

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 1 APRIL 1965

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Answers:—

(1) "Homogenised pasteurised milk is being supplied to schools in the Townsville area. The total quantity delivered daily to schools in this area is 339 gallons."

(2) "This Department prescribes that milk supplied to schools under the Free Milk Scheme shall comply with the requirements of The Health Acts and shall be delivered in individual 1/3rd pint bottles, sealed and capped. The milk being delivered to Townsville schools satisfies these requirements. Approval has been given to the principle of supply of homogenised milk, and as with all other supplies to schools, the Department is dependent upon Head Teachers for advice which might cause the Department to institute any change. No complaint has been received by the Department from any school receiving homogenised pasteurised milk."

TRAFFIC COMMISSION EXPENDITURE.—
Mr. Lloyd for Mr. Duggan, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

(1) What capital expenditure was incurred through the Traffic Commission since its inception in the installation of traffic lights and other traffic engineering facilities (a) in Brisbane and (b) elsewhere in the State?

(2) What is the actual or estimated annual cost of street marking and other channelisation (a) in Brisbane and (b) elsewhere in the State?

(3) What fund bears the cost of these charges?

(4) What is the present number of personnel engaged exclusively on the traffic engineering responsibility it is proposed to transfer to the Local Authorities (a) in Brisbane and (b) elsewhere in the State?

Answers:—

(1) "Since the inception of the Traffic Commission, an amount of £460,000 has been spent in Brisbane and £106,000 elsewhere in the State from Loan Funds in the installation of traffic lights and other traffic engineering facilities. Also since the inception of the Parkatarea Trust Fund in December 1961 the capital expenditure incurred on the installation of traffic control schemes has been £240,000."

(2) "The estimated annual cost for 1964-1965 of pavement marking including line marking and pedestrian crossings is £32,500 in Brisbane and £6,000 elsewhere in the State. This £6,000 includes the materials cost only and the installation costs which are borne by the Local Authorities outside Brisbane are an estimated £14,000 extra."

THURSDAY, 1 APRIL, 1965

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

Assent to the following Bills reported by Mr. Speaker:—

Building Units Titles Bill.

Alcan Queensland Pty. Limited Agreement Bill.

QUESTIONS

MILK FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN, TOWNNSVILLE AREA.—Mr. Aikens, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) Are schools in the Townsville area being supplied with pasteurised or homogenised milk for pupil-consumption and, if so, in what total daily quantity?

(2) Did the headmaster, committee or pupils at any or all schools have any opportunity to decide which type of milk they preferred and, if not, why not?

(3) "Up to 1964-1965 Consolidated Revenue bore the total cost for Brisbane and materials costs elsewhere, i.e. all costs except installation outside of Brisbane. In 1964-1965 money from the Trust Fund in Brisbane has been used for line marking and pedestrian crossings and money from Consolidated Revenue for materials elsewhere in the State."

(4) "At present the number of personnel engaged by the State Traffic Engineer's Office is 95 made up of 26 public servants and 69 wages employees. Two other public servants are on study leave. It is estimated that 70 per cent. of the time of this staff is spent on Brisbane City Council problems, 20 per cent. on traffic engineering problems other than Brisbane and 10 per cent. on problems associated with the Main Roads Department."

HOUSING COMMISSION RENTAL HOUSES, CHERMSIDE, ZILLMERE AND NUDGEES.—Mr. Melloy, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Works,—

Have no houses been erected by the Queensland Housing Commission in the Northern suburbs of Brisbane specifically for rental purpose since 1957? If so, will he give urgent consideration to the construction of at least fifty houses in the suburbs of Chermiside, Zillmere and Nudgee to meet the need for rental accommodation caused by the number of employees in new industries on the North bank of the Brisbane River?

Answer:—

"Houses are not erected specifically for rental except those for letting to the Commonwealth for the Armed Forces and houses provided for industry under guarantee arrangements. All other houses are available for purchase in the first instance and, if not sold, are rented. Since June 30, 1957, 1,118 new dwellings have been provided by the Commission in northern suburbs and 183 at Lawnton and Redcliffe. An additional 111 are approved or under construction. These figures exclude houses on land owned by applicants. Consideration will be given to the requirements of the northern suburbs in framing the construction programme for 1965-1966."

SALES AND LEASES OF PROPERTY TO ABORIGINES AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS.—Mr. Melloy, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) What are the details of sales and/or leases of houses, land and/or property on Aboriginal missions or settlements and Torres Strait Islands to inhabitants of those places?

(2) What were the prices involved in the sales or leases?

(3) Where land or houses were involved, what were the terms and conditions of the sales or leases?

(4) What was the degree of security of tenure provided for purchasers?

(5) Are rights of succession provided for?

(6) Were any pensioners involved in sales or leases? If so, at what cost and under what terms and conditions?

Answer:—

(1 to 6) "Detailed information sought by the Honourable Member is not readily available and it is considered that as the Department acts in the nature of a trustee, to disclose details of much of the information sought in the Questions would constitute an invasion of the personal privacy of the individual, thus seriously affecting the confidence of Aborigines and/or Torres Strait Islanders in the Department. Many Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders have been assisted by the Department in securing homes and/or Titles to land, both on and off reserves. Wherever possible and practicable even to the extent of excision of areas from Aboriginal reserves, Title vests in the individual in terms of the Land Acts, with all of the attendant rights, privileges and responsibilities applicable to any member of the population of this State. On some reserves a number of the residents have contributed varying amounts as portion of the cost of the homes they occupy. They are assured that in the event of their leaving that reserve their assessed equity in the premises at the time of departure will be made good to them, thus ensuring no injustice. Generally, on islands in the Torres Strait many homes are owned by the individual and a considerable number have been constructed by the Department, the occupants of which have contributed to some extent towards the cost. Similar assurances exist here as apply on Aboriginal reserves. However, in the Torres Strait it is pointed out that the island is a reserve and the land areas are the subject of tribal division and each owner retains possession and title in accordance with custom and their own established system of local government. This secures ownership of the land within the Torres Strait Islander race and is considered reasonable whilst these reserves are so constituted. The land ownership system in Torres Strait has been the subject of consideration from time to time at the Triennial Conferences of Torres Strait Islander Councillors and no doubt will be reviewed from time to time in the future. The Honourable Member is assured that all possible steps are taken by the Department to preserve the rights of the individual and if at any time there is any case coming to the notice of the Honourable Member where some injustice might appear to exist, it would be appreciated if it could be brought to my notice or to the personal attention of the Director with a view to rectifying action."

WHEAT FOR STARVING STOCK.—Mr. Rae, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Primary Industries,—

(1) Is he aware that graziers in drought-stricken areas of Queensland are unable to buy feed wheat from the Wheat Stabilisation Board or from any other source to provide sufficient feed for starving stock?

(2) If so, will he make representations to the Prime Minister to have the Wheat Stabilisation Board release supplies to those graziers and other producers, who need feed wheat for their stock to survive and maintain our national economy?

(3) Will he request the Prime Minister to endeavour to keep the price of this feed wheat at a level to enable all primary producers to avail themselves of this source of feed supply?

Answers:—

(1) "No. The Manager of the State Wheat Board has advised that ample supplies of wheat are available in South Queensland to meet all requirements and that the Board is willing and able to supply graziers or any other buyers direct from the Board. The Manager also advises that he has not received any recent request from graziers in the north-west for supplies of feed wheat. Any grazier requiring wheat should make a direct approach to the Board. The address is—The State Wheat Board, Ruthven Street, Toowoomba. Graziers are advised to order in truck load lots of 6 tons or more in order to reduce freight costs."

(2) "No. It is not necessary for representations to be made to the Prime Minister or to any other Minister for the release of supplies of feed wheat for stock. Ample supplies are readily available. The Australian wheat crop in 1964-1965 has been estimated at 385 million bushels and deliveries to the Australian Wheat Board at about 346 million bushels. This is the biggest wheat crop in Australian history and the problem is one of disposal, not of supply. We should finish the year with a substantial carryover—the biggest for some years. There will be more than ample grain in Australia to meet all requirements including drought feeding requirements."

(3) "No. The price of wheat is determined each year under The Wheat Industry Stabilisation legislation. This legislation, to which all States and the Commonwealth are parties, provides for the wheat price to be fixed on a cost of production basis. The price of wheat for domestic consumption in Australia will not change during the current cereal year which ends on November 30, 1965. Consequently, there will be no increase in price because of the drought demand. The base price for large scale purchases of f.a.q. wheat which will operate up to November 30, 1965, is 14s. 8d. per bushel, bulk basis, f.o.r. Brisbane. The price

for truckload orders direct from the State Wheat Board is 14s. 11d. per bushel bulk basis f.o.r. Brisbane. The cost of bags is added if these are required; the price being 33s. per dozen. Various adjustments are applicable according to the source of supply and the destination involved. Any intending purchaser should contact the State Wheat Board for detailed information on these adjustments."

WARNING TO WORKS DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES AT MACKAY ON PROPOSED STATE-WIDE WORK STOPPAGE.—Mr. Graham, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

Regarding the State-wide industrial stoppage which was to be held on Friday, March 26, were employees of the Works Department at Mackay instructed by senior officers of the Department that if they were to participate in the stoppage all works then being carried out by day-labour in Mackay would immediately cease and that the works would then be handed over to private contractors for completion?

Answer:—

"No."

MOTOR SECTION CARS, ETHERIDGE LINE.—Mr. Wallis-Smith, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

(1) How many maintenance gangs on the Etheridge line are at present without a gang motor to convey them to work?

(2) What is the reason for the shortage of these motors?

(3) In some instances is it necessary for gangs to walk to work?

(4) Is there any hold-up in the repair of defective motors and, if so, is this because of staff shortage?

Answer:—

(1 to 4) "There are seven gangs on the Etheridge Line and each is supplied with a gang motor but the cars allotted to No. 5 and No. 6 Gangs with home station Einasleigh are at present in the Cairns Workshops for repair. There is a Flying Gang working at Einasleigh which is in possession of a heavy 'Fairmont' motor section car, and while the two fettling gangs are temporarily without a motor section car, the three gangs are using the flying gang's motor section car. A relief 'Fairmont' motor section car was loaded at Cairns yesterday for Einasleigh. The delay in the repair of the defective motors is due to non-receipt of spare parts and this aspect is being investigated with a view to the early return of the motor section cars to the gangs."

GRANT FOR MAINTENANCE OF SILVER VALLEY-IRVINEBANK ROAD.—Mr. Wallis-Smith, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

In view of his Answer to my Question on March 26, relative to the Silver Valley road and the fact that the Shire Councils responsible for this road receives so little revenue from this area and are therefore unable to maintain it, will he consider the provision of a grant to enable this road to be maintained?

Answer:—

“The Department of Main Roads makes grants to the Mareeba and Herberton Shire Councils from Commonwealth Aid funds for jobs such as this.”

X-RAY UNIT AT ATHERTON HOSPITAL.—Mr. Wallis-Smith, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

(1) Was the X-ray unit at the Atherton Hospital listed for complete overhaul? If so, has this work been carried out?

(2) What repairs to this unit have been attended to in the past six months?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) “The Atherton Hospitals Board has advised that the X-ray Unit has not been listed for a complete overhaul. During the normal maintenance service carried out by the Engineer from the X-ray company earlier this month he was requested by the Board to submit a report to it of any defects of the machine. This report has not yet been received by the Board. The Board has advised that no repairs other than any minor matters adjusted by the Engineer during his maintenance service have been carried out on this Unit during the past six (6) months. The Board advised yesterday that the machine had developed a fault and was out of action. Arrangements are being made by the Board for the Engineer from Watson Victor Ltd. to visit there immediately to effect necessary repairs. The Department has been assured by Watson Victor Ltd. that the fault can be rectified without delay and the Unit made to function satisfactorily.”

GLUTEN-FREE FOODS FOR CHILDREN SUFFERING FROM COELIAC DISEASE.—Mr. R. Jones, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

Has he given any consideration to extending assistance to needy parents to provide gluten-free foods and marketed products required for their children suffering from coeliac disease?

Answer:—

“The foods which cannot be given to children suffering from coeliac disease are those containing flour made from wheat or

rye. Bread given to children suffering from this condition must, therefore, be baked at home by using gluten-free flour. Apart from bread and the like, the child can have any other foods which the family is having. It is not proposed to provide gluten-free flour.”

TELEVISION BROADCASTS FOR JUNIOR EXAMINATION STUDENTS.—Mr. R. Jones, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) In view of the statement by the Chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, Dr. Dowling, that Television broadcasts were now directed to students of Junior standard to assist in their studies and to provide a supplementary medium to increase their proficiency, are these A.B.C. television broadcasts monitored by the Education Department?

(2) If so, will the Department take cognizance of the situation, when the Junior University Examination papers are set to ensure that children now studying for the examination in the country areas not yet favoured by a television range, are not placed at a direct disadvantage to children in viewing areas?

Answers:—

(1) “Telecast lessons in senior science and mathematics and Grade 8 science and geography are arranged by Departmental teachers working on a part-time basis; the topics are decided by subject committees. Other telecast lessons including those at Junior standard are arranged by the Australian Broadcasting Commission.”

(2) “Children outside the viewing areas will not be placed at any disadvantage. The examinations are based on the syllabus and not on telecast lessons.”

MOBILE CRANE AT CAIRNS RAILWAY GOODS SHED.—Mr. R. Jones, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

(1) Is he aware that the recently acquired heavy capacity mobile crane for the Cairns goods shed has now been re-located at Ingham in the Northern Division?

(2) What was the reason for moving this crane and is this considered to be a permanent arrangement?

(3) Has the present crane now operating in Cairns been (a) previously condemned as unsafe, (b) considered of insufficient capacity to meet the lifts (e.g. 6 ton bulk cement containers, &c.) and (c) proven incapable of performing normal work requirements, which necessitated initially its replacement?

Answers:—

(1 and 2) “An eight-ton mobile crane was transferred from Cairns to Ingham for the purpose of handling bulk cement containers

of a total weight of 5 tons 15 cwt. The five-ton mobile crane from Ingham was sent to Cairns for ordinary goods shed work on March 11, 1965. The eight-ton mobile crane from Cairns was essential at Ingham to enable the Department to secure the traffic of a large quantity of cement being conveyed in bulk containers for the construction of the Lucinda Point Bulk Sugar Terminal. The exchange of the cranes is on a temporary basis only until the completion of the Bulk Cement Contract for the Lucinda Point Bulk Sugar Terminal. It is anticipated that the handling of the bulk cement containers at Ingham will continue for approximately another three months."

(3) "There are two cranes in operation at Cairns—the five-ton capacity crane transferred from Ingham and another crane of seven tons capacity. The five-ton capacity crane is in perfect working order, whilst the seven-ton capacity crane has not been condemned. This crane lifts six-ton cement containers and is satisfactorily carrying out such work. An average of three wagons of bulk cement containers per week are received at Cairns."

SECONDARY SCHOOL AND EXTENSION SCHOLARSHIPS.—Mr. Bromley, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) Is it a fact that the Commonwealth Government has not placed any restrictions on secondary school scholarships, being held concurrently with any other award, provided no bond is involved?

(2) Has the Queensland Government ruled that these secondary school scholarships may not be held concurrently with extension scholarships?

(3) Have some extension scholarships been withdrawn from Senior pupils this year, even though they were offered subject to satisfactory progress?

(4) How many such extension scholarships have been withdrawn and are these now being offered to students who failed to gain a Commonwealth secondary scholarship?

(5) Is the State saving money at the expense of the Commonwealth on these scholarships and, if so, what is the amount saved?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "No. A student holding a Commonwealth Secondary Scholarship may receive at the same time a State student allowance. Since as Commonwealth Secondary Scholars they receive an annual grant of up to £75 to meet costs of tuition fees they are not eligible to receive State assistance of £20 a year towards the same costs."

(3) "In all, 662 students who last year received State assistance of £20 towards tuition fees are now, as Commonwealth Secondary Scholars, receiving up to £75 instead."

(4) "All students who failed to gain Commonwealth Secondary Scholarships and who at one and the same Junior Public Examination passed in at least five subjects are receiving State assistance to the extent of £20 a year if they are required to pay tuition fees."

(5) "For the students referred to in (3) above, reduction in the State commitment amounts to £13,240."

TRANSPORT SERVICE TO GULF COUNTRY.—Mr. Bromley, pursuant to notice, asked The Treasurer,—

(1) Has the rain in North Queensland and the Gulf country affected the road transport of goods to Burketown, Normanton and other townships, missions and settlements? If so, what has been the extent of the effect of this rain?

(2) How many trips have been made by road, rail and sea to these districts in the Gulf country by the new contractor, Keith Hollands Shipping Co. Pty. Ltd., since the company was awarded the contract?

(3) How many hold-ups have occurred because of the water-logged conditions of the roads and what goods have been affected?

(4) Has there been damage to goods consigned to any of these areas mentioned by reason of hold-ups and what is the extent of the damage?

Answer:—

(1 to 4) "The information sought is not available in Brisbane but I will ask the contractor to supply it. Naturally the service has been disrupted by the wet season and the cyclonic disturbances which have passed through this area. It was always thus; but, thanks to this Government and its appreciation of the difficult transport position which confronts settlers in these remote areas, a proper developmental road system is being constructed. Settlers can look forward to a rapidly improving position."

SEAT BELTS AS STANDARD EQUIPMENT IN MOTOR VEHICLES.—Mr. Hanson, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

(1) Has he in the administration of his Department caused an investigation to be made into the desirability of using safety belts in cars as a means of preventing serious injuries and even loss of life?

(2) If any investigations have been made and proved successful, is he prepared to recommend to the Australian Transport Advisory Council that such belts be standard equipment in all cars?

Answers:—

(1) "Investigations in other States and throughout the world have clearly established the efficiency of seat belts in minimising injuries and preventing loss of life in motor vehicle accidents and information available from research work done in this State confirms this."

(2) "Opinions on the compulsory fitting of seat belts as standard equipment in all cars differ. The Australian Road Safety Council has expressed itself in favour of it but the Australian Motor Vehicle Standards Committee recommended against the proposal because of inherent problems associated with compulsory legislation. The Australian Transport Advisory Council decided that the motor trade be encouraged to instal seat belts of an approved standard in all motor vehicles. Both the Commonwealth and all State Governments are conscious of the value of seat belts and all are conducting campaigns to educate and encourage vehicle owners not only to instal them but to ensure their use. The Queensland Government gave the lead in 1962 when the Honourable the Premier directed that seat belts be installed in all Government vehicles purchased after that date."

REPAINTING CONTRACTS, HOUSING COMMISSION RENTAL HOUSES.—Mr. Newton, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,

(1) What is the number of repainting contracts at present being carried out by the Queensland Housing Commission in the metropolitan area by (a) contractors and (b) day-labour on State rental houses?

(2) On what projects or in what suburbs are these repaints being carried out?

(3) What is the number of years recommended by the Queensland Housing Commission before external and internal painting is carried out in these houses?

Answers:—

(1) "(a) Thirty-three contracts. (b) Nil. Day labour employees when not required for new construction are utilised on internal repainting of vacant houses."

(2) "Stafford, Chermside, Enoggera, Seven Hills, Coopers Plains, Inala, Grovelly and Acacia Ridge."

(3) "With the Commission's oil based zinc paint, seven to nine years can be expected between external paintings. The frequency of internal painting is dependent largely on the way the property is treated by successive tenants, and a specific period cannot be adopted."

PROSECUTION OF NON-HOLDERS OF MEDICAL DEGREES PRACTISING AS PSYCHOLOGISTS.—Mr. Aikens, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

(1) Was Leslie Cunningham on March 3, fined in the Magistrate's Court, Brisbane, for practising as a consulting psychologist while not being the holder of a recognised medical degree?

(2) If so, will prosecutions be launched against any and all who practice as consulting psychologists while not being the holder of a recognised medical degree and, if not, why not?

Answers:—

(1) "No. He was fined on a complaint that not being a medical practitioner he did by inference adopt a medical title implying that he was a specialist with respect to a branch of medicine, namely, he did describe himself and hold himself out in a document as 'a psychologist specialising in the treatment of nervous psycho-somatic and psychological disorders'."

(2) "Any person who breaches "The Medical Acts, 1939 to 1963" in the above manner will be prosecuted."

SEPTIC SYSTEM, SANDGATE AND DISTRICT STATE HIGH SCHOOL.—Mr. Dean, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

In view of the continual complaints being received from parents of the 1,400 students attending the Sandgate and District State High School concerning the inadequate septic system at the school, when will the present obnoxious tanker service be replaced by an up-to-date septic system?

Answer:—

"Plans have been completed for the construction of a new septic tank, aerobic filter and allied drainage and for the pumping of effluent to a Council manhole in Nearra Street. An estimate of cost of this project is now being prepared. When the estimate of cost is known, consideration will be given to approving of this work in relation to available funds. No indication can be given at this juncture, however, as to when the work is likely to be undertaken."

SHORNCIFFE STATE SCHOOL.—Mr. Dean, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

With regard to the Shorncliffe State Primary School,—

(1) Why has the guard fence not been restored in front of the unsightly and dangerous embankment, Yundah Street?

(2) Why has the retaining wall at the Signal Row entrance of the school not been constructed to overcome the bad drainage problem from the adjacent property?

(3) When will the depression in the South-west corner of the school grounds be raised to permanent level?

(4) When will a suitable medical room be provided at the school?

Answers:—

(1) "This Department awaits advice that the Brisbane City Council has given the necessary attention to the footpath and battered bank in Yundah Street. When this advice is received consideration will be given to replacing the fence in question."

(2) "It is proposed to provide a sealed entrance road from Signal Row, including concrete curbing and channelling on the lower side of the roadway. Funds are not available at present, however, to permit this work to be undertaken."

(3) "It will be necessary for the Parents and Citizens' Association under the School Ground Improvement Subsidy Scheme, to re-position cricket practice wickets in another section of the site before consideration can be given to filling the south-west corner of the grounds."

(4) "The provision of a Services Room at the school cannot be afforded a sufficiently high priority to enable the work to be undertaken at present."

