and the like. That wise programme of rehabilitation achieved very desirable results. With the growth of automation a similar scheme may be required in the future. But in all of these changes we must protect the apprentices and the apprenticeship system. Some men who had the opportunity to do their apprenticeship training preferred to take higher-paid jobs as youths, and later came into the motor mechanics industry, eventually to finish up in the same position as those who had made the sacrifice to serve apprenticeships. We must not allow the stage to be reached where untrained men may come into industry. We must remember that an apprentice is not just cheap labour; the apprenticeship scheme is

a means of turning out skilled tradesmen and craftsmen. When an apprentice learns his trade his mind is young and receptive. He learns both the practical and theoretical side of his trade, which is the most desirable way of learning any trade or profession. We must make sure that the apprentices' knowledge and qualifications are protected. The employee who comes in from outside must be given an opportunity to learn both the theoretical and practical side if we are to maintain a high standard in industry. The Minister for Education and Migration may have to look into this matter in the future if it should become necessary to use the motor-mechanics' field to absorb workers who are displaced by automation. I will conclude on that note. Those are the two main features with which I wish to deal. I look forward to examining the Bill in detail to see what changes are being made and to study the reasons for them.

Mr. NEWTON (Belmont) (12.55 p.m.): When amendments of Acts covering the Machinery Department are proposed it is necessary to examine them very closely. I am concerned mainly at the number of amendments referred to by the Minister relative to provisions that have been overlooked for a very long time. I am concerned also at the number of provisions in different Acts that have never been enforced.

Most of the amendments put forward by the Minister cover matters that will benefit the workers, but, at the same time, they will throw a great deal of extra work on to the machinery inspectors. When considering the Machinery Department one must look also at the Scaffolding Department because, although in the metropolitan area those departments are separate and scaffolding inspectors look after scaffolding matters whilst machinery inspectors attend to machinery matters, that is not the case in the provincial cities where, at the present time, the machinery inspector is also the scaffolding inspector. It is true that the position has been improved in recent years by the appointment of scaffolding inspectors in some of the larger provincial cities, but in many cases the machinery inspector is still required to act also as scaffolding inspector. However, for six months of the year in some towns the machinery inspector would be virtually fully occupied in sugar mills while they are operating.

Among other things proposed by the Minister is a stricter inspection of motor vehicles on the road. I should like the Minister to inform us how that will affect the machinery inspectors. Some of the proposed amendments are far-reaching and would entail considerable work.

Mr. Morris: What is it the hon. member wants me to tell him?

Mr. NEWTON: What will be the position of machinery inspectors? Will they have more to do or will they be relieved of some of their present duties? That is something that must be considered.

The Minister the other day introduced a Bill to amend the Scaffolding Act and I was very pleased to see that assistance is to be given to widows and next-of-kin in that reports of accidents on the job will be made available to them. Similar assistance is being given under this Bill, too. However, the position of the inspector who submits the report to the Chief Inspector is important, too. The Minister pointed out that an inspector can be subpoenaed to give evidence in a particular case, so it is important that carbon copies of all reports be held. In the same way as trade-union organisers, inspectors, whether they be in the Machinery Department, Scaffolding Department or Department of Labour and Industry, deal each day with a number of matters, and, as they are likely to be subpoenaed to give evidence in courts, I stress the importance of keeping carbon copies of their reports.

On Monday last a worker was killed on a building job in Leichhardt Street, the cause of the accident being a faulty weld. New problems are coming to light even while we discuss this Bill. Inspectors of the Machinery Department will now have to consider welding on machinery, and, as it will play an ever-increasing part in future development, the duties of inspectors will be further increased.

I return to my point about the importance of keeping carbon copies of inspectors' reports. In the event of an accident a trade-union organiser is quickly on the scene and investigates the facts. If he finds the cause of the accident is neglect by the employer, the union takes action in court seeking damages over and above workers' compensation. Workers' compensation is of assistance, but it is not sufficient to maintain the wife and family of a worker who is involved in a fatal accident. If neglect on the part of the employer can be proved judgment is given against him; on the other hand, if the evidence shows that the employee was doing something that he knew to be wrong, the claim is reduced by a certain percentage. All these matters have to be taken into consideration.