LAND FOR HOUSING COMMISSION HOUSES IN BRACKEN RIDGE AREA, SANDGATE.—Mr. Dean, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

Has the Queensland Housing Commission entered into negotiations with any real estate company to purchase land at Bracken Ridge, Bald Hills Road, Sandgate, for the purpose of constructing Housing Commission homes there?

Answer:—

"Yes. Three hundred and ninety-three sites from Barclay Development Corporation Pty. Ltd."

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr. CHINCHEN (Mt. Gravatt) proceeding to ask a question without notice of the Minister for Primary Industries—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I have previously requested hon. members to advise me if they make arrangements with a Minister to ask him a question without notice.

Mr. CHINCHEN: I advised the Minister yesterday, and he agreed.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have previously ruled that if a question is to be asked without notice, the hon. member asking it must not only advise the Minister concerned, but, out of courtesy, should also advise the Chair.

Mr. CHINCHEN: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker.

IMPOSITION OF PACKAGE CHARGE AT BRISBANE MARKETS.—Mr. Chinchén, without notice, asked the Minister for Primary Industries,—

"Is the Minister aware that the Chamber of Fruit and Vegetables Agents intends to impose a handling charge of 2d. per unit or 2d. per dozen at the Brisbane Markets as from 4 April? Will the Minister delay this imposition until he is convinced that this additional charge on growers is justified?"

Answer:—

"Yes. I am aware that the agents propose imposing a package charge on growers' produce as from 4 April. I received advice of this only a day or so ago. I contacted Mr. Bright, president of the Queensland Chamber of Fruit and Vegetables Industries Co-operative Limited, and suggested a deferment in the implementation of the proposed charges but unfortunately I have just been informed that the Chamber has decided to proceed with such scheme as from 4 April.

"I might add, however, that the C.O.D. will not be imposing any additional charge before its next meeting on 14 April, and there is no suggestion at this stage that it will in fact adopt any handling charge. I can assure hon. members that the full position as regards the necessity for handling charges will be the subject of an immediate investigation by my department."

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

The Stamp Acts, 1894 to 1964.

The State Housing Acts, 1945 to 1964, and The Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Acts, 1923 to 1957.

The Milk Supply Acts, 1952 to 1961.

The Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1962.

The Stock Acts, 1915 to 1960.

The Supreme Court Act of 1921.

Regulations under The Stock Acts, 1915 to 1960.

OPTOMETRISTS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Tooth, read a third time.

PHYSIOTHERAPISTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Tooth, read a third time.

SAWMILLS LICENSING ACT
AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Bjelke-Petersen, read a third time.

MINING ON PRIVATE LAND ACTS
AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Camm, read a third time.

MINING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Camm, read a third time.

BRISBANE EXHIBITION GROUNDS
TRUST BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Nicklin, read a third time.

GYMPIE CEMETERY BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Nicklin, read a third time.

ALIENS BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Nicklin, read a third time.

SUPREME COURT ACTS AMENDMENT
BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Tooth, read a third time.

DISTRICT COURTS ACTS AMENDMENT
BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Tooth, read a third time.

ABORIGINES' AND TORRES STRAIT
ISLANDERS' AFFAIRS BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis—Minister for Education) (11.47 a.m.): I move—

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

Hon. members have now had the opportunity of studying the Aborigines' and Torres Strait Islanders' Affairs Bill which I was privileged to introduce on Thursday, 11 March last, and I would point out that the period between the first reading and today

has been prolonged to give members the opportunity of considering all aspects of this very important legislation.

In the introductory stages of the Bill reference was made to the fact that voting rights should be included in this Bill. However, I must again point out to hon. members that in the two Acts which will be repealed by this Bill there is no mention whatsoever of voting rights nor is any discrimination shown against the aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples in this regard. The Elections Act is the appropriate legislation, and, as I stated in this Chamber earlier, it is the Government's intention to extend voting rights to these sections of the general community and the Government's proposals will be placed before this House for approval during the next session of Parliament, later this year.

Some reference was also made to existing regulations with regard to aboriginal residents on Government settlements and the use of so-called cheap labour on these communities. However, I would point out that although no person is prevented from undertaking employment in the general community at the highest possible wage he can command, it is unreal for anyone to support a policy which would provide the whole of the needs of a family, without expecting at least some contribution from the bread-winner of that group. On settlements it is expected that all those able to do so should participate in settlement activities, and I would remind hon. members that not only this Government, but all Governments, have insisted upon the settlements and missions introducing aboriginal residents to both a work habit and a work attitude in the course of encouragement of the individual to become a normal member of the general community.

As I said earlier, we have never claimed to be in a position to provide full employment at award wages to all settlement and mission residents. These communities are regarded only as transition refuges and training institutions, and any person who has reached a standard where he can do so is expected to accept all of the responsibilities and enjoy all of the rights of being a member of the general community of Queensland. Certainly some of the community inmates have been appointed as staff officers, with normal salary rates and conditions, within the framework of the Public Service, but hon. members will realise that it is not possible to appoint all of the community residents to such positions.

The regulations, as they now exist, provide for the deduction of 10 per cent. in the case of married men, and 5 per cent. in the case of single men, from the wages earned by settlement residents working away from the settlement. This amount is paid to a fund from which is provided the food and other needs of life for aborigines when they are unemployed. The department is examining this position.

It has been alleged further in this Chamber that wage discrimination exists with regard to employment on cattle stations, but hon. members apparently do not appreciate that the rates set out in the regulations are the minimum rates, and are subject to increase by agreement when the protector can demonstrate the ability of the individual to earn it. Hon. members are aware that aborigines, as such, are excluded from the operation of the Station Hands Award and, consequently, it was necessary for the department to provide regulations insisting upon a minimum standard which, incidentally, is the highest in the Commonwealth.

That superintendents and protectors do appreciate that the regulation rates are minimum is exemplified by the fact that cases can be instanced of community residents receiving amounts in excess of the minimum laid down and as high as £15 a week.

The principle of equal pay for equal work is carried into effect in the application of the regulations. However, one must not overlook the fact that work opportunity is a very desirable principle also, and this particular section of the community, many of whom do not realise the acceptance of total responsibility, must have work opportunity. It would be very detrimental to their well-being were they priced out of this market, as this field of endeavour could be regarded as a natural calling. At the present time an application is before the Industrial Commission, and the Australian Workers' Union and the United Graziers' Association are parties to that award.

On the question of savings bank accounts, no doubt those hon. members who accompanied me on the trip to the northern areas did observe the savings bank passbooks on issue to each of the account holders, and action is in hand for similar practices to be extended to the Government settlements and country protectorates in the South. The issue of passbooks already exists on the mission stations, Bamaga and the islands of the Torres Strait.

Studies in anthropology were initiated at the Queensland University in 1962. These studies were on a full-time basis with the lecturer, Dr. D. Tugby. This year a chair in anthropology has been established and it is expected that it will be filled during the year. The services and facilities of the university are available to the department, and the department does avail itself of the knowledge and information provided by this valuable source.

No doubt hon. members, from a study of the Bill, are aware of the underlying principles which I outlined in my introduction. However, it is desirable that I reiterate some of the more important points. By abandoning, as far as possible, arbitrary and discriminatory aspects, every effort has been made to place the aboriginal Australian and

the Torres Strait Islander Australian as closely as possible, legally, on the same basis as their fellow Australians.

Queensland is proud of its achievements in the aid provided to its indigenous inhabitants, and is very conscious of the fact that there still remains, in spite of the fact that almost half of the total indigenous population is assimilated and integrated into the general community, a section of the people requiring special assistance, community care or control. Thus, the legislation now before hon. members is essential. Since this legislation was introduced I have received submissions from the Advancement League, OPAL and the U.G.A. There are one of two amendments which I will probably accept but, by and large, the Advancement League wants to go much further at this stage.

Mr. Bromley: You cannot blame them for that.

Mr. PIZZEY: No. We want to go further, but we are going as far as we think desirable at present. This Bill does not bind us for all time. As new measures are adopted and we find that they are working well, we can proceed to the next stage, and then to the next stage. We would like the position where no legislation was needed but it is a little unrealistic to take away almost all the control, conditions and so forth and say, "They are adjusted; we will not hand out money; put them on full wages and allow them to control their own destinies completely." That would be right for a good percentage of them, and we want that percentage to get out in the general community. However, there will always be some, in so many degrees, who will need care. Those hon. members who saw the Bentinck Islanders will realise that they cannot be left to themselves. They will need some special aid and assistance.

Mr. Bromley: That is a goal to work for.

Mr. PIZZEY: Yes, and I respect the work done by these associations. I am glad that we are able to put a little amendment in here and there, acting on their advice. We may be able to accept some amendments from the Opposition as well, because Opposition members are putting a lot of thought into this matter.

The opening stages of the Bill define the persons who may be entitled to the benefits extended under the legislation, and in this regard I would point out that although the indigenous persons do become eligible, they are not entitled as a right until it is demonstrated that the person or persons are in need of the special care or benefit.

The second part of the Bill deals with administration and a change in title is envisaged from the current expression "Native Affairs" to "Aboriginal and Island Affairs", as proposed by the aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders themselves.

I might explain that we have power to declare people in need of assistance. There are many cases in which aborigines, or Torres

Strait Islanders, like white members of the community, may come before a court. If we did not have an opportunity to have people declared assisted persons—and I do not mean only monetary assistance, but assistance in accepting responsibility—the court could not say, "We have these people under assistance. We think they should go onto a settlement or a mission."

Without that alternative they would be sent to prison in Brisbane, Stuart or elsewhere. In many cases it is desirable that they be given a chance to rehabilitate themselves among their own people on a settlement or a mission, or maybe on a reserve. We do not want to take away that opportunity yet. I think it would be going too far to take away all protective measures for a certain section of these people.

Mr. Bromley: You cannot do that, because there are old people and certain other people.

Mr. PIZZEY: Yes, there are the old people who must be looked after and there are people who have not had experience of our type of civilisation.

Mr. Melloy: You will have to be careful about herding into the settlements all the people who get into trouble outside.

Mr. PIZZEY: We do not want to herd them into the settlements. But if it is felt that they can better rehabilitate themselves among their own people, it could be the best solution.

Mr. Bromley: We do not want to see them going to gaol, but at the same time we do not want to put them in with the good people in the settlements; we need a half-way place.

Mr. PIZZEY: It is hoped to provide some of these things. Various degrees of assimilation are needed for the people living under settlement conditions. There are so many different categories. Some of them are ready to come out straight away, and some should be out now but do not want to make the break. Others may be ready in a couple of years' time. It would be an injustice to expect some of the older people to come out. It would be kind to let them finish the evening of their lives among their own people. There are some who, only in the last 10 or 20 years, have come out of their tribal state. There are still some semi-nomadic people in the Cape York Peninsula.

A very important change is set out in clause 12, which transfers day-to-day administration from protectors who have, with only two exceptions, been the local police officer, to a local clerk of the Magistrates Court, who is redesignated a "District Officer" in lieu of "Protector of Aborigines."

This is a major change. Until now the local police officer has been the protector of aborigines in his particular district, or the "Great White Father". He has had an unenviable job to do. The aborigines themselves, and members of the community generally, have the highest praise for the

police for the way in which they have handled those responsibilities during the last half-century. But the time has arrived for those responsibilities to be taken from them and put into the hands of the clerk of the court.

We consider it is better to have a district officer than a protector, and a manager than a superintendent. "Superintendent" has a different connotation from "Manager". It connotes some form of control or duress.

The concept of superintendency on the settlements and mission communities has been altered to transfer the atmosphere of the existing settlements and missions from institutions to towns. It is far better to talk of communities, rather than institutions or missions. It will not be long before "Cherbourg Settlement" is "Cherbourg Community," and then the "community" will be dropped and it will be Cherbourg town. I hope that during my time it will become a normal township in the South Burnett district.

Mr. Bromley: Do you suggest that they will have complete autonomy?

Mr. PIZZEY: Yes, but not yet.

Mr. Bromley: You are intimating that eventually they will have complete autonomy and will control the affairs at Cherbourg?

Mr. PIZZEY: We hope so. Step by step we hope to make them take more responsibility; at least more quickly than has been the case.

Thus, in future, the officer in charge will exercise a managerial and counselling function, rather than the present concept of superintendency. This managerial status will be necessary to co-ordinate the activities of an aboriginal council established for a reserve or a community.

Another part of the Bill provides the necessary administrative machinery for persons within the categories defined in Part I to become assisted persons. It is necessary for the director to compile certificates for the inhabitants of each reserve at the commencement of the operation of the provisions contained in the Bill, and it further extends this certification to provide that such certificates may be issued by the director for non-residents of reserves for a period of 12 months from the date of commencement of the Act. This period of time is necessary to ensure that no person in an isolated or remote area in need is overlooked. It further provides that any aborigine or islander may apply to the director for entitlement to assistance.

However, should a person or persons be in need of all the benefits envisaged, section 20 authorises an approach to a court for a declaration that the person named in the application is in need of care under the Act.

Mr. Bromley: Will that prevent any aborigine from entering a settlement if he has no certificate of entitlement?

Mr. PIZZEY: He would have to get permission.

Mr. Bromley: Before he could get in?

Mr. PIZZEY: Yes. He would have to apply and prove that he was in need of assistance and that it would be better for him to be on a reserve than outside working in the general community.

Mr. Hughes: If a court is approached to have a native brought under protection, can he defend the action?

Mr. PIZZEY: Yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask hon. members to allow the Minister to complete his speech. They will then be at liberty to advance their arguments during the debate. There will then be, of course, the Committee stage to follow. An uninterrupted speech by the Minister would give every member of this Assembly the opportunity to hear what is contained in the Bill.

Mr. PIZZEY: Another section of the Bill states a very important principle, namely, that a child born by, or to, an assisted aborigine or assisted islander shall not, by virtue of his or her birth or parentage, be declared to be an assisted aborigine or assisted islander. Each child will be born with the legal rights and responsibilities of any other child. The Bill does, however, extend to the director authority to declare the child to be assisted, with certain provisos. This will preserve the family unit, and it institutes a particular administrative act against which is provided a reference from the decision of the director.

Hon. members will have noted also that the certificates of entitlement are an administrative procedure only; the entire concept of aid being provided is reversed in the Bill, and no person is required to hold a certificate. Previously, of course, an aborigine exempted from the provisions of the Act had to have in his possession a certificate of exemption, whilst the Torres Strait Islanders remained subject to control from birth to death, as no provision for exemption was included in the legislation.

The certificates issued specifying persons entitled to benefits are administrative certificates only. They are retained by the director as authority for the extension of benefit. The person admitted to benefit does not require to hold any certificate at all.

A further benefit extended is that which provides aid as a general benefit not only to assisted persons but generally to any person of indigenous extraction subject, of course, to regulations to be provided. For the first time, aid will be made available to those who were previously, one might say, outside the Act. In the beginning that will not be done in hundreds and thousands of cases. The Government's first responsibility will be to those most in need of assistance. The aim is to begin by giving reasonable

assistance on a modest scale, particularly in helping people to become established in the community. That work is now being done on a voluntary basis by OPAL and other organisations. We feel that we, as a Government, will be called in to some extent in this field.

It is visualised that this extension of aid will greatly enhance the prospects of those who are known as "fringe dwellers" of finding their feet in the general community, thus obviating, in many cases, the need for individual or family groups to be declared by a court as being in need of special care. It may be that a little bit of extra assistance with housing or something of that sort will help them to slide over a difficult period, and finding employment for them might make all the difference between success and failure.

Earlier this week it was my privilege to attend the annual general meeting of the Ipswich sub-branch of OPAL and a social function later in the evening. There is no doubt that the warm and friendly atmosphere which was abundantly manifest throughout all of the proceedings amply demonstrated that here, in a practical way, is being demonstrated the extension of the hand of friendship, far removed from any thought of racial differences, that will overcome the inherent difficulties and problems associated with taking that step into the wider society of Queensland from the missions and settlements. A very great debt of gratitude is due to this band of inspired and practical people, and their efforts merit the highest commendation.

I do not think that is an isolated case, but let us be clear on this: all the legislation in the world will have little effect unless all the people of Queensland try to do something along the lines of the work that OPAL is doing in the various towns and communities of Queensland. It is a very fine body. The hon. member for Fassifern might know of some of the assistance it has provided with housing, furniture, and so on, and by giving advice and providing employment in the Ipswich district. Some of the service clubs have helped, too. They have lent money for the purchase of homes so that people will not be tied up with high interest rates. Above all, on the general community depends the success or failure of the legislation, because what is written in the Statute Book will not matter very much if the community is not behind it.

Mr. Sherrington: People coming into the community for the first time should be protected against some salesmen, too.

Mr. PIZZEY: Yes. Within Part IV, provisions applicable both to aborigines' and islanders' affairs are included, generally of a precautionary nature—for example, management of the property of an assisted person, execution of instruments, administration of

estates, restriction of creditors' rights, disposal of unclaimed moneys—and these are set out in the respective sections and are self-explanatory.

Some organisations do not want us to include provisions to safeguard the property of these people in the early stages. The hon. member for Salisbury mentioned that someone is needed to protect them when they first come out. Someone else is needed, too, to ensure that people from missions and settlements are not taken for a ride by smart entrepreneurs. When they visit towns or cities and they have a few pounds in their pockets, very often it is quickly taken from them. I think special legislation has been introduced in Victoria to protect women against salesmen in the community. Some deals are no longer legal until seven days have elapsed, because very often it is a different story when Dad comes home. A smart salesman might be able to convince Mum that she should spend £70, £80 or £160 on the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. She signs up before Dad comes home and then finds that she is involved legally and has very little chance of getting out of the contract. Surely nobody in the community could object to our taking the precautions that we have taken in the Bill.

All these things are necessary to ensure the progressive development of the people and, more particularly, to ensure that there is no exploitation of people who are incapable of caring for themselves.

Hon. members are aware that there are in this community unscrupulous persons who would readily take advantage of the opportunity to exploit this group of people, who it is envisaged will require special aid. Just imagine what it would be like for them to come out from a settlement for the first time to cut cane and then get pay packets of £60 or £70. They would be easy marks for some people on the first occasion when they had any large sum of money in their pockets to handle. So we are taking these precautions.

It is to guard against such activities that these provisions are inserted. However, I would remind hon. members that where some may appear arbitrary, a right of reference is provided against the director's decision, thus providing the assisted person with appraisal of his particular case by an independent arbiter.

A great deal of the criticism of the present Act is criticism of the arbitrary powers of the director to do this or that with a person who comes under the present Act. Certain of these powers will still be held but they will no longer be arbitrary powers not subject to appeal. In every case we have given the person the right to appeal to a magistrate or an independent tribunal, whatever the case may be, in regard to these things.

Another section extends to the director the authority to transfer an assisted person from a reserve to another reserve, or to transfer

from a district to a reserve. This provision is a very real one in ensuring the well-being of residents. It is not one that is readily invoked and it is not expected that it will be used to any great degree in the future. However, there are circumstances arising which warrant immediate action, where circumstances are such that unless such action is taken serious repercussions could result from breaches of tribal ethics, etc. In other words, they take their tribal law into their own hands, and sometimes it is advantageous to move some of them away to avoid any further trouble. Sometimes it has to be done in an arbitrary fashion, and even here is provided the right of reference from the order of the director, thus preserving the personal dignity of the individual.

General preventive measures involving unauthorised mining of reserves and trading on reserves are embraced by other sections. These are generally to prevent exploitation and do not apply to assisted residents of the reserve itself. In this regard we give them all the rights of ordinary citizens in the community. Here again they are protected.

Where a confession of an offence has been made, it is optional for a district officer to appear to inform the court whether it is likely that the accused did not understand such admission of guilt or confession, having particular regard to his stage of development. In such case where a district officer testifies that in his opinion the accused did not understand such submission, the court must satisfy itself, by inquiry in the absence of a jury, that the accused did, in fact, understand the admission at the time it was made. An assisted person, when charged before a court, may elect to plead guilty and, if he does so, the district officer, of his own motion or at the request of the accused, may appear and appropriately inform the court of the probability of the assisted person understanding the nature and consequences of such plea of guilty. This is just an added precaution to ensure that an accused, at this stage of his development, does not compromise himself before the law, not knowing his rights, responsibilities and privileges.

The general tenor of the sections dealing with the entering of pleas do not derogate from the rights of the individual to enter a plea, but rather provide for intervention in those cases where such is warranted. They further place on the courts a responsibility to ensure, by special inquiry, that no miscarriage of justice might occur. This is one occasion when the two legal men in the Chamber might agree that what the Government is doing is right, proper and fair.

Another clause provides that the Minister for Education may take charge of mission schools which are aided by the State, and in this regard I must point out that the mission schools are performing a very fine service to mission residents. That service varies in quality. Everyone would realise that. In some cases they have qualified and

experienced kindergarten teachers, which is more than we have in most other similar schools throughout the Australian States. Hon. members, of course, are aware that the Department of Education has assumed full responsibility on Government settlements for the education of all of the children of the community, and no doubt the Department of Education's influence will extend to mission fields, as the need arises. It is proposed to exercise a close oversight of the standards and, where necessary, remedial action can be taken.

This does not necessarily mean, of course, that the Department of Education will take over the schools. This is not the only solution to problems. The missionaries have rendered very sterling service in the educational sphere, and as awareness of mission residents develops so also will the need for improved educational facilities be enhanced. Whether or not the churches will be able to meet the need is problematical, but there is no intention on the part of the Government to allow any missionary organisation to be presented with problems incapable of solution by the mission, when intervention by the department could resolve them. In most cases, almost without exception, the missions would welcome our coming in and taking full responsibility. I am sure they will welcome all the help we can give them.

It might well be that churches would require the Department of Education to assume full responsibility for educational facilities, but in any case this provision in the Bill provides for intervention as and when circumstances warrant and justify.