I have here a booklet issued by the Building Workers' Industrial Union, of which Mr. Dawson is secretary. It deals with a number of points raised in debate on this Bill and on the Bill to amend the Inspection of Scaffolding Acts, and in addition contains information on the award and the union's rules. It would cost about 10s. to produce. We do not find employers going to the same trouble to bring themselves up to date in these matters.

Mr. Hughes: Don't you think employers are more safety-minded now than ever?

Mr. NEWTON: I should say that employers first became safety-conscious after the recent convention on safety in industry. A number of them attended that convention and began to realise that what the trade-union movement has been trying

to do since the war is essential for the protection and welfare of the workers. As I have pointed out, if there are no accidents in industry the employers must benefit.

The Minister touched on a big field when he referred to refrigeration and air-conditioning. He gave us certain assurances, but I should not like to speak on those provisions without seeing the Bill because they cover a very wide field.

Engine-drivers and plant-operators were also mentioned. I should like to ask the Minister if there have been any conferences, or any correspondence on this matter with the Federated Engine Drivers' and Firemen's Association, which covers engine-drivers and plant-operators. If the Minister has anything to put before us on that point it will help us. We will then know whether the union has had any conference or correspondence on the matter with the department.

I will not elaborate on the question of used-car dealers, but I am pleased to see that at last some protection is being given to buyers. It is long overdue. When we look at the number of used-car dealers we realise that from their profits they can easily afford to make the improvements that are covered by the proposed legislation.

I do not want to speak at length on apprenticeships because, as was pointed out by the previous speaker, the five-year apprenticeship system is greatly cherished by the trade-union movement. We feel it is a necessity and could not be cut except in very special circumstances. If we do not have the apprentices we will not get the tradesmen for tomorrow. The introduction of highly-skilled mechanical techniques will follow in the train of automation, and from my experience I cannot see how we can reduce the period of apprenticeship from five years to four, as has been suggested in the motor-mechanics trade.

I conclude by saying that the Bill contains a number of proposals that may be very good, but without examining the Bill closely it is very difficult to elaborate on them.

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Labour and Industry) (2.24 p.m.), in reply: I should like to thank hon. members for their comments on the Bill. I shall not elaborate on them to any extent, but I shall answer the points as they were raised. The matter of the small fee was raised by one hon. member; I do not remember who it was. The smallest fee is 2s., chargeable for the issue of a small metal plate for attachment to machinery. There is a fee of 2s. 6d. for the inspection of hot-water cylinders, and the fees increase from that point.

The hon. member for Salisbury referred to the need for a periodical review of all legislation. I agree that that is desirable and I should like him to know that it is being done.

This Bill is the second of the related ones. I have three more very important Bills, all

of which are being introduced as a result of that review which is taking place quite regularly. The officers of the department are working very hard to bring all our legislation up to date.

The hon. member for Salisbury spoke of the periodic inspection of automatic machinery and, by interjection, I told him that Section 29 covered it. I can elaborate a little on that. The Chief Inspector is ensuring not only that the machinery will be inspected but also that a log book must be available for the inspectors to see.

The hon. member for Bulimba suggested that for used cars a duplicate inspection sheet be left with the second-hand dealer in respect of the particular car. It would be a little difficult to ensure that that inspection sheet was up to date when the car was sold. As I have said so often in the last week or two, you get a bad potato in every bag. Similarly you get the occasional bad dealer. Let me say emphatically that I have had the greatest co-operation from the recognised ethical car dealers. Indeed they have urged me to go much further than we have gone.

Mr. Sherrington: The point I tried to make was that all used cars should be subject to a mechanical inspection so that they are up to the standard required by the Act.

Mr. MORRIS: I have always been keen on this type of inspection and I repeat that I have been asked by the ethical dealers to go further and to do it more quickly than we have. It is pleasing to know that.

I have been impressed by the various methods of used-car inspection I have seen in different places, particularly two different systems that are in operation. Under the New South Wales system all cars must be taken to the motor garages or service stations or inspection stations—or perhaps the best way to describe them is to say the garages that are licensed as testing stations. In New Zealand there are many Government testing stations. That system is very costly to set up, although it works well. The Chief Inspector and I and others have had many discussions on the matter. It has been studied very fully by Mr. Hilless in the last six or seven months. At present he is preparing a report on the testing of all cars. It is a big system to introduce and I make no bones about it that I personally am very much in favour of a system like that so long as it is effectively controlled.