As hon. members are aware, the management of missions and settlements is normally vested in the superintendent of the community. His is a heavy burden in the responsibility for the discipline and control of the aboriginal residents of the community. Through their welfare associations residents have become capable of developing and managing their own affairs, and it is considered the time is opportune for a much greater proportion of the responsibility for self-determination, self-development and general well-being to devolve on the aboriginal residents themselves. Therefore, it is proposed to institute aboriginal courts and councils on reserves, with powers outlined in regulations, which will be extended as opportunity warrants. It is our thinking and, I think, the thinking of the whole of the House, that for too long there has been too much paternalism and not enough placing of responsibility on the shoulders of these people in the settlements.

The affairs of islanders generally are set out. The Bill provides for local government of their communities to a greater extent than hitherto. The proposals are consistent with the general responsibilities already accepted by the islanders, which are being capably handled. These islanders have within the legislative provisions of this Bill

powers and functions of councillors and courts, which require them to accept responsibility for the development and administration of their own communities.

The director has forwarded copies of the Bill to the group representatives of Torres Strait, and he is in receipt of information that generally the contents of the Bill have their approbation.

Another clause extends to councillors the right to levy a rate and make the funds so raised available for general community services.

Machinery for election of councillors, the dissolution of the council and the maintenance of the Island Fund is set out in this Bill, and is not inconsistent with the provisions in the repealed legislation. However, this Bill does provide for greater recognition of the three group representatives, who will be co-ordinating councillors for the entire island groups they represent.

In the course of good government it is necessary to establish an Island Court, which is constituted by the Island Council and appeals from this court's decision are, in the first instance, to the group representatives and, further, to the district officer. The district officer, in his administrative capacity, has extended to him the powers of a trustee and in practice these powers are exercised in a counselling capacity, rather than an arbitrary or a restrictive one.

The Bill provides for the continuation of the co-operative known as the Island Industries Board. Hitherto this board has been constituted by three persons, the chairman of which has been the Protector of Islanders. The Bill extends the personnel of the board from the present three to include a further three, who are the group representatives elected by the Councils of Torres Strait. This will give to the islanders a very real share in the deliberations of the Island Industries Board. The powers and functions of the board are self-explanatory. The functions of the board, which are detailed in the schedule to the Bill, will permit the board to operate on exactly the same basis as any normal trading undertaking.

Another section is particularly important in that it provides for the making of regulations and special rules which will meet all foreseeable contingencies. Whilst much could be said for and against all of the powers included in this section, I must point out that although the power to make regulations is extended in this section, this does not mean of itself that regulations will necessarily follow.

Mr. Bromley: Do we still have the right to oppose them?

Mr. PIZZEY: Yes. However, in the course of prudence and in an endeavour to introduce into the legislation as great a flexibility as possible, all-embracing regulation-making powers are recommended. It is required, of course, that all regulations,

special rules and Orders in Council be laid before this Assembly within 14 sitting days of such publication if this Assembly is in session and, if not, then within 14 sitting days after the commencement of its next session. Thus hon. members will be fully aware, at all times, of regulations introduced.

The Bill sets out general facilities and regulation procedures which are generally formal in nature and do not require elaboration, whilst another part of the Bill details the islands constituted by the three groups in Torres Strait. Not all of these are permanently occupied, but they are all used by islanders for gardening and other purposes in the normal course of living.

As hon. members have now had the opportunity of perusing the Bill, I am sure they will agree that the legislation before them provides for vast changes and improvements directed towards progressive development and promotion of the well-being of the indigenous citizens of Queensland. From this Bill they will as a birthright, enjoy Australian citizenship status and throughout their lives they will benefit from all of the rights and privileges of being citizens of Queensland, yet, additionally, they will have special benefits available if they so require. The Bill is so designed that it will preserve the simple dignity of the individual and will encourage him to accept to the maximum possible all of the rights, privileges and responsibilities as a member of the society of our State.

I commend the Bill to hon. members.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (12.29 p.m.): We can be very grateful to the Minister on this occasion for the time he has given us to study the contents of the Bill. Unfortunately we have not had the same opportunity with other Bills, although we can be grateful now that other legislation which was to be debated today and tomorrow is to be delayed until Wednesday and Thursday of next week to give us greater opportunity to discuss it. Possibly we should be grateful that the Premier has decided to wait until next week to debate several pieces of legislation.

We have contended for some time now that the previous procedures and practices adopted under Queensland legislation in relation to the preservation and protection of the aboriginal population have become outmoded on world standards. We have always considered that citizenship should be an inherent birthright of the indigenous population of this country. Many people in the world, examining the practices that have been adopted here for so long, could criticise Queensland and the other States of Australia on the basis that they did not uphold the principles and declarations of the United Nations because the indigenous population of Australia is not entitled to citizenship as a birthright. From that point of view, members of the A.L.P. have for some time criticised our legislation.

For many years the administration has smugly considered that its policy has been in the best interests of the aboriginal population from the point of view of humanity and the comfort and security of those people who are resident on reserves, particularly Government settlements. Much could be said of that satisfaction felt by the administration, both political and civil. There is no doubt that the Government and the administration could be proud of this policy from the comfort and security point of view.

But at the same time a paradox was created which instilled in the minds of these people an inbred inferiority complex and a feeling of dependence on the rest of the community which was slowly and surely taking away any desire on their part to secure citizenship rights or to accept the responsibilities that go with them, until now they cannot accept the fact that they have to be independent, as the Minister said, of the "Great White Father", or of humanitarian Public Service control. One reason why we have so few of the coloured population of this country assimilated or integrated into our community is that their will to become citizens has been taken from them, and they have been deprived of that opportunity by many of our laws. Unfortunately that has been the case. We have postulated for some time that we cannot do a great deal for these people. We should alter our opinions and methods of administration to enable children to be educated to a standard where they can readily be assimilated into the community.

After 150 years of settlement and 100 years of government in this State, we still have some 20,000 coloured people in Queensland who are at present under protection. That that has occurred indicates that there must be some fault in our legislation and administration. I reject the point of view that these people are generally backward in ability to the extent that it would be impossible to have them readily assimilated, over a short period of time, into our community.

I reject the contention that they have not sufficient intelligence to be trained to a standard sufficient to permit their ready assimilation by the time they are adults. The main barrier confronting them is the atmosphere and environment generally in the white community. Aborigines have a long history and tradition. Before white people came to this country, and before the aeroplane was invented in the so-called civilised world, the Australian aborigines had acquired a knowledge of aerodynamics and the coefficients of lift and drag, as demonstrated by the development of the boomerang. This was the traditional weapon used by them for hundreds of years in fighting and hunting, and its flight depends on the same principles of aerodynamics as were later applied in the invention of the aeroplane. Aborigines have

demonstrated, by their history and tradition, that they can be educated to the standards required today.

In general, and in principle, the Opposition supports the Bill. There are one or two features of it that will be dealt with specifically by hon. members on this side of the House. The alterations proposed by the Bill are not as radical as the Minister would have us believe. It goes a long way towards bringing our attitudes more in keeping with world standards, and indicates that it is at last appreciated that people are entitled to citizenship by right of birth. That is important from both the Australian and the State point of view.

Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders are still, however, being denied the right to vote, and in not including in the Bill a provision conferring on them this right the Government is denying what it postulates in the legislation. The Minister shakes his head, no doubt implying that the right to vote should be included only in the Elections Act. This is the most important legislation in this State concerning the welfare of aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

Mr. Pizzey: It would be discriminating against them if that was done.

Mr. LLOYD: It appears that the intention of the Government on this occasion is discrimination, as it is intended to give citizenship rights to aborigines but not the right to vote now enjoyed by the rest of the community. Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders should be able to vote in the areas in which they live. If the Government intended to extend voting rights to these people, a simple addition to the Bill bringing them within the provisions of the Elections Act is all that is needed. By their right of citizenship, they should be able to vote in the areas in which they reside. Why should their treatment be different from that accorded all others?

Mr. Pizzey: The Bill does not say anything about denying them that right, or giving it to them.

Mr. LLOYD: I realise that. I am foreshadowing an Opposition amendment that will be moved under which voting rights would be granted by this Bill. It is our opinion that as these people are no different from any others in the community, they should have the right to vote in their own areas. To do less than this is to deny to them the full citizenship rights that the Minister states are now being offered to them. As the hon. member for Sandgate said by interjection, they are already on the Federal electoral roll; why should not their names be included on the State electoral roll?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to direct his remarks to the principles of the Bill. Voting rights are not mentioned in the Bill.

Mr. LLOYD: With respect, Mr. Speaker, I am replying in some detail to the speech of the Minister for Education in which he mentioned that voting rights were not included in the Bill. I say that a provision giving voting rights should have been included in it.

One of the most important features of our attempts to assimilate these people into the community is a concentration on the education of the young people. I notice that the Bill gives the Government power to take over schools on church mission stations. All hon. members realise, I think, how difficult it is to staff all the schools in church mission areas. About 4,000 aborigines reside on church mission stations at present, mainly on Cape York Peninsula. An insistence on educating the children of these people to the same standard as that reached by other children in the community would raise many difficulties, but a greater effort must be made in this direction. Unless we insist that these people ensure that their children are in the same position as any other child who is subject to the compulsory education system of the State, there will not be any improvement in the situation that has existed for many years.

Mr. Pizzey: They are subject to it now.

Mr. LLOYD: Yes, but only to a certain stage. At the introductory stage, the Minister said that many of the children were being educated only to 3rd and 4th grade standard.

Mr. Pizzey: That is not correct.

Mr. LLOYD: Well, perhaps it was the 6th grade standard.

Mr. Pizzey: No. That is the limit which they reach; but there are opportunities for them to go above that grade if they wish to take advantage of them.

Mr. LLOYD: The Minister has said that they are subject to the compulsory education system; at the same time he has said that, although they have reached that standard of education, facilities are there for them to go beyond that stage if they wish to do so. I do not know how those statements can be reconciled. If they are subject to the compulsory system of education, surely they must remain at school until they reach a standard of education similar to that reached by other children in the community. If inadequacy of staffing is such that these children have not the same opportunities and facilities to reach the standard of education reached by other children in the community, some radical action must be taken to effect an improvement.

The Minister said that the staffing of schools in these areas is very meagre. The difficulty that confronted former Governments now confronts this Government—that the Commonwealth Government does not recognise the State's sovereignty over these people. The Commonwealth Government

interferes with the sovereign powers of the States in so many other matters that I think an attempt should be made by the States to reach agreement and insist upon the inclusion of these people in any census of the population of Australia. If they are, money will be made available for additional educational facilities at many centres.

An area of many hundreds of square miles in Cape York Peninsula has been declared as tribal land for many years, and these people have been allowed to roam over it without any of the advantages of civilisation enjoyed by other people in the State. It is obvious that there has been some neglect by Governments in providing the finance necessary to undertake a task that they perhaps thought was too difficult. Bringing it back to its basic essentials, we will have to reach a stage where the Commonwealth Government recognises these problems and, by way of incentive—possibly taxation deductions for people who work in these areas, or by some other method—subsidises the education of these children by enticing people to go into the areas. Schools could then be established, and, under a system of compulsory education, these aboriginal children could attend them to the same age as any other child in the community. Until we do that we will never assimilate them properly. In 10 or 20 years' time we will still be in the position we are in now unless that is done.

We give the Government credit for removing the discriminatory provisions although in some directions it is really no more than a change in terminology. Many of the arbitrary powers the director had are, in fact, still reposed in him but the assisted aborigine is given the right to appeal against such decisions to the Magistrates Court. In this regard, again I have some doubt as to the value of an appeal to the Magistrates Court in that I think the magistrate may possibly accept the director's impression of the man rather than the statements made to him by the assisted aborigine. I hope that does not occur, but I see a danger in it.

The position will be that before the assisted aborigine can secure the abolition of the certificate of entitlement he must apply to the director, who may approve of the application. But if he rejects the application, then, within a period of 28 days, the assisted aborigine can appeal to a magistrate. On the other hand, in the case of one who is not an assisted aborigine being declared as such by the director, it is not necessary for the director to apply to the Magistrates Court for permission. The approach to the Magistrates Court can only be by way of a declaration by the aborigine himself and, unless an appeal is lodged with the director against his decision, it is not necessary to go to the Court to declare a man or woman an assisted aborigine. In this way the right of the director is retained. I believe that the declaration of any man or woman as an assisted

aborigine should not be made until the director himself approaches the court on the matter.

Other principles contained in the Bill, I think, could be given consideration. The Minister has said, in relation to the citizenship right by birth, that a section in the Bill provides that regardless of parentage or whether or not a child's parents are assisted aborigines, that child is entitled to citizenship by birth. However, when this provision is compared with others in the legislation it will be seen that if a person is declared an assisted aborigine, any child of his up to the age of 17 years, or any other member of the family, may also be declared an assisted aborigine at the whim of the director. There is a contradiction. One section contradicts the other. However, it establishes a principle with which we are in complete agreement.

In framing the Bill the Government has included much of the previous legislation, excluding some of the provisions which, over the years, have been a form of discrimination against aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. That is a good thing, but the Bill does not provide such a very radical change from previous practices. We will still have only a gradual assimilation. We have to try to formulate a better method of integration so that assimilation will occur more quickly than in the past.

Tribute should be paid to many people within the administration who have devoted a great deal of their lives to the welfare of the aborigine and the Torres Strait Islander.

Wage discrimination is always a matter of concern to us. I understand that at the present time there is an application before the Industrial Commission covering the payment of aborigines employed in certain callings. Many assisted aborigines are working in various parts of Queensland. Girls are working as domestics and men are employed on cattle stations and other types of properties, but they are not receiving the wages applicable to white people in the community. The Minister has said that we have to consider the worth of the labour to the employer. He mentioned that a certain deduction would have to be made for the living expenses and housing of the family. We accept that principal. On the other hand, it is well recognised that the aborigine has special ability in handling cattle. That has been proved at Foleyvale and Woorabinda.

Aborigines have proved their worth in portion of an industry in which many white men would not wish to engage. When they are under the care of the manager of the station or property they should not be required to accept lower pay than would be received by white men doing the same work. If we refuse to recognise that principle we might as well reject the Bill. It is a basic principle of industrial justice. When

the regulations are framed I believe something to that effect will be included in them, and, of course, what is in the regulations will have the force of law.

A number of other hon. members on this side have matters to raise. I do not want to enroach on their arguments. Many of them have travelled throughout Queensland, some of them in company with the Minister on his trip through the North. No doubt they saw a lot of the work that is being done by the Government and the church missions. The church missions must be complimented for the work they have done over the years but I believe that education and hospitalisation should be the sole responsibility of the State. Housing, of course, is another matter. The financial needs of the missions should be considered by the Government. In 1957 the then Secretary for Health and Home Affairs—and his predecessors in earlier years—found that many of the conditions in church mission stations in North Queensland were shocking. Housing was inadequate, sanitation was poor, schooling was inadequate and hospitalisation was bad. These conditions should not be allowed to continue. The State Government certainly makes its contributions each year to the church missions. A considerable sum is paid, but it costs the State Government much more per head for the people on its own settlements than it provides per head for the aborigines in church missions. The Government should pay cognizance to that fact.

I understand that visiting magistrates are empowered to visit the reserves which they cover once every three months. When the superintendents of mission stations are declared managers the stations are to be included in the reserves under the legislation. This will allow continuous reports to be made to the department about the conditions of the church missions and will enable us to provide much more money, and many more amenities, than at present. If the facilities at the church missions are worse than those on the State settlements, it is the responsibility of the Government and the department to see that they are improved to the standard of those on the State settlements.

Mr. Pizzey: Three are being re-built— at Mitchell River, Edward River, and Weipa. They will be far superior.

Mr. LLOYD: We expect that they will be far superior.

I understand that the Minister intends to introduce an amendment relating to mining which will allow a portion of the royalties—

Mr. Pizzey: There was no mention of that.

Mr. LLOYD: It is not in the Bill?

Mr. Pizzey: No, but you hope it will be.

Mr. LLOYD: The Commonwealth Government insists on the payment of double royalty from mineral leases in tribal reserves,

or any area set aside as a reserve. In such cases half the royalty paid is transferred to a trust fund for use in the care of the people on the reserve. This principle applies throughout the Northern Territory. If the Minister does not intend to do something along those lines I suggest that he should give very serious consideration to including a similar principle in the Bill to provide more finance for this very important purpose. Because of this practice in the Northern Territory some overseas companies have mined Queensland bauxite deposits instead of those on the Gove Peninsula. When we consider the bauxite deposits—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is off the track.

Mr. LLOYD: The Bill refers to the Mining Acts and the interference by mining companies with any reserve, as well as the granting of leases. It contains certain restrictions on the activities of mining companies. I have no doubt that, by legislation, the Minister could do something about the very important matter of building up services and facilities at aboriginal missions in this State by stipulating certain financial arrangements.

[Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.15 p.m.]

Mr. ADAIR (Cook) (2.15 p.m.): I welcome the Bill. For the 12 years that I have been in this House I have fought for many of the measures contained in it. I congratulate the Minister and the Director of Native Affairs, Mr. Killoran, who has played a prominent part in the preparation of this Bill. He has more knowledge than anyone else I know of the requirements of the Torres Strait Islanders and the aborigines. A large part of his life has been spent looking after these people. I have been with him and have seen the problems that confront him as Director of Native Affairs. I know the knowledge he has acquired, and that it is necessary for him to have to administer the position he holds.

Many of us have the wrong conception about what is good for these people. Very few people inside this House, or outside it, know their requirements. We read and hear a good deal from people who are trying to do the best for them. One has to go among them and know them to realise what is good for them. Many people say that we should give them their freedom. I believe that they should be given all freedoms, including the freedom to drink, and voting rights.

I have been requested to free some of them from the provisions of the Aborigines Preservation and Protection Act. I have taken this matter up with the Minister of the day. To my regret, all that I have done has been to ruin their lives because they have taken up drinking and have neglected their families. Those who advocate freedom for all these people do not realise what they are saying because they do not know them and the circumstances in which they live.

This also applies to the Torres Strait Islanders, who are mainly dependent on the Government. Many of the islands I have been on could be self-supporting. On those which have good fertile land on which crops could be grown, I have never seen a tractor or a plough to cultivate the land. In my travels round the islands never have I seen any real effort by the people to become self-supporting. On St. Pauls there is good land on which could be grown some of the people's requirements, but not a plough or tractor can be seen. The same situation will be found on the other islands. On a recent visit to Yam, Badu, and other islands, nothing of any consequence could be seen growing.

Mr. Pizzey: Their system of ownership of land would mitigate against that.

Mr. ADAIR: That is so. The Government will have to encourage these people to do something about supporting themselves. If that is not done, the time is coming when the mainland will be the only place for many of them. On the mainland there is fertile land that will grow almost anything, plenty of water, and timber to build homes, which is not available on the islands. If the people are freed from the provisions of the Act and obtain all these citizenship rights, the Government will still have to look after them because they will not be self-supporting. Ships will still be required to transport their requirements to the islands. On St. Pauls, Badu, Yam, Darnley, Murray, and all the other islands, the people will still have to be looked after by the Government. Very little work is available for them, and for them to become self-supporting would be virtually impossible. The richest people on these islands today are those in receipt of the old-age pension, the invalid pension, and the widow's pension.

Mr. Pizzey: With free rent and light.

Mr. ADAIR: Yes, and with homes and everything else provided. For the able-bodied people not drawing pensions, there is very little work available, and eventually they will have to leave the island and find employment elsewhere.

I know that in this Bill the Minister has done his best for aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. I know that there are many things still to be done, and that for several years to come amendments will be necessary to make the legislation meet the requirements of these people. I commend the Minister on the contents of the Bill, as I know how difficult it is to draft legislation that suitably deals with the problem.

I know the difficulties to be faced at reserves and missions. I believe that eventually the Government will have to assume responsibility for the education of children at mission schools. At present, educational facilities for children on the missions and on the islands are provided by religious bodies; but I think the time is fast

approaching when the Government will have to take over this responsibility and provide qualified teachers who will bring the children up to a standard of education that will enable them to compete for work with other children in the community. I do not know whether it will be possible to get teachers to go to some of the remote islands, but the standard of education will have to be improved. On some of the islands the standard is quite good—on Badu, for example, there is an excellent teacher—but on most of the islands in Torres Strait it is not as high as it should be.

I have heard it said that the Government has neglected coloured people, particularly the Torres Strait Islanders. I have visited the islands in Torres Strait and I know most of the people quite well. From my experience, I should say that the Government has done all in its power to improve the living conditions of these people and make life as easy as possible for them. If one goes to any of the islands one sees the home-building that has been carried out. I do not think one could find cleaner people anywhere than the Torres Strait Islanders; their homes are spotless, inside and out. Hundreds of them have left Thursday Island and settled on the mainland at places such as Yorkey's Knob and Machan's Beach and in the town of Cairns, and they have proved to be excellent citizens. I have no fears about their assimilation into the general community in Queensland. At Machan's Beach the children of Torres Strait Islanders are going to school. They have shown that they are excellent students. In the Railway Department, Torres Strait Islanders are holding their own with other employees of the department. It is very difficult for a man from the Torres Strait Islands, who previously has worked only as a fisherman or a diver, to adapt himself to unfamiliar work. However, several Torres Strait Islanders have been appointed gangers in fettling gangs and are doing a very good job. In the Mt. Isa area, too, dozens of Torres Strait Islanders are doing very good work.

On Thursday Island, children from the islands in Torres Strait are getting an excellent opportunity for education at Waiben school. Recent extensions to the school cost over £80,000, and a hostel has been provided at which the children can stay. I think this is a very good move by the Government, because at the Waiben State School and at the high school children are getting an education which, if they are good enough, could give them an opportunity of coming south to the university or of undertaking some other form of higher education. I think that, as time goes on, many of these children will qualify to come to Brisbane or Townsville and further their education.

I thought earlier that the Minister would bring down legislation to make provision for a Torres Strait Islander to represent his people in this House. On Thursday Island there are several men capable of undertaking

that responsibility. To name but a few, there is George Nye, three of the Monas, James Mosby, and several others. Any one of these men would be capable of representing his people in this Parliament. I regret that that has not been done and that the islanders will not have a representative here. I do not think anyone could represent the island people as well as an islander himself. The islanders know the requirements of their own people. I have represented the area for 12 years and I believe that an islander could represent his own people better than anyone else could.

Under this Bill the Island Industries Board has very wide powers. No doubt it is entitled to many of those powers as it does a good job for the islanders. However, I believe that on Thursday Island itself the powers given to the board under this Bill are too great. I feel that Torres Strait Islanders, for instance, should be able to use their banking accounts to deal at any store on the island. I do not think that the Island Industries Board should have full power to deal with the money of these people.

I know that the director, and probably the Minister, will say that if they were given full freedom with their money the storekeepers could abuse the privilege and the position would lend itself to corruption, but I think that if we are giving these islanders their freedom they should have sufficient intelligence to handle their own banking affairs. The best way to teach them is to give them the opportunity. At the present time, they are forced to buy at the Island Industries Board store and whatever they purchase from that store is debited to their banking accounts. They are not allowed to go to any other store on the island and purchase goods through their bank accounts.

I believe that is wrong. They should be able to do that. I know of a few instances where members of the public have taken advantage of the islanders. A resident of Thursday Island asked an islander to purchase a watch for him from the Island Industries Board. He did so and had his passbook debited with £12, the cost of the watch, but the resident handed him only £5 in cash. Although the islander's passbook was debited with £12 for the watch he received only £5. He was only too pleased to receive the £5 because it was in cash.

Mr. Pizzey: You should let us know when things like that happen. We would then take appropriate action.

Mr. ADAIR: I took the matter up with the Minister at the time. This was some time ago, before the present Minister's day. That sort of thing does happen.

The storekeepers on the island are entitled to some of the trade. The Island Industries Board is rendering a good service. It is selling goods as cheaply as they can possibly

be bought and its profit margin is very low. Probably no other business on Thursday Island could sell at the same price as the board. Nevertheless I believe that the islanders should be able to purchase whatever they require at any of the business houses on the island. If the Torres Strait Islander wants to go to the Island Industries Board, well and good, but he should not be forced to go there. It should be his right to go where he likes. After all, what is shown in his passbook is his own money.

As I have pointed out, the Bill does not meet all the needs of the Torres Strait Islanders and aborigines, but I realise that the Minister has done the best he could, possibly the best anybody could have done in the circumstances. Unfortunately, previous Governments did very little to provide benefits for these people. Many urge for the complete freedom of these people, but they do not know what they are talking about. They have no idea of their requirements. The Government will still have to look after them in many directions. Many of them will still need protection, particularly those on reserves and missions. I again congratulate the Minister on the introduction of the measure.

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) (2.40 p.m.): The more I study the Bill and the more I consider the problems associated with the matters responsible for the Bill, the more I am convinced that a visit to the mission stations and settlements is essential if one is to have an understanding of the problems associated with our relationship to the native peoples.

Mr. Pizzey: It would be a different picture if you had not been there.

Mr. DAVIES: Yes, and once again I thank the Minister for the opportunity he gave us to visit these areas.

It is regrettable that the Government decided to grant these people drinking rights without full voting rights, but I will not dwell on that. We realise the dangers of the drinking position as it existed with the availability of "metho" and other cheap liquors to these people outside their missions and settlements. We believe that if full voting rights had been included in the Bill it would have been a major step forward. As it is, we appreciate what the Minister has done, and we believe that this is a sincere endeavour to make progress. There is much difference of opinion as to the speed at which we should move. I feel that to hasten too quickly would be as disastrous as to do nothing.

I have one or two general observations to make. I do not think that enough recognition is given to the language problem. The absence of any common aboriginal language that can be understood by all tribes presents a great difficulty. While we were at Aurukun there were two ladies

from the university making a study of the various dialects and languages. I do not know how far their investigations have gone. Possibly the Minister may be able to give us some information on the results which accrued, or are accruing, from other investigations being made.

The language difficulty presents a great problem in educating the young people in the settlements. It has been noted that where there is a teacher with a knowledge of the language, and the child is learning the English language at the same time, greater progress is made by the child. Language is definitely a vehicle of culture. Of course, with the number of teachers required for the schools, it is impossible to get white teachers with a knowledge of the language. There should be some attempt to make greater progress in solving the problems associated with this language in an endeavour to get it on paper so that it may last as a language which can be learned. I think that would help to bring about a better appreciation of the problems confronting the white race as well as the dark race. It is essential to have a better appreciation of each other's problems. As the Minister said, the white population must be prepared to receive these people without any sense of patronage, if they are to be—to use a term so frequently used—assimilated into our society.

It should be remembered, of course, that over the years the opinions held of these people have helped to build up in the minds of the senior people of the aboriginal peoples, and deep in their hearts, a grudge against the white race which must be kept well in mind in considering any improvements or any change in the extension of privileges, or any endeavour to hasten assimilation. We note that, even at the end of the century—in 1899—from a report by Mr. Alfred Giles, a pastoralist, that the Government Resident in the Northern Territory, Hon. J. L. Parsons, said he heartily agreed with these opinions—

"That the blackfellow is not the noble savage he is depicted; that if he lacks one thing more than another it is virtue; their songs, rites, and ceremonies are utterly revolting and fiendish, but if we add a few white vices, and then ask the question as to the possibility of chastity among the women, the idea at once becomes preposterous. No less preposterous, therefore, is the idea of black women being outraged unless it is by stopping their supply of tobacco. As to the numerous murders being attributable to the white men violating the moral laws of the tribe, I have already shown it to be impossible when such laws do not exist."

Such ideas were held well into the present century. These people drifted farther inland and were received by the station-owners. They were allowed to live as fringe-dwellers on the edge of the stations, and, when there was work, were allowed to do some work.

Conciliated and indulged on one occasion, rebuffed and maltreated on another, it is not surprising that the aborigine has become a problem.

People who tour the North would find it difficult to realise that in 1871 five powerful healthy tribes travelled from Newcastle Bay to Cape York. Each tribe could muster from 800 to 1,000 fighting men. These tribes became almost extinct by the turn of the century. The tribes at Newcastle Bay and south to Princess Charlotte Bay were still living in their original state at the end of the last century—as they were 1,000 years ago. The West Coast tribes were absolutely wild. We must remember the great achievements of the Christian church. I call to mind the Rev. McKenzie at Aurukun Mission, and the work done at Doomadgee and Hope Vale. Many whites coaxed blacks aboard in the years after 1900, and treated them like dogs. They kidnapped their women. The aborigines suffered and lost. In the more distant areas in the southern parts of the State, there was a better understanding, and reasonable relationships existed.

During this period there arose a very serious problem—it is still a problem today—namely, the part-aborigine. Throughout the early years there was a feeling that the race would fade out. In the last century Barron Field wrote "The Passing of Aborigines", in which he said—

"Yet deem not this man useless.

But let him pass, a blessing on his head;
And, long as he can wander, let him breathe
The freshness of the woods.

And finally,

As in the eye of nature he has lived,

So in the eye of nature let him die

This pessimism seemed justified."

This race is virile and its numbers are increasing. The Minister could well indicate any efforts made by this Government to persuade the Commonwealth Government to include Queensland aborigines in the Commonwealth census. That is important from the point of view of mission stations such as Doomadgee, which is not very far from the western border. A magnificent job is being done there by church people known as The Brethren. There were only five or six families there living in humpies at the time of our visit. As people hear of the treatment being received there and the excellent consideration being shown to the aborigines, new numbers will come in. If there was a general census and a realisation of the number of people who are moving about, some effort by the Commonwealth would considerably help everyone associated with the settlements and the mission stations.

Section 127 of the Commonwealth Constitution excludes aborigines from inclusion in the census. It says—

"In reckoning the numbers of the people of the Commonwealth or of a State or a part of the Commonwealth, aboriginal natives shall not be counted."

That does not seem to be right.

Mr. Pizzey: It would help this Government if they were included. It would give us another £250,000 a year.

Mr. DAVIES: It would be of considerable help to all.

Keeping all those thoughts in mind, it is very good to note today that aborigines are learning to speak plainly and effectively for themselves about the needs of their people, the problems they face, and how those problems might be met. It is realised that the rapid extension of occupation by the white man from 1788 onwards completely upset the economic, social, and ritualistic life of the aborigines, and restricted their hunting grounds and tribal areas. They were a people who lived off the land. What was more serious, their sacred areas were invaded. These people have every right to their religious views, which should be respected. Their civilisation (and they had a civilisation, and a high moral code) was of little use to them, as they found themselves brushing shoulders with a totally different and dominant man.

If the aborigine is to survive and become a useful member of the community, he must slowly—I emphasise "slowly"—adapt himself to those things that make our civilisation, and we, in turn, must help him to meet his changing environment. In the field of education the arranging of a suitable syllabus must be kept in mind. As I have already mentioned, the aborigine was a hunter who lived off the land. Whilst many now desire to be what we describe as "assimilated", there are many who desire to preserve their group identity. I hope that they will be able to do so, and that their language will be preserved and that they will not be lost within the general community.

The hope that I see for the Northern aborigines is in the development that is taking place—and we hope it will continue to take place—in the Bamaga area. It must be remembered that endeavours must be made to assist these people through our system of education, which should also include kindergarten training and adult education classes. I know that at Mornington Island night classes are arranged for the senior members of the community. This may be happening in other places, too. This helps to develop in these people better health measures and hygiene standards, sensible dietary habits, and better care of babies.

It is interesting to note the tremendous amount of building that is going on, providing schools, hospital improvements, accommodation for nurses, and clinics to advise mothers on the health of their babies. The department must be given credit for this work. We claim, however, that still more should be done and that the Commonwealth Government should make available as much

money as possible to carry out all this work. We recognise what has been done by the Minister with the funds available and say to him "Well done" for what has been accomplished over the years in these centres.

To enter our social life, an aboriginal must develop a desire to reside in a house and to keep his home in order at a cost of labour and a stable life. Much has been said about exemption, and we know the position that applies under the Act. I think it is forgotten by too many people that exemption brings aborigines face to face with what must appear to be a hard world and complications that possibly they did not dream of and to which they are not accustomed. When discussing at the Committee stage the clauses connected with the establishment of the welfare fund, I shall have a few words to say about the advisability of appointing more welfare officers than we now have. Keeping in mind the position in Aurukun, it is good to remember that what I have said applied about 40 years ago when two-thirds of the people lived in the bush, but that none now do so. They have been taught how to live together without serious brawling or trouble—to live as a community. Aborigines in a tribe are all relatives. They are sociable people. They hunted together for protection against dangers of the dark and came together for the celebration of corroborees. They are loyal to their social order and are a virile people. Ninety-one per cent. of their marriages conform to ideal rules, and they believe in stable marriage in the interests of their children.

When a syllabus is being drawn up for schools, it should be kept in mind that, in their tribal life, the aborigines show a flair for songs, for ritual, and for dramatic representation, which is allowed to fall into abeyance and receive no encouragement as they become "Europeanised", if I may put it that way.

Those of us who had the privilege of visiting Bamaga will never forget the four hours of magnificent entertainment that was provided there at night. On the same programme were Torres Strait Islanders and aborigines—people from Old Mapoon who had settled in New Mapoon, people from the Lockhart River mission, and Torres Strait Islanders from Bamaga—and their music and their stage presentation was excellent.

Mr. Pizzey: They had a good choirmaster, too.

Mr. DAVIES: Yes, at one stage.

I think we must respect the innate skills of those people and their achievements, and the aborigines, though training at school and adult education courses, must be taught to respect European traditions because of the many privileges that they receive as inhabitants of this country. All categories of aborigines are human beings, individuals with minds and wills of their

own, who can, and will, largely decide for themselves on important matters affecting their future, and this will become more evident as the number of educated people increases.

In visiting the various mission stations, I noticed, particularly at Doomadgee and Hope Vale, something that should be kept in mind at schools over which the State has some influence. The mission policy, which was based on training for usefulness, was stated in this way—

1. Develop a right attitude to work in minds;
2. Provision of and training in a many-sided programme of work;
3. Aim at responsibility, independence and indigenous leadership in as many spheres of work as possible.

An endeavour was made to inculcate into their minds the idea that to go out hunting is honourable, to work is honourable, but to sit and be idle is to be despised.

The attitude of aborigines in the years gone by was to work only when it was necessary to hunt for food, and that attitude has been handed down to many of the present aborigines. In a number of groups the man who applies himself to his work and is diligent in his efforts is not always the man who wins the highest praise.

Part of the Bill deals with land problems and land titles on the various reserves in relation to the land laws of the State, and it is worthy of note, I think, that even in America, where 500,000 Red Indians live on 53,000,000 acres, an area of more than 290 square miles—hon. members can imagine the size if they take the distance between Brisbane and Gladstone as one side of the square—administered by democratically elected local tribal councils, property is not transferable to outsiders but can be used as security for financial advances. During 1960, Red Indians borrowed £36,000,000 to advance and improve reserves. Land title is absolute, and royalties from oil and other resources found on reserves are paid direct to the tribes. For example, they receive £22,000,000 from petroleum development. I know that the laws relating to petroleum in the United States of America are peculiar, but we shall have a discussion on an amendment that we desire to move later and shall suggest that in Queensland a percentage of the royalties could be paid into a welfare fund, for instance.

Another point is linked with claims by many organisations throughout the country for greater consideration in regard to land that has been taken from these people over the years. Claims by Red Indians against the United States Government for land alienation in the past are heard by a special Red Indian Court of Claims which, it is reckoned, will eventually have paid out £500,000,000 in settlement.

Turning to New Zealand, 64 per cent. of that country's native population are full-blood Maoris, who constitute 137,000 people of a total population of 2,000,000. In 1840 the Treaty of Waitangi guaranteed the Maori possession of his tribal lands and equal rights with Europeans. Four million acres are Maori-owned, an area of 79 miles square.

We meet with the suggestion now and then that a welfare board is in existence in other States and we will be getting on to that question when discussing that part of the Bill in which a welfare committee is mentioned. New Zealand has tribal committees to preserve, revive and maintain the teaching of Maori crafts, language, genealogy and history in order to perpetuate Maori culture. When these people did that they were at their very best and realised and accepted that an appreciation of Maori culture would lead to the building up of an economically and culturally strong community which would be encouraged to influence and to extend influence over the community in general. With similar progress among our aborigines we would have a racial group which would have restored its dignity and pride in its past achievements and would be in a position to choose what is good in our civilisation and worth absorbing.

Since 1961 there has been in New Zealand a dominion council of tribal executives. That would correspond with what some would like to see in the form of a welfare board. Committees of from five to 11 members are elected every two years. It is a body which can fairly claim to represent Maori opinion on a Dominion-wide and non-political basis. With such people as Harold Blair and other famous coloured sportsmen as we have here, we would have the nucleus of such an organisation. Some famous Maoris in New Zealand were Sir Apirana Ngata, Sir James Carroll and Sir Maui Pomare. On one occasion Sir James Carroll held the high office of Acting Prime Minister of New Zealand.

Another problem that has been raised by various organisations throughout the State who claim that the Government should deal with these matters is the question of compensation. Compensation has been paid to Maori trust boards by the Government for land appropriated in the past and the boards use the money for such projects as scholarships, soil improvement and business loans.

The opportunity for granting land title exists in the Bamaga area. The Minister may give us some idea of the progress that has been made by the committee appointed—it was mentioned to us while we were in the area—to investigate the economic possibilities for sound development of the area, for storage of water, and for developing agricultural pursuits. An examination of the soil was to take place, as well as a survey of the existing quantities of timber. I believe that there is an ideal set-up first of all in New Mapoon, in what appeared to be good scrub country. It appeared to us that the only thing that could have been done

in the circumstances was to develop New Mapoon for the people living there. The department has decided that it will establish some holiday homes at Old Mapoon. I know that they have there some homes in which crocodile hunters can reside when travelling down the coast. At Bamaga itself, of course, it is very pleasing to know that Torres Strait Islanders are building up a very useful area. When we arrived there, we were happy to learn that Mrs. Bamaga was present to welcome us.

Much of the timber requirement of the North comes from the Bamaga sawmill. We inspected the hospital, which is staffed with experienced nursing sisters and matrons. The people from Lockhart were being established in a new settlement. Whatever the circumstances of the past, whatever failures there may have been, as we saw the present position at Lockhart there were only two courses open. It was necessary to spend enormous sums of money to rebuild, or quickly move, the whole settlement because of the danger of a plague breaking out in that area. We have been assured that building is going on in the new area as quickly as possible.

The importance of welfare officers is emphasised throughout the Bill. It highlights the need to train welfare officers. We need more than adequately trained teachers in that area; we need dedicated teachers. Even on Thursday Island, where a splendid high school and a primary school have been built, with excellent hostel accommodation available for teachers, the Minister has great difficulty in getting teachers to remain there. Fortunately they have a very good headmaster. The day has gone when the people in charge of the various departments might be considered to be second-rate. In the medical and nursing services and in the teaching staffs in the various schools we now have first-class, well-trained people who are doing an excellent job on Thursday Island. The only problem is that the Government is not making enough money available so that Thursday Island could be a model from the point of view of tidiness in order that people coming from the other islands could regard it as the pattern to be followed.

Our aborigines have experienced a terrible struggle for existence in an extremely hostile environment. The Maoris in New Zealand and the Red Indians in America experienced altogether different conditions. They did not have to suffer the extreme conditions of drought that have had to be endured here.

The aborigines have a dignity and a pride in their past, and are more easily wounded than is realised. They are a very sensitive people.

I notice that much is being left to regulations. I had hoped that the Minister would give us a better idea of what the regulations are to contain. When they come before Parliament there will not be a great deal of time

for us to discuss them. From what I can understand there will be many regulations dealing with the establishment of councils. I hope that the department will give the members of these councils every opportunity to attend what would amount to schools or courses—conferences of local-authority people—so that they will be able to get advice and gain experience that they can apply in the administration of their own areas.

Any money that can be advanced for improving housing generally should be provided. At Aurukun, tremendous expense has been incurred by the church authorities. I cannot blame the church authorities, but the homes that are being built are too small. It was pleasing to hear the Minister say that he is willing to take over the church schools and education responsibilities at all mission settlements. I believe that the churches should hasten their actions to bring that about. At the Edward River and Mitchell River missions there are large cattle stations which have to be run. It is a problem to get trained officers for this activity apart from trained school teachers.

It is all very well to say that 15 or 20 welfare officers should be appointed. Where will they come from? We must first train people who are dedicated to helping the natives. We must realise that this is a problem that cannot be surmounted overnight. I hope the Minister will start selecting and training people who will eventually become welfare officers.

More should be done to give concessions to teachers in the way of extra allowances, tax concessions, or special grants for holiday expenses to meet transport costs from those centres. We must encourage students who, from their training college days, will make themselves available for this work. I know that when a teacher is appointed as a State school teacher he undertakes to serve in any corner of the State. However, we must realise that we need very select people for this very difficult job. This is essential if we are to prove that we are serious in our efforts to assist these people to raise their status in their own community.

We found an excellent type of home at Doomadgee, which is some 60 miles west of Burketown. Every family, except perhaps four of five, had an excellent home, and by now they may all have good homes. The homes were well equipped with electric light and water, with a plentiful supply of firewood available. There is a good water storage in a nearby river. We have nothing but praise for the buildings. The same remarks apply to Hope Vale. However, at Aurukun the homes are definitely too small, and are very poorly ventilated. I am not blaming the church mission. Some aborigines still have their dream-time fancies and their superstitions, and refuse to sleep inside a building. However, the buildings we saw being constructed are too hot under any conditions for people to sleep inside. Much has yet to be done in that direction.

The settlements on Cape York Peninsula are hundreds of miles from the nearest cities, and many more hundreds of miles from the southern cities. This presents a big problem, as air services provide the only reliable means of transport and communication. Those of us who journeyed up the Edward River and the Mitchell River so many miles for so many hours, and then went by truck over a very rough road for about three-quarters of an hour to get to the settlement, realise the extreme isolation of these missions.

I hope the Government will give serious consideration to training welfare officers. Some of the southern States have them. I believe that New South Wales has fifteen, and that they are doing an excellent job. One welfare officer in another State was successful in obtaining employment for 269 people. He appeared in court 50 times representing these people. He gave 18 public addresses and three radio talks. Two of the officers are trained nurses. There is no reason why women should not be welfare officers. We know that there have been female missionaries in lonely outposts in New Guinea. Under the new system of administration in New Guinea, the natives are taking an interest in the government of their own affairs and are watching developments such as those that this Act will bring about.

Most of the time of a welfare officer is taken up in the field protecting people against exploitation, and in taking an interest in local procedures. Wherever possible the district officer is a clerk of the court and has legal training. They are public officers of the Government and do everything possible to safeguard the interests of these people. They are requested to appear in court for them and at times appeal against decisions. They protect them against people who desire to exploit them. Although they make their services available, with their own personal responsibilities and duties they would find it impossible to attend to all of the necessary interests for the welfare of these people.

Then there is the employment of adults and those at school-leaving age, particularly people who are given exemption. They move out into the general community. That is a stage when they need more advice than at any other time, until they can adjust themselves. Many of us fail to realise what it means to have a family move into a town on the coast. There is a certain amount of resentment from people there. More people should be willing to play a part in helping these people to adjust themselves.

The average Australian would be prepared to study the conditions of the aborigines throughout Australia, to promote their welfare, and to help form a public conscience in favour of just and enlightened treatment of the people under our charge. I think the Government should take steps to train people to occupy the position of welfare officer.

This would fill the bill for a number of years and until we can see the results of their work. An educational fund has been established in some States for the benefit of aborigines. An organisation in South Australia, which has been established for over 100 years, looks after the interests of the aboriginal inhabitants of the Commonwealth, particularly those in that State, and promotes spiritual and temporal well-being in any way that circumstances may suggest. We know that these organisations have been established in other States. Queensland has a greater problem than other States because of the greater number of aborigines, greater distances, and greater variation in climatic conditions. There are many more difficulties associated with the administration of this department here than in any other State.

Over a period of time much has been done which bears comparison with what has been done in any other State. As the Minister said, the position is better here than in the other States.