Mr. Sherrington: Will that report of Mr. Hilless's be available to the members of this Assembly?

Mr. MORRIS: No. It is a departmental report. On all these matters of investigation, one gets a report from officers of the department. I want to make it clear that I am seeking information on this subject and I should welcome anything from anybody that will add to the knowledge we

already have. It may give us a new idea. We are genuinely seeking the best solution of the problem.

Mr. Duggan: In the event of proof being provided, would you agree with the imposition of a heavy penalty on people who turn back the speedometers of used cars by several thousands of miles? Would you consider that for proven offences they should be dealt with very severely?

Mr. MORRIS: I would consider it very seriously, because I believe that we must do all we can to protect the person who buys a second-hand car. There are people—for many years I myself was one—who cannot afford to buy a new car and thus have to buy a second-hand car, and they are entitled to get the true history of the vehicle that they buy. If we introduce the system of testing about which I am speaking, I think it will be possible to check on the history of any vehicle with the records that will exist. I think it is well and truly worth considering. Without going into great detail, I can say that we are looking for the very best method and that many hours have been spent by Mr. Hilless and his officers in trying to weed out the least valuable parts of some of these systems.

Mr. Houston: I think you will agree that the better used-car dealers usually have a motor mechanic on their staff.

Mr. MORRIS: That is quite right.

Mr. Houston: I am not worried about them. I am worried about the dealer who does not employ a qualified man.

Mr. MORRIS: Most of the dealers are very ethical and highly reputable. There are some who are not, and they are the ones we are worried about. If I could see a way of ensuring that an accurate log-book was kept for all vehicles, I should like to see that method introduced—the method that is used in the Army. But I do not think there is any way that we could get private individuals to keep log-books for their vehicles, even of inspections. It may be possible—Mr. Hilless may have the answer to this—to keep in our own inspection records the mileages of vehicles on each inspection.

There are many other points that I could mention, but I do not want to weary the House with speculation. I prefer to give hon. members the details when a firm plan has been decided upon. I again emphasise that I will welcome most sincerely any suggestion for improving a scheme such as that.

The hon. member for Belmont said that we are giving our inspectors more and more tasks to perform. I agree that we are. If I may be permitted to diverge a little, in other legislation that I shall be introducing shortly we will be giving our inspectors more and bigger tasks to perform. For that reason we have to consider increasing the number of inspectors. We have appointed more

motor inspectors only recently, and we have attempted to keep the inspections up to date.

Mr. Newton: It is very good to know that, because they could become overloaded.

Mr. MORRIS: Yes. It would be impossible for them to carry out many additional tasks unless we added to their number. On the other hand, in every sub-department—I do not care which one it is—one could say, “If we could increase the number of people on the staff, we could do more work.” All Governments, not only this Government, have to temper their desire to extend their services in accordance with the needs of other departments. Bearing that in mind, we are doing all we can to increase the numbers in conformity with the tasks that they are required to perform.

I think the hon. member for Belmont also raised the matter of welding certificates. That is under consideration now by the Chief Inspector, and he has in mind particularly the method that is operating in New South Wales.

Mr. Newton: I referred to the accident that happened last Monday.

Mr. MORRIS: I was just going to refer to that. I have not yet received the report on that very regrettable accident, but it is in course of preparation. Until I get it I should not like to comment on the accident.

The hon. member asked me about correspondence with the F.E.D. and F.A. Every day the department receives correspondence from different quarters, but whether there has been any correspondence on the matter referred to by the hon. member I could not say without referring to the files.

I thank all hon. members for their constructive suggestions. I know that they all realise that safety is not a matter of politics. I think that we in Queensland are moving in the right direction. I had intended to bring along some letters from various industrial organisations wherein they specifically refer to the great help that they have had from the department in their efforts to extend safety in their industries. Those letters show the way in which these organisations are co-operating with us. We all know that is so and hon. members do not need me to read letters to illustrate it.

I again thank hon. members and look forward to being able to get this Bill and a related Bill through so that we can implement the safety provisions embodied in them.

Motion (Mr. Morris) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

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

The House adjourned at 2.39 p.m.