During the debate on the clauses we will raise the question of remuneration to the aborigines for work done, the position regarding awards, and, when voting rights are granted, the right of responsible people to enter settlements and mission stations if they desire to give talks on our democratic system of Government. Much could be done along those lines.

(Time expired.)

Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) (3.20 p.m.): With the exception of a few parts of it, I think that the Bill is desirable. Those who have served here for any length of time feel a little unhappy that so little progress has been made in lifting the standard of living of aborigines. In saying that, I am not reflecting on officers of the Department of Native Affairs. I have in mind mainly those aborigines who are outside settlements. The Director of Native Affairs and his officers have done a really excellent job over the years. This is a most difficult task, and I think we might as well face up to the stark truth that talking about it and putting improvements into effect are two entirely different matters.

Over the years the answer to the problem has been said to be assimilation. To my mind, that does not necessarily imply inter-marriage and that type of thing; it means getting coloured people to embrace our way of life. Is failure to bring this about a weakness on the part of the white man, or of the coloured man? I think we have to encourage aborigines in every possible way to aim at a higher standard of living. One of the first things that we have to do is remove from the minds of aborigines the feeling of inferiority. We have to be honest with ourselves and realise the inferiority complex that can creep over anyone who feels that he is something less than the other fellow, and that, no matter how much he tries, he

can never measure up to the other person's standard. Eliminating that feeling is something at which we must work very hard.

I do not feel that over the years sufficient improvement has been made in the standard of education of these people. I therefore commend attaching the Department of Native Affairs to the portfolio administered by the Minister for Education. I believe that the basis of success lies in continuing the line from school to useful employment in the community. I have watched this problem closely, particularly during the last 15 years. In my electorate there are two colonies of aborigines outside the control of the department, one at Churchill and the other at Beaudesert. I say without reservation that the standard of housing at both those settlements has shocked me. The children go to school, and whilst there they mingle with white children and receive the same general standard of education. However, there appears to be a drift from these standards after the children leave school. On one occasion a health officer asked me to accompany him to Churchill to see the settlement there. I would not even attempt to describe the homes of these people; one would have to see them to believe the state that they were in. Most of the men were away at work—or those who wished to work were—and when I conversed with the women I found that they spoke quite good English but seemed to have no civic pride and no desire to improve their conditions. When I saw the water supply, the housing, and the sanitary arrangements, I could not help feeling ashamed.

What are we to do about this? I heard the hon. member for Maryborough speaking about employing welfare officers. I think it might be possible to establish welfare committees composed of some of the coloured children attending the schools, some of the white children, and some older people. When the children leave school and seek employment, the committee might accept some responsibility for obtaining suitable employment for them. If they are unable to get it, the committee might try to find out why. I do not suggest that nothing along these lines has been done; but if it has, I should like to see it persevered with.

In the places to which I have referred, I know that the churches are concerned and have made an effort to form organisations to assist these people. OPAL is doing very good work at Ipswich, although it did not get the support and encouragement that it deserved when it commenced operations. It was backed by the heads of the various churches, and I believe that in the future more will be done to help it.

If we are to lift the morale of the aborigines, the first thing we must do is to provide improved housing. In my opinion, nothing will destroy morale quicker than living in hovels while people nearby live in decent homes. I suppose it could be argued that in many instances they have done very little

to help themselves. The position is similar at Beaudesert, and I could show hon. members places where people are living under a few sheets of iron halfway down the river bank or in hovels little better than those that I described earlier. When I have spoken to those people they have said, "We feel we are entitled to a better standard of housing." I could not agree more. A number of people in Beaudesert, including members of the Country Women's Association, the local authority, the chamber of commerce, and the churches, have taken an interest in the problems, but there is a need for a housing system quite separate from the Housing Commission. I made representations to the Housing Commission in an effort to do something about it, but cast-iron conditions apply to housing loans and it would be impossible for these people to get the finance necessary to enable them to get a home. What I had in mind at that time—it is still in my mind—is the erection of some structure that would provide them with adequate shelter. At present some of them have no real shelter. I have walked into places that had cracks 3 or 4 inches wide in the walls. It was impossible to keep out water or dust, and in many cases it was impossible to keep out the dogs. I said to one coloured woman, "Aren't you cold in here?", and she said, "Well, you get used to that, Mister." That is the way the people live, and because their housing is of such a low standard they develop an inferiority complex, their morale drops, and they just do not care. What can we do to give them additional confidence?

I mention these things because I think they are at the root of the trouble. Some of these people will not work; others are quite good workers. Every one of them should be given a chance. I do not think there is anything more depressing than to walk round country towns and see a number of these people sitting about the place, depressed, discouraged, and seeming not to care what happens.

One might well ask, "Why does that apply to coloured people?" I can assure hon. members that it applies equally to whites if they live in similar circumstances. I called to mind an experience I had in the years of the depression. I was in Newcastle some time after the mines and the Newcastle steelworks had closed and there were dozens of people lolling around parks, just as one sees these coloured people. They were very depressed; they had nothing to look forward to. They were out of work. White people, too, can fall into that state of depression if something is not done for them.

We must at least give these people every chance. I was one of those who was somewhat doubtful about the wisdom of extending the franchise to them. Some people feel that, after all, aborigines do not take any interest in elections or politics, so why ask them to exercise a vote. I believe that the very fact of being given the right to vote makes them

feel that they are of some importance in the community and that, in itself, will give them greater confidence even though they may not be right on every occasion that they cast a vote. I suppose it could be said that that applies equally to white Australians. After all, who are we to judge how any person should exercise his vote? It would, at least, provide the confidence that I feel is so important.

I mentioned that getting people into useful employment is very important. There are one or two other features of the Bill about which I am not really happy. I think they would have been better either deferred or more fully examined before the Bill was drafted. I refer particularly to a circular that has been distributed within the last week or two by the United Graziers' Association, which is somewhat concerned that this Bill has been designed, drafted, and presented to Parliament without its being consulted. Graziers claim that they are the biggest employers of aboriginal labour, and I believe that to be true. It would have been only right and proper to seek their opinions before the Bill was drafted. But that has not been done, and they now make one or two very strong points.

I think it important that the Minister should heed their comments before the third-reading stage of the Bill. One point they make is that many of the aborigines who are employed on the stations were born there. Many of them are of the second or third generation. They live on the station and it is their home. If the owners of the properties are obliged to pay them award wages, it will be found that in a great many cases these people may lose their jobs. I am not saying that they will. Some of them are as good as any white man could be, but one must remember the conditions under which they live. Their wives and families are there, they get fruit and vegetables and many other forms of help from the station that ordinary wage-earners would not get, and I think if that arrangement between the station manager and the coloured employee is upset there is a real danger that some of these people might lose their jobs.

Be that right or wrong, I feel that the Minister or his officers should have conferred with officers of the United Graziers' Association in order to get a real perspective of the position. I have seen a number of these people working on stations. Some are really good horsemen and some really good stockmen. Others, of course, are not so good. I would not go any further than that.

I will say in favour of the Australian aborigine that you cannot lose him. Get among the sandhills in the Channel Country and but for the sun you would not know where you were, but the coloured boy will always find his way home. Station managers have told me, "We lose men here, time and time again. Chaps who come from closely settled districts do not know what it

is to be in isolation. They ride out without knowing what direction they are going. Sooner or later we have to look for them."

The Australian aborigine is a typical bushman. Over the centuries he has lived off the bush and known his way around the bush. He can still do it. To get him to accept our way of life as part of his assimilation seems to be the problem. I do not think we should upset the arrangement considered suitable for the coloured employee and his family on a station. He likes to live in the bush. He does not want to go to the city. He does not worry about the isolation. If, by legislative enactment, we tell the property owner, "You must not do this and you must not do that," we will do harm.

The Minister and his officers have not looked sufficiently into the problem of supplying liquor to aborigines. If we are not going to have some control over the supply of liquor to aborigines they will be taking it home to entertain their friends, and in this way will be looking for trouble. I have seen the behaviour of some of them in these circumstances. There is a real danger in the uncontrolled supply of liquor. A tremendous amount of harm can be done to some of the stations. No aborigine should be permitted to take liquor to his place of employment. If he takes it he is going to do himself an injury, his family an injury, and his cause an injury.

I do not like discrimination. If we say that it is right for a white male person 21 years old to enter a hotel it should be right for a coloured male person of the same age to enter a hotel if he wants to. I know many hotels in the country where the proprietors will not serve coloured people because they will not take care of themselves or behave themselves after consuming liquor.

Mr. Aikens: A lot of white people are in the same category.

Mr. MULLER: I was coming to that.

Perhaps we could deal with the coloured boy who misconducts himself with liquor the way we deal with the driver who misconducts himself with a motor-car. Perhaps we could disqualify him or prohibit him for some time. Rather than allow him free access to a hotel at all times we could say, "If you offend against this law you will be prevented from entering a hotel for 12 months. If you persist in misconducting yourself after the first offence you will be prohibited for many years, or for life, from entering a hotel." That rule should be applied not only to the coloured man.

I feel that it was a mistake not to consult the employers of coloured labour—probably the biggest employers of coloured labour—before the Bill was drafted. The Minister could have gained quite a deal of useful information in that way.

I know that the standards under which aborigines have been living are low. I believe that something should be done to lift them.

Every person who is prepared to do something to help himself should be encouraged. I do not suggest for a moment that we should build houses costing £3,000 or £4,000. However, in the districts to which I am referring, particularly the Beaudesert district and the areas surrounding Churchill, I know only too well how thrilled the people would be to have a home that would shelter them from the cold, the rain, the dirt, and the dust. They would then enjoy much better conditions than they have now. Something should be done to assist them—to make a starting point.

There should be greater possibilities for educating aboriginal children after primary-school level. I attend the annual sports gatherings in these districts and I see aborigines taking part in the sporting programmes. They acquit themselves splendidly. In discussions with the teachers I have found that they do remarkably well with their studies, too. They intermingle with the white children and live under similar conditions while at school. It appears to me that if something could be done for them after they leave school to ensure that they get employment, we would be taking a big step in the right direction. I have in mind encouraging the establishment of local welfare committees, not merely the appointment of one welfare officer. This cannot be just a one-man show.

The people in my district see what is going on and they are very unhappy. Most of them are willing to do something to help. It is just a matter of how they can help. We have the aboriginal children competing with white children in sport and study. It appears to me that there is something radically wrong in that they fall by the wayside when they leave school. If they could be guided into doing something useful at that stage, something could be done. I do not suggest for a moment that every one of them would co-operate. We cannot expect that. Some are not as good as others, but that applies to whites, too. After we have taken them so far in their education and they have intermingled with white children, there should not be the break that there is. I am sure that hon. members could hardly credit the difference between the conditions of the white people living in the district and those of the coloured people. Hon. members would be shocked to see their living conditions.

The hon. member for Cook has had a very wide experience with the Torres Strait Islanders. I noted that hon. members listened to his speech with a great deal of interest. He has told me that many of them are excellent workers. A few years ago I was on the north-western line after the floods when the railway lines were washed away. I have never seen men of any nationality, or creed for that matter, work harder than the Torres Strait boys worked in the terrific heat and humidity. They were big, strong,

willing workers. If they are prepared to take on such hard work, they should be encouraged.

The lifting of the standard of living of our coloured people concerns church people more than ever. This is common to all Christian churches. They believe that they must accept some responsibility. They have done quite a lot, but they are not getting support and co-operation from those who can help them. From a Christian viewpoint, we are obliged to help.

The Bill purports to lift the standard of these people and I compliment the Minister and his officers on its preparation. Housing is the main thing that will lift their standard and remove this inferiority complex. When the children pass through the schools and their environment is lifted, it should be possible to keep them up to that higher standard. There are many views on what can be done. While trying to do something for them this afternoon, I must confess that I have seen some rank failures. In a great many cases they have lived under these conditions for generations, and it will be difficult to get them to make a change. Once they do, we should try to keep them up to the mark.

I wish the Minister well with this legislation. He has an advantage over previous Ministers because he is putting aboriginal children through the schools, and in that way he will probably earn success. Whatever has been achieved in the way of civilisation has been achieved through education. After educating these people we have to prove to them that we are sympathetic. We have to help and encourage them. No-one can suggest a better way of doing it. It has been possible to lift the standards of many of the coloured people in other parts of the world, so it can be done here.

I should like the Minister to look at the point raised by the United Graziers' Association in regard to the employment of aborigines on stations. I would not like to see them deprived of employment. They could not compete with the white employee. They are there, and they are supplied with amenities that the white man would not get. But if they had to compete with white labour, the manager would employ the experienced white man.

Mr. Pizzey: There is nothing in the Bill about that. That matter is at present before the Industrial Commissioner.

Mr. MULLER: I am glad to hear that. I hope the Minister will look into the question of aborigines taking liquor onto stations. Some white people are weak, and some coloured people are likely to do themselves an injury if they take liquor onto the stations. I hope the necessary protection will be provided to ensure that that does not happen.

The Minister has made an honest attempt to lift the standard of the aboriginal people by the introduction of this Bill.

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) (3.50 p.m.): I express appreciation at the sincerity of the Minister in trying to improve the standards of Torres Strait Islanders and aborigines. I realise that in the framing of this Bill the Minister has had pressure applied to him by various "do-good" groups in the community, including many people who do not have too many clues and have not had much direct contact with aborigines or Torres Strait Islanders. I endorse the remarks of the hon. member for Cook that, apart from those who have visited the islands, mission stations, and Government settlements, very few have a true appreciation of the problems of these people.

Mr. Hanlon: Some people want aborigines to be free to do what they think they should do, not what the aborigines want to do.

Mr. MELLOY: That is a very true statement. The people to be considered are the aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders themselves.

Mr. Pizzey: Don't forget they want their own member.

Mr. MELLOY: That is where they need guidance, too. It is necessary to be realistic about these things. When it is said that their wishes have to be considered, it has also to be remembered that they have in many cases not had the education and experience of other people. I am not referring now to the "do-gooders" but to men such as the Minister and the officers of the Department of Native Affairs who know the position both inside and outside settlements and missions and the capacity of the people on reserves and missions.

Mr. Ramsden: They would soon be educated if they came here.

Mr. MELLOY: You can say that again!

I could quote from many books and reports that I have read on the aboriginal problem during the last three months. With very few exceptions, they seem to me to throw little light on what has to be done in this matter. Certainly past events have been quoted, but no guidance for the future is contained in them.

I think the Minister realises that the Bill, at best, approaches the problem on the basis of trial and error. Never before has a situation quite like this had to be faced. There is little past experience as a guide in determining what should be done with these people, nevertheless what is being done now will be proved right or wrong only by the events of the next ten years. The Minister has my sympathy in framing the Bill, and I hope he will realise that suggestions and criticism emanating from this side of the House are merely attempts to help him with this legislation.

Mr. Pizzey: It might be amended in a couple of years' time.

Mr. MELLOY: Yes, and probably it will be, in the light of experience.

Education is mentioned in the Bill. It is my opinion that the Department of Education should assume full control of education on the missions; I know that it will on Government reserves and settlements. In saying this, I am not for a moment discrediting the work done in the field of education by the various churches. It was essential that the missions accept responsibility in the early days for the education of the aboriginal people. They brought more or less nomadic tribes into various settlements and provided them not only with spiritual guidance but also with education. They have done a wonderful job; I give them full credit for it. However, because of their economic circumstances and their economic resources, the cost of educating children at the missions is getting beyond the churches, and very soon the Government will have to accept full responsibility for education at missions, as it has on settlements. The churches usually have a teacher who is responsible for the school, and a number of native teachers, who are really no more than monitors, assist with the teaching. Although those people are doing a wonderful job, the provision of the much more comprehensive education that children require today is beyond the resources of the churches. In my opinion, the Government must accept full responsibility for education at missions in the near future.

I go further and say that the time is not far distant when the Government will have to accept full responsibility for the maintenance and development of the mission stations themselves. The burden on the churches is becoming increasingly heavy, and I believe that the provision of better amenities for aborigines will soon be beyond their resources. I do not suggest for one moment that the churches should lose their spiritual control over the missions, but I think the Government will have to accept responsibility for their administration.

I turn now to the provision of drink to aborigines. This will present very great problems in the community generally, and church missions will have to make up their minds whether or not they will allow drinking. I know that several missions already allow the inhabitants to have a drink on the mission.

It will create great problems, too, in the Torres Strait Islands. When I spoke to the women on those islands, I found that virtually none of them favoured the introduction of unrestricted drinking. I can well understand their concern, because the drinking of methylated spirits was very rife on several islands and this had given the women a foretaste of what would happen with the introduction of unrestricted drinking. One has only to look at what happened in New Guinea when the natives were given the right to drink liquor to form a picture in one's mind of what might happen on the Torres Strait Islands.

The situation on Thursday Island will have to be watched very closely, also, and I think a considerable increase in the number of police will be necessary. In fact, when we were there the police sergeant expressed great concern about what the situation would be when drinking by these people was legalised. At the present time they get it secretly and go down to the beach or into the bush on various parts of the island and have a real binge. That is not good. I do not favour drinking to excess in any community, but I think that one of the results of the introduction of legal drinking will be to reduce the amount of drunkenness. Those on the various settlements, particularly Thursday Island, will be able to drink sensibly and reasonably instead of going away into some corner of the island and drinking two or three bottles, or whatever they have, in one session.

The hon. member for Maryborough mentioned language and the desirability of some common ground on which there could be interchange of views and that sort of thing between the various peoples. I think that problem will be solved, because in 10 years' time, when the children grow up, they will all speak English and there will not be any trouble in that direction.

Whilst we were at Aurukun some girls were translating the local language—Wikmunkan, I think it is—into English. I appreciate the spirit of these girls, who had been there for two years, on and off. Their object was to translate the Bible, but they had not succeeded in formulating a basis for translation and, at the rate they were going, by the time the translation of the Bible is completed nobody at Aurukun will be able to speak the Wikmunkan language.

My concern with the Bill is not so much what is in it, but what is not in it. There are various points with which I wish to deal, the first being the provision of welfare officers. I do not favour the setting up of a welfare board, I think the Department of Native Affairs will be quite capable of controlling or administering any welfare movement that is initiated, but I do think that a considerable number of welfare officers should be appointed. I suppose the number will depend on the money available to the department but any expense involved will be worthwhile.

Mr. Pizzey: You would not write into the Bill the appointment of welfare officers.

Mr. MELLOY: No, but provision could be made in the Bill for the appointment of such officers.

Mr. Pizzey: There is provision for "any other officers".

Mr. MELLOY: I realise that, but the Minister did not specifically state his intention to appoint welfare officers. "Any other officers" could be what it says; it need not include welfare officers.

Consideration must be given not only to those who are at present on settlements and missions but to those who are outside the Act at the present time. I think the Minister will appreciate that. I know that certain work is being done for them but it does not extend to the whole of the 20,000-odd outside the scope of the Act. Perhaps some of them do not require assistance, but many do. They need guidance, assistance and advice to enable them to cope with the problems that confront them. Even though they have been outside the scope of the Act for a considerable time they are still facing problems. Although they have had experience in the outside world they are still confronted with a certain amount of prejudice in the general community. The same problems do not arise in Victoria and New South Wales. They have different problems in those States. In Victoria, where there are about 3,000 aborigines, there are eight welfare officers under the control of the welfare board. I do not agree with the idea of a welfare board, but the welfare officers are doing a tremendous job.

Mr. Ramsden: Why don't you agree with the idea of a board?

Mr. MELLOY: Because of apparent disagreement and argument, I do not think it is working out very well. I think we have a sufficiently efficient administration in Queensland to control the work of welfare officers here. In New South Wales they do not do quite the same job as in Victoria. They have about 17,000 or 18,000 aborigines and about 16 welfare officers. The appointment of welfare officers is essential for the welfare of aborigines, both in and out of settlements. They need all sorts of assistance. They need assistance to get houses. I know that the Queensland Housing Commission is doing a good job in this field but many aborigines do not realise what is being done. It is no use providing these people with houses if they do not know how to take advantage of them. When they are going into new houses they need guidance and assistance.

The Aboriginal Advancement League in Victoria is doing a tremendous job for the housing and general welfare of the aboriginal people in that State. OPAL is doing a similar job here, although I do not think it has sufficient money to carry out the work it sets out to do. With the resources at its disposal it is doing a tremendous job for the aboriginal people in Queensland.

I had intended to deal with the need for adequate wages for aborigines, but as the Minister has said that this is the subject of a case before the Industrial Commission I will not proceed with that matter now. I take it that there will be provision in the regulations for the payment of these people on stations, with the elimination of the working conditions presently provided?

Mr. Pizzey: That will depend on the decision of the commission.

Mr. MELLOY: I hope the commission decides that they are entitled to equal treatment with whites. The hon. member for Fassifern said that in the event of their receiving equal wages there was a risk that station-owners would prefer to employ whites. I hope that is not so. The aborigine does his job equally as well as the white man on a station and has proved himself to be a good pastoral worker. I hope that station-owners will appreciate that and that they will not discard aboriginal workers if they are awarded equal wages with white employees. The effect on the families of aboriginal workers is another matter that must be considered. I know that they take their families with them to the station properties. I do not know whether their wives will have to be paid award wages. Those are problems which will go hand in hand with paying aborigines award wages, and they will have to be solved in due course.

The Minister said that the Bill makes provision for the establishment of a local-authority type of council on settlements and that some day a place like Cherbourg will be another town. However, what will be the source of finance for the maintenance and administration of the new towns? Industries will have to be established in the towns if an attempt is made to run them on the same basis as local authorities. The Minister hopes they will become towns, but I think this will create another problem for these people.

Mr. Pizzey: We have not yet reached that stage with Thursday Island. We have an administrator there and we help with finance.

Mr. MELLOY: We will have the same trouble with the settlements if they become towns with local-authority status. Again, I think it will perpetuate the segregation of these people. As I said at the introductory stage, we must make up our minds whether we will have a policy of integration or one of segregation. Once we establish towns for them we more or less perpetuate them as aboriginal towns.

Mr. Pizzey: You can go there and start a business if you want to.

Mr. MELLOY: Yes, I can. But would I? I am not saying that my personal view is that I would not. However, if any citizen moved into an aboriginal town to start a business I should be inclined to suspect his motives. I do not think the Minister's idea of creating self-supporting towns is helping a policy of integration, if integration is our policy.

At the introductory stage I pointed out that the Bill provides that an aboriginal court or the director may order that any child under the age of 16 may be detained in a specified dormitory until he attains the age of 16, or for a lesser period. I should like to know whether the Minister intends to proceed with that provision under

the new regulations. I do not think it is desirable. As we have not the regulations before us, we do not know if that is the Minister's intention. I hope we have some indication from him about it.

I wish to speak now of a couple of the missions we visited. I feel that Mapoon should not have been closed. On practically every site where there had been a house we found a well. Admittedly the wells were in a rather disgusting state, but there was water there, and the fact that they were dirty does not discredit Mapoon; it discredits the people who used the wells. We saw melons, citrus fruit, and various native fruits growing there. It seemed that almost anything could be grown there. Instead of building houses at Bamaga the Government would have been well advised to build them at Mapoon and restore it in that way. It was one of the most popular crocodile grounds in the North. When we were there three or four aborigines from another part of the State were catching crocodiles. Mapoon was an ideal site, right on the water's edge. I must confess that I would not have given two bob for the dogs we saw there. They were a mangy lot. When we were there the department was building several houses for holiday purposes. That indicates that the department has not completely given Mapoon away. By allowing people to go back there occasionally, I think we are only stirring up memories and tugging at heartstrings.

No matter how much money is spent at Lockhart River, I do not think it will be any good. I agree entirely with its closure. I was appalled by what I saw there. The sooner it is closed and those people shifted to Umagico, the better. The situation there does not warrant its maintenance. I think it is intended to close it and move the people to Umagico.

I could talk for an hour about the Torres Strait Islands and what we saw there. Some of them are beautiful. We visited Yam Island, which was the best of those we inspected, but there also we saw things that did not measure up to what we would have liked. I do not intend to raise at this stage several of the things I was unhappy about. I may have something to say about them in the Committee stage. There is room for improvement on those islands.

In the introductory stage I expressed concern about ownership of property. The Minister said that in the islands there are many people who have paid £200 or £300 towards the cost of their homes. He mentioned one man who had quite a good home there. I admit that he had a good home. The Minister went on to say that he did not think that that person had a title to the land, and that he did not want one. I cannot understand anyone not wanting a title to the land on which his home is built.

Mr. Pizzey: He has a tribal right, which is pretty strong in his mind. Let anyone try to take it from him!

Mr. MELLOY: At a later stage I will quote the Minister's reply to me this morning on that point.

I was very surprised at the Minister's later remark that in some cases these people are happy to pay £3,000 or £4,000 to build a house on land to which they have no title. I think they should have more security than a tribal right, which could be worth nothing in five or 10 years' time. Tribal rights could go by the board completely in five years' time.

Mr. Pizzey: Wouldn't any reasonable Government substitute an ordinary title if he lost his tribal title? We certainly would, and I am sure you would if you were in Government.

Mr. MELLOY: We certainly would. We have to convince these people that we are fair dinkum, and it is no good trying to do that by word of mouth. Let there be put into writing and given to him, "This house is completely free of encumbrance should your tribal right be lost at any time." One hon. member interjected at that stage of the debate that they owned the island, anyhow. If they do, and we are going to sell to them what they already own, that is one of the greatest confidence tricks that could be put over them. If they own it, what right have we to impose any charges on them?

Mr. Pizzey: Who said we were selling it to them?

Mr. MELLOY: I see the Minister's point. He said that they spend £3,000 or £4,000 to build a house. I will accept his point. There is, however, danger in having a house on land that one does not own and to which one has no title. If these people own the land, their title should be recorded in writing to tell them so. As a matter of fact, the aborigines owned all Australia at one time. How much do they own now? How much have we paid them for what we have taken? We have paid nothing. The same thing will happen to these people. If the Indonesians enter Papua and New Guinea and take over the Torres Strait Islands, where do these people stand? I suppose it could well be asked where they would stand even if they did have titles. At least their areas would be defined. If they are not given titles to the land they will be in exactly the same position as the aborigines in this country, who have received nothing for their land. It was taken from them, and what have they now? They are in reserves, and the Bill is trying to atone for things done to them 100 years ago. It is proving a hard task. I propose to leave my further comments till the Committee stage.

Mr. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon) (4.25 p.m.): During the trip through the mission stations it was obvious that the aborigines desired in particular what they referred to vaguely as the freedom practised by the European com-

munity. It is the desire of the Government that this objective should be attained; but it believes that it should be attained over a reasonable period and at the same pace as these people are prepared to accept the responsibilities of citizenship. The rights that we enjoy have to be earned, and development goes hand in hand with the rights and privileges of citizenship. In their case we must learn their way to some extent, but it must be a two-way trade and they must learn to become citizens while they are acquiring their rights. Of course, they have so far to go that it is not quite as clear-cut as that. We must meet them, clarify the position for them, and assist them, so that they will attain the rights of citizenship before they have learnt all the responsibilities that those rights carry.

If we are to achieve this objective, the first effort must be made in the field of education. The State has already come a long way in this field. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition said—I forget his exact words—there was something wrong with the progress made up to date and referred to the fact that aboriginal children have reached only fifth-grade standard. I think hon. members know that a much higher standard than fifth grade is open to children with the necessary ability. Let us reverse the situation. I am confident that if the hon. member for Kedron, or any other hon. member for that matter, went to school in the morning and had to speak in the dialect of the Bentinck Islanders all day and then went home to parents who spoke only English, he would find it difficult to reach fifth-grade standard. At Mornington Island, where the children of Bentinck Islanders attend school—until about 30 years ago we did not know they existed—the children speak English at school all day and then go home and speak their native tongue at night. It is a very difficult job to bring them up to fifth-grade standard, particularly when one takes into account that quite a number of the teachers are Mornington Islanders who have not really had time to learn to speak English correctly. Taking all things into consideration, I think very good progress has been made.

In my opinion, we shall have to give consideration in the very near future to appointing more European teachers to schools at missions and settlements. At present there are usually one or two European teachers and under them are Torres Strait Islanders or aborigines who have progressed rather well and become sub-teachers or monitors. As I said, the system is working remarkably well, but if more rapid progress is to be made in educating these people, additional European teachers will have to be appointed to the schools.

I referred earlier to the language problem, and this presents many difficulties at missions. At Lockhart River mission, for example, two dialects are spoken. Three dialects were spoken at Bamaga before the present settlement was established; today 14

dialects are spoken in the Bamaga area. The problem is very complex, but the fact that 14 dialects are spoken may prove to be an advantage in the long run because those people will tend to turn to one language. Since the tongue at school will be English, I feel that that problem will be overcome rather rapidly because these people cannot properly converse one with the other in their native tongues and it will break down quickly. They will all use English. As I say, I think a solution to that problem will come very quickly, and as English becomes their mother tongue it will be easier to take them to forms of education beyond fifth grade.

The new pupil will be starting off where his mother and father of this generation left off. They had to learn English right from the word "go." The purpose of this Bill is to lead, not force, these people into citizenship, with all its advantages to, and demands on, them. When one gets amongst them one misses influences seen in our own European community, such as the various organisations and service clubs. The only evidence I saw in the islands of anything approaching a service club was the Mothers' Union, which does quite a good job in the limited field on these islands. I did not see it on the mainland, but I know it exists in the islands.

Mr. Wallis-Smith: It does operate there.

Mr. McKECHNIE: I did not see it.

When we see organisations such as the Country Women's Association, students' school committees and service clubs assisting the general community, we realise that these people are looking for some form of guidance, with our help and within themselves. We will have to give them that guidance and encourage them along the lines of helping them to develop a true form of citizenship. After all, citizenship is mainly what we do for ourselves rather than what the Government helps us with or prompts us to do. If we can get these influences working, we will find that these people will become proud of their settlements. They will have organisations within their little areas that will work similarly to the organisations within our communities. The people will become proud of their little areas and work to develop them.

We must encourage this because it will give them considerably more self-respect, lead them to better citizenship and build their wealth and status on a sound basis. We must encourage them to lead purposeful lives, whether it be socially or economically, and they have to learn to look after themselves financially and assume the responsibilities of the normal citizen of this State. We must help them to become people who are prepared to give themselves self-help and to avoid any system in which they are mendicants. As the hon. member for Fassifern pointed out, if we make them mendicants it destroys their self-respect and their desire

to help themselves. We must lead these people away from that situation. We must encourage them to learn to work.

In their happy, idyllic life in some of the missions, there is no need to work in long periods. It certainly is quite a good life; food is plentiful, although the rations they have are necessary. We do not begrudge them those, but we feel that people who look upon such rations as a right are bringing about their own downfall and becoming mendicants. Their problem with work is that their tribal law requires not only that they should give to their fellow-men, but that whatever they earn should be spread over the tribe. That is no encouragement at all. While that attitude exists it is hard to inculcate a spirit of industrialism. By "industrialism" I mean the will to work, a keenness to work so that you accrue unto yourself that which makes life more pleasant. There is no incentive to do that when they know that their brothers, uncles, aunts and all the rest of their relations are waiting at home to share equally. They are not even donors because it is the custom of the tribe that they should do that.

That does not apply in the Torres Strait Islands. The islanders have a more independent, individualistic outlook, which is exemplified by the house that belonged to the diver mentioned by the hon. member for Nudgee. They accrue unto themselves possessions that are their own in their own right. That is the big difference between the Torres Strait Islanders and the aborigines of the mainland.

Opportunities for work are insufficient in these areas, although there are some quite good jobs. The aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders who work for the Japanese pearl-culture stations receive award wages for award hours of work. They are quite happy in their work and do a good job. The position becomes more difficult with jobs that do not appeal so much to their native way of life.

What are the prospects of increasing their employment in that area? I think there is quite a deal of potential at Bamaga. There are various estimates of between 150,000 and 200,000 acres of rich red soil in that area. It is heavily timbered country. Some of the bloodwood is reasonable milling timber. The big problem is the re-growth. At Doomadgee and New Mapoon the under-growth grows particularly vigorously. That is one problem that has to be overcome. I feel that there is great room for employment with a large area of country like that which could be developed either for cattle or for crop raising. At Weipa and Aurukun there are great possibilities of development because of the excellent underground water. The orchard at Aurukun illustrates what can be done with water. In that area the aborigines could make a greater contribution to their own requirements.

The hon. member for Fassifern has quoted the United Graziers' Association as saying that the cattle industry is the greatest employer of aboriginal labour. Many aborigines have been trained in this work at places like the Edward River and Mitchell River missions.

Mr. Bromley: Do you agree with the hon. member for Fassifern that they should not get equal wages with whites?

Mr. McKECHNIE: I believe they should get the equivalent of equal wages, but not in cash. I will expound on that subject later.

The timber industry will develop in the North. I would not say there is a lot of timber, but there is enough for many years.

I mention the work of the Department of Native Affairs at Somerset. The old copra plantation was abandoned by the Jardines many years ago. It is now being reclaimed from the jungle. Assuming the price of copra is maintained at a reasonable level, there is quite a large area of the Cape that could be used for the expansion of that industry.

At Yarrabah, near Cairns, the natives are building their own homes. They are not particularly good, and the workmanship leaves much to be desired. Many faults can be found if one looks deep enough. However, they are building homes for the first time in their lives, homes that are reasonable. From now on they must improve. If more are employed in the building industry their standards will improve, especially with experience gained by contact with builders of European descent.

Mr. Bromley interjected.

Mr. McKECHNIE: That will have to be explored. I am quite in favour of a limited number being employed. Any authority which employs them will have to carry them for a certain period until they gain more experience. The more experience they have the easier it will be to apprentice them.

By extending local government to them we are encouraging them in the art of local government, just as the appeals to different courts establish the principles of our laws of jurisdiction.

There is a provision for the granting of financial aid in special circumstances. This is a very awkward matter for the Director of Native Affairs as it is difficult to advance money to a person unknown to develop some small business or enterprise—although the director would know of them. If we can get them into these enterprises they will be able to develop them. This will be an experience from which they will benefit, as will the people associated with them. However, the principle must not be exploited because it could be very easily exploited if money became too easy to get. If that happens it will provide a source from which a

Torres Strait Islander or an aborigine can get money and, from a previous example, he may know that he may not have to pay it back. However, that is a matter for the administration.

We are to restrict credit rights in contractual obligations and purchases by native people. They must have this protection because money does not mean as much to them as it does to us. They do not have an understanding of it and naturally must be protected.

For a long time, in South Queensland and the central areas of the State, aborigines have proved that they can hold their own with European labour in shearing sheds, ring-barking, and burning off. In burning off they have proved to be more skilled than Europeans. They do a very good job for which, on some contracts, they are well paid. The problem in such cases is mainly social. I have worked with them in shearing sheds at various places and I have had them working for me. One of the biggest problems is that they can earn big money, collect perhaps £200 for three weeks' work on the Thursday or Friday, have a long week-end in town, and come back to the job on Monday morning when very often they have to be guaranteed their groceries. The £200 has disappeared.

Mr. Wallis-Smith: White workers are often that way, too.

Mr. McKECHNIE: Yes, but to a much lesser extent.

Mr. Wallis-Smith: I would not say that.

Mr. McKECHNIE: I would. The problem is much greater with the aborigine.

Mr. Hanlon: It is the difference between spending money foolishly of your own free will and being taken down.

Mr. McKECHNIE: A little of both occurs. Mostly the European gets value for his money, or something in return, whereas the aborigine ends up with nothing but a sore head, and on Monday morning you have to fit him out to commence the job again.

The social conditions that we and other good-thinking people unwittingly force upon him, which make him feel unwelcome in certain areas where he does not know what to do with his time, lead him into this way of life to some extent. How can we help him? I must confess that I do not know. I have tried to do something in my own small sphere. I have suggested to the aboriginal employee that I retain a certain amount of his wages until the end of the year when he can do something worth while with it. That is all right for some weeks and then he realises that I am denying him the use of something that is rightfully his, and he wants it. Then he has a bigger spree than ever. If his request is denied he becomes restless and unhappy, so he ends up getting it and is unhappier because he has one big outing instead of three or four small ones.

Mr. Bromley: That is where long-term education will be an advantage.

Mr. McKECHNIE: Education is part of the answer, but unfortunately, it will take two or three generations. We must find ways and means of assisting him now.

I come back now to question posed by the hon. member for Norman. Should we pay them the full amount? I have done a lot of thinking about this. I would suggest that the Department of Native Affairs or the Government, who is not a direct employer, should take a percentage of the money and build up a fund so that the employee can buy a home. The employer cannot do it because, rightly or wrongly, he can be accused of malpractice, and the aborigine becomes discontented. Some higher authority should control a certain amount of his salary so that he can be helped to buy a home of his own. That will lead to self-respect and a certain amount of standing in the community. Once a person owns a home I think he is a much better member of the community, whether he is an aborigine or a European. I would appreciate help in this regard. It is a blight on some western towns that these conditions exist. When aborigines from the missions spread more through Queensland, the problem will become greater. If anybody has a practical solution I should like to hear it.

This Bill is an earnest endeavour to assist the Torres Strait Islanders and the aborigines. But it is only as good as those who administer it and the reaction of the people of this State to the Torres Strait Islanders and to the indigenous aboriginal people. I support the Bill.

Mr. BROMLEY (Norman) (4.50 p.m.): Following the very good and constructive speech made by the hon. member for Carnarvon, I, too, feel that the Bill has some very good provisions. I am, however, very disappointed that the Cabinet and other Government members have not shown any great interest in the matter. Apart from the Minister for Education, who has remained assiduously in his seat, we have seen nothing of other Ministers. I am most disappointed in that.

Mr. Pizzey: Have a look at your own people.

Mr. BROMLEY: As the hon. member for Baroona said, at one time the Minister—I am not casting any slur on him—had to call a former Minister to sit on the front bench to carry out the obligations of the Government.

I believe that one of the most important things said by the Minister this morning in his second-reading speech was that a Chair of Anthropology will be established. It gave me much pleasure to hear this, and I hope it resulted from my speech at the introductory stage.

Mr. Pizzey: We made the decision long before that.

Mr. BROMLEY: It may have been decided upon but it has not as yet been set up. It is no use the Minister and the Government making promises all the time. Promises should be kept, so let something be done about it. I know that this Bill is a step in the right direction, and I am prepared to commend the Government, particularly the Minister, on it.

Mr. Pizzey: Do you think I should direct the University Senate?

Mr. BROMLEY: I say that the Government should assist the university by making more money available for the immediate setting-up of a Chair of Anthropology so that, in the long run, the aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders will benefit. I have placed on record my appreciation of the Minister's endeavours to do something for these people. I do not intend to keep on praising him; I simply believe in giving credit where it is due.

Mr. Ramsden interjected.

Mr. BROMLEY: If the hon. member for Merthyr wishes to be nasty by interjection, I will be nasty, too. As a matter of fact—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Hodges): Order!

Mr. BROMLEY: The hon. member for Merthyr—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! If the hon. member does not heed my call, I shall have to ask him to resume his seat. I ask him to develop his speech along the lines on which he started it and to confine his remarks to the Bill before the House.

Mr. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Because of the inane interjection by the hon. member for Merthyr, I did not hear your call to order. At all times I respect and obey the Chair.

I believe, as do other hon. members, that, although the Bill does not go far enough, it is a step in the right direction. It is an honest endeavour to do something for people who should have been helped many years ago. I am not saying that my party when in Government did not do the right thing; they did not do enough. I have also stated that at one time Queensland did have the best conditions in Australia for native people.

Mr. Pizzey: When was that?

Mr. BROMLEY: In the 1930's. We then had the best, but we have gradually been left behind. I am now pleased to see that steps are being taken to place Queensland ahead.

One bad feature of the Bill concerns voting, with which I will deal later. The native people have not been given complete equity in this matter.

Mr. Pizzey: There is nothing in the Bill about voting.

Mr. BROMLEY: There is nothing in the Bill about it, admittedly; but there is something in the Bill—I will refer the Minister to the page if he wants me to—about ballots, and if ballots do not relate to voting, I do not know what does. At the introductory stage the Minister dwelt at some length on voting. He said also that he would like as wide a debate as possible on this very important Bill. That is recorded in "Hansard".

Mr. Pizzey: On the introduction.

Mr. BROMLEY: The Bill is still before the House. The Minister cannot deny that he spoke at some length on voting rights.

Mr. Ramsden: You are an argumentative fellow.

Mr. BROMLEY: I am not argumentative, but I believe in sticking up for my rights and for the rights of every person in the State.

Although the Bill is a step in the right direction, I believe it does not go far enough. I warn the people of Queensland that they will have to scrutinize carefully the regulations that the Government will bring down by Order in Council. The Minister assured me this morning when I interjected that we would still have the right to disagree with the regulations after 14 days had elapsed. However, the Orders in Council will be issued between the rising of the House next week and the August session, and when we reassemble here they will have been proclaimed and will be in force.

The Minister's speech dealt with many subjects, but I intend to deal first with education and refer briefly to an important award that was made during the week. It was made by an organisation that is supported by many people, and perhaps the Minister subscribed to the fund for a scholarship for children of aboriginal descent.

Mr. Pizzey interjected.

Mr. BROMLEY: I am sorry that the Minister did not send his cheque along.

Mr. Ramsden: I sent mine along, so that might help.

Mr. BROMLEY: I give the hon. member for Merthyr full credit for what he has done. The first award was made to a young aboriginal girl, Patricia Bray of Rockhampton, and a subsidiary scholarship was awarded to Ronald McKellar of Cunnamulla. Both awards were made by the Queensland Aboriginal Advancement League under its scholarship scheme. The League is doing something that the hon. member for Carnarvon mentioned—extending the hand of friendship. Many organisations are extending the hand of friendship to white people; others are extending it to those who are classed as aborigines and who are perhaps not living in the same affluent circumstances as white people are today.

A number of hon. members have already referred to education, which the Minister dealt with at some length this morning, and

I believe that all hon. members should press strongly for improvements in this field. In my opinion, the Minister should promise unequivocally that full education will be made available to the indigenous people of this State. Money must be made available to provide fully trained teachers, and it should be the State Government, with the assistance of the Commonwealth Government, that assumes responsibility for such education. I believe we will get that when voting rights are eventually extended to these people. This education, as it is for white people should be free—although I suppose one cannot class it as such nowadays—compulsory, and available to everyone. The opportunity should be provided by the Government for all aborigines and islanders to obtain such education, which should include trade training. This is a most important part of their lives. This system of trade training should be financed, once again by the State, and, as I say, by the Commonwealth. I do not think that is asking too much when one remembers that it is our own aborigines—the original Australians—who are asking for these things—and they really are asking for them. They are not asking for charity but for compensation for all the wrongs that have been done to them and the neglect they have suffered in the past.

I believe that this compensation, commensurate with the happenings over the years, would be no more than the justice to which they are entitled. Large sums of money should be made available from revenue to rehabilitate these people and to provide free, special, first-class, modern primary, secondary, technical, and even university, education for all and not just the selected few as is happening now. The opportunities of these people for education have been increased tremendously in the past few years and for that we must be grateful; in that time there have been a selected, or perhaps lucky few, who have gone on to higher educational standards than are possible on the missions and settlements.

I suggest also in connection with this Bill that there should be a complete and, I suggest, immediate abolition of segregated schools, although that may not be possible at the moment. I think the Minister indicated when we were on the inspection trip that that was one of the matters he had in mind eventually.

Mr. Pizzey: Where are the segregated schools now?

Mr. BROMLEY: On the missions. The Minister knows that at one mission—in fact, I believe there were two—the supervisor's children were receiving correspondence schooling; they were not going to the same school as the others and we must therefore class that as a segregated school. I know that suggestion is supported by the Minister and all those who were fortunate enough to go on the educational trip around the missions and settlements.

These people have a very keen aspiration to attain higher educational standards. That view was expressed to us in full hearing of the Minister at all the missions we went to and it was an impression gained, I believe, by every member of the party. It was suggested that Torres Strait Islanders particularly had a keen aspiration to learning, and if my suggestion eventuates I think it would be a step in the right direction towards ultimate full education of the older people. It is well known that young people have the ability to absorb learning much more rapidly than their elders.

When the schools are eventually set up teachers should be appointed in the same student-teacher ratio as in other schools, although in some of the schools there are already overcrowded classrooms. The building standard should be very high. Throughout the State we have seen schools of a better type being built. The architecture is much better. There is better provision for natural lighting. When we were on the trip we saw schools being built with the assistance of aboriginal labour. That brings to mind again the need to give aboriginal youths trade training, particularly in the building trade. Their particular bent lies in that direction, as well as in droving. The support of the trade-union movement should be sought and encouraged by the Government for an extended apprenticeship training scheme. Indeed, I believe that the aborigines could be of great assistance in the trade-union movement, and vice-versa.

Many more qualified social workers should be appointed to work in the communities, as they will be called. Many social workers could be recruited from the ranks of the aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. They like that sort of work. They are very keen to better themselves and help one another. They can help one another to dress well and so give themselves a sense of responsibility. These people could be successfully trained in this work, perhaps not in the missions and settlements but in various places where they could be sent for training.

More hostels should be established to cater for children who need accommodation in towns and cities where higher education is available. There are some places where accommodation is not available and therefore there is a need for more hostels. Those we visited were good. I do not think anybody could deny that the one in Cairns was particularly well kept by the aborigines in charge. It was very clean. With the establishment of more hostels we could properly educate more of the young ones. This would greatly assist in bringing about the integration and assimilation of the older aborigines and islanders.

It is true that young people learn from their parents, but that applies more particularly to the white community. In our efforts to assist these indigenous people the young ones can be a means of assisting in

the education of the older ones. Of course, it will take some time to fully implement these suggestions and ideas. If we can better educate the young people—they are keen to acquire an education—in this case it will be the older people who will learn from the young ones.

I do not think we can do very much for some of the older people. At some of the missions and settlements they did not want us to do anything for them. However, we should assist them so that their social and economic background is such that they have no wants. I do not think we can do anything for them by taking them away from the mission stations. I am sure that hon. members who went on the trip will agree that many of the older people wanted to remain on the islands and the settlements.

Mr. Ewan: Did you see any working on cattle stations under proper conditions?

Mr. BROMLEY: I intend to deal with workers on cattle stations at a later stage.

When we see the anxiety of the young people—who are eventually to be integrated and assimilated in our society—to own property and manage their own affairs—which is what the Minister referred to this morning—I believe we should allow them to own it, and that they should be given full land and property rights. We should not go only half the way. There should be no further alienation of reserves, settlements, or mission lands. That matter is referred to in the Bill. At present they have no title to the land they live on, or to their homes. These defects must be rectified. They should have ownership and control of the existing aboriginal and Torres Strait settlements.

There should be big Government expenditure. When I say that I am not referring to this Government as a big Government, I mean large sums of money should be spent. I believe that these lands could be developed by the expenditure of large sums of money. In this way development would expand and self-supporting industries and communities would spring up.

Development has taken place in the brigalow lands. In referring to this I am only drawing an analogy as to what can be done by spending money on the land belonging to the aborigines. We know what has happened following the expenditure of large sums of money, which admittedly was made available for white people. When I think of the large sums allocated for the brigalow lands scheme and realise that little money is made available to develop reserves, or land which should belong to the aborigines, I wonder what will happen eventually.

Mr. Pizzey: You would be surprised to know how much money is allocated to them over the years.

Mr. BROMLEY: I know what is allocated.

Mr. Pizzey: You said that no money had been allocated to them.

Mr. BROMLEY: The Minister was talking to the Minister for Labour and Industry and did not fully hear what I said. As a former teacher the Minister knows that he must always pay attention to people who are making constructive remarks. I am amazed and disappointed in the Minister.

Mr. Pizzey: Sometimes you exaggerate to make a point.

Mr. BROMLEY: I do not exaggerate. The Minister knows that when I make a point I make it so that even he can understand it.

I make the point now that the spending of money on these lands will pay off in the long run. There is no doubt that aboriginal people have the potential to develop their minds and their physical strength, and that they can be self-supporting. I repeat that it would pay off in the long run.

It is very important in developing the reserves to provide modern houses with all facilities. When this is done industries can be established. I do not have time to deal with everything that I think should be established because I wish to deal with other matters covered by this important measure. I believe that industries could be set up, and self-supporting communities could be established. That would provide an opportunity for self-development and would encourage self-reliance, integration, and assimilation.

The Minister mentioned the paternalism that has gone on in the past. I do not want to deal with that at the moment because there are many other important matters to be dealt with. I shall now develop my theme on the ownership of property, and land tenure.

Mr. Ewan: You told me that you would deal with boys working on cattle properties.

Mr. BROMLEY: I shall deal with that later.

Mr. Ewan: Your time will be up soon.

Mr. BROMLEY: That is what I am worried about. I hope that I will be granted an extension. I am trying to put forward something that will benefit these people. If the hon. member is going to waste my time with silly interjections, I shall have to deal with these matters at the Committee stage.

What happens in relation to indigenous people overseas? The Minister spoke about managerial control of land, local authorities, councils, fringe-dwellers, and the management of property, and he made a sincere appeal for the prevention of exploitation. The Government is exploiting aborigines to a certain extent by not giving them full rights in relation to land.

In America, 500,000 Red Indians live on 53,000,000 acres of reservation. They are administered by democratically elected local tribal councils. This property belongs to the Indians, the original American people. It is not transferable to outsiders. It is freehold property. During 1960 the Indians borrowed £36,000,000 on mortgage on their property. One can imagine what that amount would do to help build up their property.

Mr. Murray: You are now advocating integration rather than assimilation, are you not?

Mr. BROMLEY: We cannot have immediate integration and we cannot have immediate assimilation. It is like a bridge. One has to go half-way before going right across. I do not want to get off the subject because I believe it is most important. I am suggesting to the Minister how we can assist these people in a practical way. In America the land title of the Red Indians is absolute. That is very different from the position here. It means that the royalties payable on oil and other minerals found on reservation lands are paid direct to the tribe concerned. In 1960, £22,000,000 was paid following petroleum development.

Unlike our aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, the Indians have a right to make claims against the Government. They make claims against the Government in matters of land alienation, and those claims are heard by a special court of which there is no equivalent in Queensland. According to my information, the United States Government will eventually have paid out to Indian tribes £500,000,000 in settlement of claims arising from the alienation of land. One of the great things about the American system is that tribes as well as individual Indians are land-holders. That means that there are communities similar to those envisaged under the terms of the Bill, but the land of communities here will still belong to the Government whilst the land in America is owned by the Indians themselves. Here aborigines do not have the right to freehold land.

Mr. Ewan: They do, if they are outside settlements.

Mr. BROMLEY: I am speaking of the ones that have to be assisted in building up their communities. I am speaking of those in communities, not those outside settlements.

Mr. Murray: You are still "on the bridge."

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I trust hon. members will remember that the Chair is still being occupied.

Mr. BROMLEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have great admiration for your position in the chair.

Mr. Bennett: So have I.

Mr. BROMLEY: In passing, I should like to place on record that when I saw the programme "Meet the Press" on television last Sunday evening I thought that you, Mr. Speaker, not only handled yourself with your usual ability and decorum, but that you put a certain gentleman in the right place. I believe that in your interview you were not only fair but you made it possibly one of the best and most entertaining of those programmes that I have seen. Having said that, normally one would say that one has said all. I have, however, many more things to speak on.

I believe that the Government could give some thought to my reference to the rights of the Red Indian people to own their own land. Recently a Bill concerning mining was introduced and embodied in it was a clause relating to unauthorised mining on aboriginal reserves. I believe, for instance, that the aborigines affected by the operations at Weipa should be fully compensated. I know that the Minister would not like to have his house taken from him without compensation. It is the law that a person's house cannot be taken unless he is adequately reimbursed.

Mr. Pizzey: New houses worth £3,000 each are being built and handed to the aborigines as gifts.

Mr. BROMLEY: But who is coming out on the right side? To some extent justice is certainly being done to the aborigines, but surely the Minister is not so naive as to think that the company mining bauxite is going to give aborigines homes costing £3,000 each and not come out of the deal on the right side. The position is similar to that of a man who goes into a hotel, asks for a drink, and gets a pot. Would the Minister knock it back? He would not; he would take it.

Mr. Pizzey: I would give it to the lady next door.

Mr. BROMLEY: Ever the gentleman! The Minister reminds me of the old song, "Is he a busy Pizzey, is he?"

The Minister spoke this morning about the administration provisions in Part II of the Bill, and I should like to deal briefly with some aspects of administration affecting aborigines. Mr. Paul Hasluck is a gentleman who knows a great deal about our aboriginal people. I do not think anyone would deny that he was the architect of legislation introduced in the Federal Parliament that gave aborigines some degree of equality and full voting rights. Mr. Hasluck made this statement on the assimilation and integration of aborigines—

"All governments recognise as necessary the reduction or removal of restrictive and protective legislation applying especially to Aborigines."

I should like to interpose and say that I do not believe we should remove all legislation applying to aborigines. After all, we have

legislation covering various sections of the community. The Minister said this morning, in reply to an interjection, "Do you want us to remove all legislation applying to aborigines?" or something to that effect. Of course we do not, because we believe that the rule of law must exist in this country.

Mr. Smith: Do you? You are not one of the Mackie boys?

Mr. BROMLEY: I feel very sorry for the hon. member for Windsor, because he has to interject and bring in things that have nothing to do with the subject under discussion.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has only two minutes of his time left.

Mr. BROMLEY: I do not want to change my opinion of you, Mr. Speaker, but I think you must have got at the clock while I have been speaking.

Mr. Hasluck said—

"It is not the aim of the policy to solve this problem by forcing dispersal of Aborigines throughout the community. Dispersal of segregated groups is likely to be a consequence of its successful achievement but this would come about from individual voluntary response to opportunity and not from deliberate pressure applied for the purpose of achieving dispersal."

That bears out what I said before—that we do not want to force these people to do anything that they do not want to do.

He continued—

"The policy does not deny the 'right of the Aboriginal people to retain their group life and customs if they so desire' . . ."

I should like to speak at some length on the tribal customs of the aborigines because I believe that their retention is very important. However, I wish to finish this quotation.

Mr. Hasluck said—

"I agree that there should be training for the Aboriginal people in legal and political rights and that they should participate in plans and policies which concern their welfare."

I heartily agree with that. These statements indicate that the Minister agrees in theory with the organisations promoting aboriginal advancement; possibly he agrees with them in practice, too.

Before my time expires, I wish to place on record my appreciation, and the appreciation of other hon. members, of the forceful attitude of the people who have attempted to assist the indigenous people of Australia by continually hammering at this by means of correspondence, advice, and assistance.

Mr. CHINCHEN (Mt. Gravatt) (5.30 p.m.): I welcome the opportunity to support this Bill. It is very important, but I think we must keep in mind that a measure such as this is purely for the purpose of establishing a climate in which the work that has been done for so many years can continue. I warn

anybody who thinks that something miraculous will happen because of this Bill that he will be disappointed. This work has been going on for many years now—excellent work, as all those who went on the trip through the missions and settlements last year will appreciate.

What is happening here, of course, is that we are moving a step forward. The Minister has said that we are in a period of transition. He also mentioned, by interjection, that there will be amendments from year to year. Nothing is static in this problem of our aboriginal and island peoples. The whole Bill, of course, is based on a policy of assimilation. This was mentioned to some extent by the hon. member for Fassifern, but in speaking to a number of people I find that they have not a true recognition of just what this means. They understand what assimilation means if we speak, for instance, of the French assimilating the Italians, or vice versa. They understand what it means with two bodies of people with similar standards, and they realise the problems associated with assimilation of that nature. But they do not understand the problems of assimilation into a society such as ours of isolated groups, many of them with entirely different standards and great distances apart. This poses peculiar and particular problems. Our aboriginal and island people are not a homogeneous or integrated society. They are small groups of people—some of them very small indeed—and this brings quite peculiar problems. For that reason I say that this Bill can only set a climate and, within the new climate that is developed, the work that has been going on over the years will be accelerated.

I pay a compliment to the Department of Native Affairs, because it is very obvious to me—and I am sure it was obvious to all those on the recent trip—that a great deal of work has been done by it in the past few years. It is made particularly obvious and confirmed by the lack of criticism from those hon. members opposite who went on the trip and realised the work that has been done in this social field. Everybody knows there are many more things to be done and realises the problems associated with what is to happen, but those problems have to be met step by step. The hon. member for Maryborough sounded a note that I, too, should like to sound. It is that movement cannot be accelerated beyond a certain point. He mentioned, very wisely, that development, of necessity, will be slow compared with what we would all want it to be. We want it to be as fast as we can get it but not at a speed that could be damaging to the people we are endeavouring to help.

I have mentioned assimilation as one of the major policies now and in the future. This policy of assimilation was decided upon by the Commonwealth as a whole. It was not somebody's bright suggestion but a recognition of what has been taking place for many years. However, there are problems associated

with it which bring about some of the difficulties in this State. Unless a recognition of this is accepted by everybody there will be this desire for undue haste. There are probably three sets of influence, as I see it, which make the question of assimilation very difficult.

The present social and cultural conditions of our native people must be recognised. There seems to be some thinking that these people at any stage of their development can take their place in our society. We must recognise that their tribal customs are very real and true things to them. I think we all appreciate that there is a lot of comfort in being with your own people; a lot of comfort in being with people whose skin is the same colour as your own; a lot of comfort in being with people of the same standard of education, the same cultural background and the same knowledge.

Unthinking people are inclined to say that perhaps the reason why a large number of aboriginal people have not moved out into our society is that they are lazy. I am more inclined to think that even after the second, third, fourth and fifth generations the tribal influence is much stronger than we realise. I think that is what is making it so difficult. It is not a matter of merely saying, "You have been so many years at school. Now you must be happy because you are the same as we are." They realise they are not the same. This will take a long time to overcome. Haste in this direction could be very damaging.

The second influence that operates—we must recognise this—is the one of race or breed. The aboriginal people realise this just as we do. It creates a problem. The problem in this direction is as much in our minds as in theirs. We must adjust ourselves to having people of a different colour among us. Many have done this but a great number have not. That is one of the problems. It also must be a fear in the minds of the aboriginal people that they have to go into a society of a different colour. That is one of the factors mitigating against assimilation.

Then there is the other problem that there must be within them a feeling of—I will not say "inferiority"; indeed, in some directions there must be a feeling of superiority because there are some things we cannot do which the aboriginal does well. But when he comes into our society he must have some feeling of inferiority.

All this is not just a matter of education; it is one of time. I hope there will be no haste or an endeavour to push these people into our society before they themselves know in their own minds that they are ready to take their place in what to them must be a very strange society, one in which a competitive system operates, something of which many of them have had no former experience. Some who have gone out to work may have experienced this but, generally speaking, it is something entirely new to them.

A further factor is kinship, which means so much to the aboriginal people. When they leave the missions or settlements they usually do not go in family groups. Perhaps this is the reason for the break down. When that happens we say that it is hard to understand. I am inclined to think that this kinship, which is such a real thing to them, tends to drag them back. I think that tends to be the reason for the break down. All these influences cannot be negated quickly. Even in the second, third and fourth generations this tribal side of their make-up is something which has an enormous influence on their lives. It is something we have had no experience of, but we must recognise it.

We must not accept the idea that these people have been spoilt by paternalism. I am not saying that there is not some of it, but these other factors must be taken into consideration and time alone will allow assimilation to take place as we would like to see it. To me the main question seems to be when decisions should be made. If we carry on with a method or a system for too long we can undermine, or impede, the development of these people we are trying to help. On the other hand, if we move too fast we will force a situation which will do damage.

I was very interested to hear the Deputy Leader of the Opposition refer to education. He created the impression that there were not enough schools to handle the children willing to go to school. That is not true. Anyone who went on the trip—and I covered the whole trip of the northern missions and settlements—knows that there are adequate schooling facilities for anybody who cares to go to school—and the young people are going to school. It is quite wrong to say that more schools are required at the primary level. There is plenty of room at school for every young child. They are attending school and enjoying it. The hon. member was not on the trip so perhaps he does not know that any child with the necessary ability can continue on to secondary-school education, or, for that matter, to university level. That education is provided for aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders at no expense to them. This is not something new. It has been available for a long time. Of course, a problem is the standard of education attained by these people, and it arises because many of them reach only the 3rd or 4th grade.

I was surprised to hear the hon. member for Nudgee say that in about 10 years' time there would be no language problem. I presume he meant that all the young people will have passed through school. However, the difficulty will still exist because there are large areas in which aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders live where English is spoken only at school. It is not spoken in the home. The young people put in a few hours at

school each day but when they go home in the afternoon they hear nothing but their native tongue. There is a continuing language problem. It is very important to remember that our children knew their language before they went to school, because they were using it at home. The native children are in an entirely different environment. This is one of the major problems preventing aboriginal and island children from continuing to a higher education.

Facilities are available for Torres Strait Islanders to get higher education, thanks to a very fine experiment, which has now gone beyond that stage. A Torres Strait Island college was established to which boys have been taken from the islands. They come to a new and excellent environment and their education is continued right through secondary school. Of course, if they have the ability they can go on to tertiary education. We must recognise that these young people have not the same chance as ours because of their environment.

There is a belief in the community at large that if these young people spend the same number of years at school as ours they will attain the same standard of education. That is not so, because of the environmental problem. It is there, and it must be recognised. Language is a big difficulty. We found that there was excellent reading in the primary schools, but a complete lack of comprehension. We also found that there was great difficulty with figures. This can be understood.

The Cuisenaire system would have a great impact on the aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. We know what a wonderful success it has been with our own children. I suggest that a move should be made at an early stage to institute the use of this system, which demonstrates numbers by the use of rods. These people will understand the value of numbers more readily than by working with books, when they do not know what it is all about. This is an excellent way in which the Department of Education could help the schools there.

Excellent work is being done at the mission schools, but there are problems in providing adequate teaching staff. The missions are not in a position to meet the salaries paid by the department. That limits their chances of getting as teachers other than dedicated persons who are willing to give of themselves for the good of the aborigine and island people. I admire the people who are doing this work. They are doing an excellent job.

Speaking to people in some of the missions, I found that they were a little worried because of the possibility of their getting a teacher from the department who could undo much of the religious work done by them over the years. We can imagine the concern if an atheist or a person of a diametrically opposed religion was sent by the department.

If the Minister made it clear to the churches that he would recognise their requirements in this regard, it would assist greatly in their acceptance of assistance from the department so that the standard of education in the mission schools could be raised.

The hon. member for Nudgee mentioned the old Mapoon mission. I am surprised that he said there appeared to be adequate water. We looked at the wells. They were extremely shallow, only a few feet deep, with only inches of water in them. If they were taken deeper they would go into salt water. We were on a raised patch of sand, which was only a few feet above sea level. I understand the problem was that the water could be taken but only a cupful at a time. That was one of the major reasons for shifting the people from there.

Liquor has been mentioned, and on this subject I should like to quote from the report of the Aborigines Welfare Board of New South Wales for the year ended 30 June, 1963. I feel that this may allay the fears of many people on this matter, and I am hoping that the experience in this State will be the same as that in New South Wales when aborigines were granted the right to drink. The report reads—

"Some time after removal of the ban against supplying liquor to aborigines, reports were furnished by welfare officers on the reaction as it affected aborigines themselves and members of the general community. The survey showed that there had been no increase in unfavourable incidents arising from free access to liquor by aborigines, or in the number of arrests for drunkenness.

"That the transition should have been accomplished without serious incident is due largely to the attitude displayed by the majority of aborigines in exercising restraint and common sense in the newly confirmed right."

It is good to know that that is what happened in New South Wales, and I am hoping that the same will apply here. I should like to think that the Department of Native Affairs is taking steps at this moment to educate aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in the dangers of alcohol. I feel that such education could be of considerable assistance in this matter. Perhaps this is now being undertaken. If it is not, the sooner it is started the better it will be for all concerned.

The Minister mentioned settlements as being, I think he said, transitional refuges, and I think that this must be the line of thought to be followed when considering assimilation. The hon. member for Norman launched into the question of land ownership in settlements, which I am inclined to think would mitigate against assimilation. At present missions and settlements are places where coloured people can be educated and adjusted to take their places in our society. As soon as this has happened,

they must be encouraged to move among us. I am inclined to think that if freehold or leasehold land in the area in which they have grown up is made available to them, we would be perpetuating segregation and not assimilation. The time will come eventually when perhaps settlement, mission, and reserve areas can be thrown open to settlement by a majority of aborigines, with perhaps some people from our society moving in among them. That could be the ultimate position, although in my opinion it will not be achieved for a considerable time. It will take generations and generations to engender a feeling of sufficient security in a new environment, and the time when land ownership on settlements should be considered is, in my opinion, far removed.

Thinking along those lines is dangerous thinking. When such thoughts are expressed by responsible people, they are inclined to become part of the thinking of the aborigines themselves till they come to believe, "This is our next step." I feel that people in contact with aborigines on reserves and missions should not encourage this line of thought at present. Let assimilation be the major policy. Land ownership on reserves is well in the future. I say this quite sincerely, because we could be caught on the horns of a dilemma and not achieve the objective of the policy, which is the policy of the Commonwealth of Australia, of true assimilation.

The Bill is designed fundamentally to free the aboriginal and island populations and to give them those rights at this stage which they feel, and which we feel, are their due. But I do not think any opportunity should be lost to express to the people whom we are all sincerely endeavouring to help that they must show they are willing to accept responsibility, that they are willing to work in their own interests. I believe that a move in this direction by them would be a wonderful thing for the nation as a whole. In my opinion, there has been an inclination on our part to develop the line of thinking that we will do something for these people now and something for them in the future, without placing sufficient importance on what they can do to help themselves. This is an important factor in moulding the character of the people whom we are trying to help.

I shall refer briefly to part of a statement by Rev. F. W. Albrecht, M.B.E., who has spent his life with aborigines. He says—

"It causes nothing but confusion among the aborigines if they are to accept a standard of life beyond their present capacity for work and planning. Any artificial standard of life which is not the result of their own effort, will not lead them upward, but in too many cases will land them in trouble. Artificial creations seldom survive."

That is why I was so pleased to hear the hon. member for Carnarvon say that he is conscious of this problem. We may be building up something that is artificial, and unless these people can adjust themselves, apply themselves, and help plan this development, we may hinder rather than help them and so delay the development of the individual that we so want to see.

If I might mention one thing rather than another, I might point out that in many areas English is not spoken in aborigines' homes. We must endeavour to keep the young people interested in the English language when they leave school if they are to be satisfactorily assimilated into our society. The establishment of libraries is the first step, but these will not be used unless the young people receive encouragement to use them. In addition, I think some form of club life for young people should be introduced. This would help to teach them leadership and develop their character; it would teach them to assist in planning for themselves; it would allow them to continue to use English.

It is terrible to realise that when the children leave school, very often at an early age, in many cases English is not spoken again; yet we talk of assimilating these people into our society. Clubs could extend their activities into the field of sport during the daytime and at week-ends, and there could be such things as debating clubs, pen-friend clubs, and many others. Things of this sort are lacking now, and probably the appointment of people who could give their full attention to projects of this sort would be necessary. There is a very great need for aborigines and island people to be trained in activities of this type so that they can go to their own people and interest them in things other than those that they are doing now and induce them to set their sights a little higher and show them how to help themselves. This seems to be the main attribute lacking in aborigines. Some thought in this direction could be very worth while.

The Island Industries Board is mentioned in the Bill. This board has done a great deal, particularly for Torres Strait Islanders. It is a very large and complex organisation. The only reason I mention it now is that it appeared to me that there was a possibility that the Island Industries Board could grow in Thursday Island at the expense of other forms of industry and that this could perpetuate an awkward situation. On Thursday Island, where there are only 20 people paying rates, people are scared to move in because of the octopus that is being developed. I suggest that the board should be contained purely to this work and not permitted to expand itself into all fields of competitive endeavour.

Mr. Davies: What branch do you suggest should be cut out?

Mr. CHINCHEN: We know it is in competition with a softdrink manufacturer, who could not carry on. There are other things of that nature.

In conclusion, I am wholeheartedly behind the Bill. I compliment the Minister and his department on its introduction. It has everything in it that we require. I agree with the hon. member for Carnarvon that it is now up to us, to the department, to the aboriginal and island population, and to the people of Queensland themselves to do everything in their power individually to bring about the assimilation of our native peoples.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH (Tablelands) (6.2 p.m.): I want first of all to draw to the attention of this Chamber a most unusual state of affairs in that this Aborigines' and Torres Strait Islanders' Affairs Bill contains 69 clauses whereas the previous legislation, the Aborigines Preservation and Protection Act, contained 38 clauses. It would appear, as the Minister said, that we are approaching the time when we are going to assist these people to attain equal citizenship and it takes 69 clauses to do it whereas previously it took only 38. It might easily be explained, but to me it seems strange that that should be the case. Of course, under the old Act there were 98 regulations and, as previous speakers on this side have reminded us, when the new regulations are promulgated we will be able to get a real idea of the Government's intentions.

The Bill is designed to promote the well-being and progressive development of the aboriginal inhabitants of this State and the Torres Strait Islands. I should like hon. members to keep that in mind because we are going to promote the well-being of a certain race of people and, when we are approving or rejecting certain parts of this Bill we should keep in mind the question, "Will this promote the well-being of these people?"

It has been mentioned that the Bill is designed to eliminate the second-class citizen and to remove discrimination. Those are noble sentiments. They are the sentiments of the Minister, who is trying his best to bring a part of our society up to a standard equal to our own. I have frequently heard the Minister referred to as a dedicated Minister. I have heard him referred to as a Minister whose one ambition is to bring this about. I have heard the director referred to as the "Great White Father" of all aborigines. Those are terms that mean nothing to the aboriginal people. They are terms that will gradually become the hallmark of people in various offices. They do not mean anything to the aborigines, and I do not think they mean anything to any hon. members who have a sincere interest in increasing the rights of these people.

The Bill refers to and defines "part-aborigine". Has anyone ever thought of referring to them as "part-white"? It has become usual to use the term "part-aborigine". One person told me that they

want it that way. I do not think the aborigines were ever asked for an opinion. Straight away there is that discrimination.

The very people who are being asked to observe the new laws have been here for centuries. When members of the white community get lost or stranded or are in dire straits the aborigines are the people to whom they turn for assistance. I often think that the aborigines must smile at our efforts when we are not sure whether we are right or wrong.

The Minister said that the Bill was a step forward. I think it is just a shuffle forward. It could be called a "Bill of changed terms". Of the 23 terms mentioned, 17 are changed names. Here again it means nothing. Changed names and terms mean nothing to the aboriginal people. What is important to them is something that they can see and feel, something that they know is permanent, something tangible, something that they have never had before—complete acceptance by the other people of the State. They have never had it.

Although previous speakers have said that aborigines must help themselves, we can help them by telling them that there is no discrimination. That is the strongest argument we can offer them. Let us show them that there is no discrimination. We should not go out of our way to take them to garden parties, to dress them up, or laud one of them because he is the dux of the school. If we treat them as ordinary people among us, then we are on the right track. All these regulations will be necessary if we simply plod along the way we are going. The more we plod the more clauses and regulations will be necessary and, consequently, a greater number of people will be required to enforce them. The Minister said he hoped he would see the day when the department worked itself out of a job. The way we are going the great, great, great grandson of the present Protector could be the Director of Aboriginal and Island Affairs.

Inspections of the missions should be made more than once a year. Frequent and unannounced visits by departmental officers and magistrates would enable the Government to receive first-hand information about what is going on. It would not get the distorted picture that can be given by a few members of Parliament who, after spending two or three hours at a mission after all sorts of preparations for dinner and entertainment have been made, are satisfied that everything is all right. I remember that in the Army exactly the same thing happened. When the "big brass" came around everything untidy was put out of sight, and any soldier who could not keep in step was put on kitchen duties.

I am not condemning the Minister for taking us on the inspection. I think it was very good to hear the comments of Parliamentarians about it. I think they learnt quite a bit about a part of the State they previously knew nothing about. I was

fortunate to be in the party. I think we should have more frequent visits by people in authority who know what they are looking for. That would be far more beneficial than the prompted investigation that we made. We were only a few hours at each place and then had to push on to the next.

Mr. Pizzey: At least once a year.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: Yes. The Minister also pointed out at the introductory stage that it would be necessary for aborigines to have certificates to be in the settlements or reserves rather than certificates to be outside. The people who are outside—irrespective of what we may think—look on those who are under the Act with a little disdain. We know that an old-age pensioner becomes an old-age pensioner if he applies for the pension, if he is a certain age and is eligible. Why have this certificate? Why must they have a certificate before they can go into a settlement to live?

Mr. Pizzey: Does not an old-age pensioner have an entitlement card?

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: When this Bill becomes law there will be power for the director or a manager to issue a certificate for a child to be assisted. What are we to deduce from that? Does it mean that the reserves and settlements will continue to grow by the admittance of infants and people who are assisted, and that outside areas will be the only places where children will be free? I believe that the word "free" should be adopted so that they can remain free. If they are with their parents why should they be looked upon as assisted aborigines? It is only common sense that, up to a certain age children will want to be with their parents, and they should be with them. It should not be necessary for them to have certificates to say that they have a right to live in settlements.

Mr. Pizzey: They will not have any certificates themselves.

[*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*]

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: I was about to deal with the administration of the funds of a deceased aborigine by the director. If the Minister is serious and sincere in his suggestion that there should be a move towards equal rights and as we can decide who will administer our estates and who will act in our stead, the Public Curator is the logical choice for these people. I hope the Minister will see that this will ease the work of his officers and will give aborigines the right that we have to make a choice. Many workers approach the Public Curator to handle their estates.

I propose to suggest alternatives to some of the principles contained in the Bill. I mentioned previously that the patience of these people had to be experienced to be appreciated. I think that is worth repeating. In my area houses for aborigines were completed on 12 December, and everybody thought they would be in occupation by

Christmas. Members of the white community would have expected to occupy them by Christmas, but the aborigines did not take possession of them until February. There were no sinks in the houses, and no water was connected to them. I took action in the matter, and as late as 21 September I received quite a lengthy letter from the Minister stating that sinks would be installed. There are still no sinks in the houses and no water laid on. Is it any wonder that I mention the patience of these people?

Mr. Pizzey: They waited 50 years under your Government.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: The Minister is hiding behind what happened 50 years ago. He said that this is a progressive State. Now, from a progressive shuffle he has taken a back jump that would win an Olympic title. All that I am pointing out in these remarks is the patience of the aboriginal people. I think these things are worth mentioning because they are happening not only in this area but in other areas also.

Education has been mentioned by speakers on both sides of the House. It was noticeable that a committee that included eminent Queensland educationists did not mention education anywhere in its report. The Minister assured us that education was to be assumed. I hope and trust that he takes notice of the request of the Synod of the Northern Diocese of the Church of England. They have frequently requested the Minister to assist in the education of children on their mission stations. That is not mere assumption; it is a fact. The sooner education facilities can be arranged, the sooner will a step forward be taken not only by the people concerned but the whole of North Queensland.

Not only is education for the children required from the Department of Education, but assistance in other ways. The supply of films, school equipment, and books, for instance, would fill a long-felt want. I am sure that there are ample books in the schools that have now been closed that would be of great value at mission schools till the Department of Education takes over. How many times does one see small schools closed and all the presses, equipment, foot-balls, playground material, etc., immediately taken over by large schools nearby? Usually only a small portion of it is needed, and the rest remains under the schools and lies there till it gets into a state of disrepair. If this material was made available to missions, they would be very considerably assisted. The front page of the Bill declares that its purpose is to "promote the well-being and progressive development of the aboriginal inhabitants of the State and of the Torres Strait Islanders". This is a way in which missions can be assisted at little cost to the Government. All that is needed is some foresight, and I know that departmental officers would be only too pleased to do it if they received official approval.

The hon. member for Mt. Gravatt introduced a jarring note when he spoke of the possibility of an atheist being sent to a mission station as a teacher. I do not think that should have been mentioned. If that point is going to be made in respect of mission schools, let us also think about all other schools. The Minister for Education has enough foresight and sincerity and knows his job well enough to see that such a person is not sent to a mission school. I do not think mentioning that point was a very good contribution to the debate.

Teachers who go to these places should have special training, not necessarily extensive, to allow them to realise what they will face when they go to these outback places. There is isolation, the fact that there may be only 10 or 15 white people there, and the fact that they may be cut off from the rest of the world for months at a time. Mail that they may have been accustomed to receiving daily may be delivered only monthly, or even at longer intervals. The teachers would have to realise the conditions under which they would have to work and that the pupils would probably be slow to learn at the beginning. I have seen schools for slow learners in other parts of the Commonwealth, even in white communities. For example, in Adelaide, in a very busy part of the city, one sees a building that has on it "Slow learning School". I think that could well apply when aborigines begin to learn.

Let us look at the question from the health angle. It is important that the Department of Education should take over the education of aboriginal children; it is equally important that the Department of Health should take over the supervision of the health of people on missions and reserves. I say this because for a long time it has been a matter of luck whether or not the superintendent of the mission or the person in charge of the reserve is hygiene-conscious. Inadequate hygiene is not something that is peculiar to the Australian aborigine. I was fortunate enough to make a trip overseas, and in a town in Italy with a population of about 30,000 I saw a really disgusting example of a lack of hygiene outside a school. There was an old castle nearby and one could not go and look at it because of the primitive sanitary arrangements at the school. We should not hide behind the fact that the aboriginal people are not hygiene-conscious; they are not the only ones. The Italians are one of the oldest races in the world, so we should not blame the aborigines too much. Only by the strict enforcement of health regulations can we stop this sort of thing, and the only person who can do this is the Minister for Health, who has the assistance of the very efficient officers of his department.

Mr. Aikens: And the aborigines themselves.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: The hon. member for Townsville South says "And the aborigines themselves".

Mr. Mann: The hon. member for Townsville South would not know.

Mr. Aikens: You are always bunging on a turn.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: It is quite obvious that people will co-operate if they are given training. Septic systems have been installed in many places, and this is very good. A protector of aborigines has said to me, "What is the use of giving these people this amenity? They do not know how to use it." I could have replied to him by saying, "I could take you to Sydney and show you a place where there are no towels, only hot air. If you did not know how to use it, would you be looked down on?" These people must be taught. It is no good saying, "There is a Rolls Royce. Drive it." One has to be taught to drive. It is the duty of the protectors to teach the aborigine, and I hope that those who take the place of the protectors will be properly trained and will understand these people and their problems so that they can get the best results from them. In my opinion, people must be specially trained for the job. However, we do not want only educated men; we want men who are also interested and sincere. We should look for these attributes in the people who will implement the provisions of the Bill and the regulations made under them.

I should like to deal now with a matter that has been mentioned to me quite often by people in my electorate. I understand that people who have committed some crime or misdemeanour on a mission and who have to be sent some distance away to be tried are under the jurisdiction of the superintendent, and I think that some place should be provided in which they can be kept until they appear for trial. Quite a lot of excitement is caused at missions when people who have committed crimes and should be in custody are allowed to go free or are held in very loose custody. They do not understand that they have committed a crime and are to be punished and, therefore, must be held. They say, "While we are free we will remain free." A building, not like a gaol, but a solid and firm building, should be erected in each reserve and mission and be put under the jurisdiction of a capable officer. This could also be used for any person who has been convicted of a minor offence requiring some detention.

That thought causes me to mention the police at these missions and reserves. There are some who are arrogant, but quite often they are very good fellows, something that exists in our own branch of the community. No difference is evident simply because these police are coloured, but here again I think their training should be on similar lines to those of our own police officers. They should be chosen and hand-picked personnel who can understand and win the confidence of their own people, who will know they are acting

in the best interests of the community as a whole as well as in the best interests of one who commits a crime.

Mention has been made of welfare officers. Whether we call them welfare officers, administrative officers or district officers does not matter. There will be failure if these people, first of all, simply want a job. Secondly, there will also be failure if they think that once they get out of the way there will be nobody to watch what they are actually doing and that they will not be found out if they do nothing. Then there are the lazy types who say, "This is just the job I am looking for; I will give it the least I can." And last, but not least, there is the person who thinks he will do the best he can in the job, who will administer his duties correctly and sincerely and remain in the job as long as he possibly can. This is the type of man we want.

These welfare officers should be trained. A certain amount of culling will be necessary to ensure that the right type is obtained and that no-one who might destroy the confidence of these people creeps in. The Minister and the director will know quite well that at present we have protectors who have to be moved from one place to another. They are looked down upon by the aborigines because they are not the right type to be in charge of any number of people or their funds.

Speaking of funds, we want men who can be trusted implicitly, holding funds in trust for aborigines. They trust explicitly until they learn that their trust is misplaced. In our society, if we have money in the bank we have a bank passbook which discloses the amount held in trust for us, but that position does not obtain with aborigines. They go to the director who says, "You owe so much. That has been taken from your credit. You want so much. You are overdrawn, I cannot give it to you," or something like that. I was surprised when the Minister mentioned amounts of £60 or £70 that these people might become entitled to withdraw. I should say that is a very low estimate. Whether the Minister actually meant to convey that that would be the amount, I do not know.

Mr. Pizzey: I was talking about the amount for one pay-day.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: That is a different proposition. Some of them have thought they had enough to build a home only to find that they had merely £60 or £70 in the bank when they received an exemption and went out to work.

Mr. Pizzey: You have not much faith in the Auditor-General.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: The Minister did not interject when I said that officers had been transferred. Now he interjects about the Auditor-General. I do not think he should pursue that subject too far.

Even when anyone undermines the confidence of a white man it takes a long while before he gets back to normal. This sort of thing will continue to happen. The risk must be reduced to the absolute minimum. We have not enough teachers. The missions are existing on a shoe-string budget. The Minister for Education and the Premier know that from constant requests for assistance. What happened following the cyclone proves the truth of that statement.

The Minister commented on the amount of £300,000 which he said I did not mention. I admit that the Government is spending £300,000 now, but the missions are not getting full value for it. A number of people are making a very good business out of this contract, and I am not referring only to the contractors. Bringing Torres Strait Island boys down to work at the Edward River mission was not in the best interests of the aborigines there. Perhaps it had to be done because the contractor could not get workers, but he took the contract in all good faith and then employed 24 Torres Strait Islanders. I do not think any hon. member knew that. They all thought that the contractors took men up to do the work.

Mr. Pizzey: Do you object to their getting the work?

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: The contractor did not carry out the contract the way we thought he would. He has hardly a stick of timber to start when the roads are open in May or June. The 85 tons that were to go to the mission are still lost somewhere. They were to be delivered by a certain ship, but so far no-one has seen the ship. That is the sort of thing which stretches the patience of the aboriginal people to breaking point.

I hope that all that is implied in this Bill can be carried out. If the Government wants to improve the lot of these people, let it improve the lot of all those responsible for the implementation of the provisions of the Bill. Everyone who is to go among these people should be told what he is expected to do. To a large extent there should be a standardisation of the duties and responsibilities of the officers who will go among these people to implement the provisions of the Bill.

I hope that in the Committee stage other hon. members on this side will bring forward a number of other points.

Mr. RAMSDEN (Merthyr) (7.55 p.m.): I do not wish to delay the House, but after the last speech I am forced to my feet to reply to a number of points. It is rather significant that the last speaker should have taken the Minister and the Government to task for what is, in fact, the first creative and constructive Bill in the last 50 years to deal with what we are pleased to call the "aboriginal problem." It is amazing that in 40 years of Labour rule Labour members

did not wake up to all the indignities and sufferings of humanity, responsibility for which they are now trying to throw on this Government's shoulders.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr. RAMSDEN: Of course hon. members opposite are on the band-wagon. They always have been and always will be.

If the Minister were to table his files we would not find one letter about aborigines from the hon. member who has just resumed his seat, either to this Government or the previous Government.

Mr. Bennett: What is the use of writing? The letters are ignored.

Mr. RAMSDEN: That is probably true in the case of the hon. member for South Brisbane, but it would not be the case with other hon. members.

Whether we are dealing with white people or coloured people, liquor is a highly controversial subject. This afternoon, I think the hon. member for Nudgee, or my vitriolic friend from Norman, said that what was wanted was control over the sale of liquor to aborigines so that they could not go back to their homes and settlements, or the properties where they were working, and then cause inconvenience to everybody. I have never heard anything more discriminatory in my life. On the one hand the hon. member told us to get away from racial discrimination—that we must assimilate aborigines in our community and give them the same rights and privileges as white men—and on the other hand he wants to empower a publican, by an order of this Government, by an Act of Parliament or a regulation, to say, "I will not sell you any liquor. You might go back to the station where you are working and get drunk, and inconvenience the boss." Could anything be more fatuous than that?

Mr. Bromley interjected.

Mr. RAMSDEN: I am not attacking the wrong speaker at all.

Surely it is within the right of any employer to lay down conditions of employment. If I am an employer of labour surely it is my prerogative to say under what conditions I am prepared to employ people on my property.

Mr. BROMLEY: I rise to a point of order. I should like to put the hon. member straight. It was neither I nor the hon. member for Nudgee who made the remark about selling liquor and taking it back to the stations. It was the hon. member for Fassifern.

Mr. RAMSDEN: I am quite prepared to accept the hon. member's assurance.

Mr. MULLER: I rise to a point of order. I did not make the statement.

Mr. RAMSDEN: Having been interrupted twice and having accepted both assurances, I must say that I certainly did not conjure

it up. I heard the remark. It was said in the House this afternoon. Three people have denied saying it, whoever may have said it.

If I am an employer of labour, surely it is my prerogative to lay down the conditions of employment.

Mr. Melloy: You would have to work according to the award.

Mr. RAMSDEN: Provided I am working according to the award. If the hon. member can tell me of any award that says that an employee may buy grog and take it to his place of employment, I will abide by that award. I can assure him that that is not in any award, and he knows it.

It is not the responsibility of this Government to protect an employer who has not the backbone to tell his employees the conditions upon which he will employ them on his property. Why should he pass the buck? This is similar to the request that we should allow hotel-keepers to pass the buck by prohibiting raffles in hotels. For the information of the hon. member for Nudgee, the Station Hands Award prohibits liquor on properties unless with the consent of the employer. It is not within the province of this Government to assume power to assist people incapable of protecting their own rights.

The Department of Native Affairs previously accepted full responsibility for all education in the settlements. I represented the late Dr. Noble at Palm Island and at Cherbourg for about a week in each case. One of the complaints I brought back to him was that there were not enough qualified teachers in the settlements. It was shortly after that that the change was made and the Department of Education took over the responsibility for providing trained teachers in native settlements.

All school grades, whether at missions or in State Schools, receive all their school requisites from the department. It was in 1960, after my visit to Cherbourg and Palm Island, that the Department of Education took over the responsibility for settlement education. I remind the hon. member for Tablelands that at Aurukun Mission Station the department took over the manual training school and provided thousands of pounds worth of manual training equipment which was surplus to other school requirements.

Throughout the history of the Church of England—and I can talk with some knowledge of that—it has been the experience that the mission field has been very much bereft of money to do the job it was intended to do. In the early stages it was the church's job to take education and hospitalisation into those places. In the past few years it has become more and more the responsibility of the State to accept the responsibilities of education and hospitalisation.

It was with the full agreement of the bishops of the Anglican Church that the Government assumed full control at Yarrabah in 1960. I can say without fear of contradiction that the Church of England was most delighted and relieved to be freed of the financial burden that Yarrabah imposed. Although I cannot speak for the Presbyterian Church—and perhaps some Presbyterian may put me right if I am wrong—I understand that that church was equally grateful when it was relieved of the responsibility of conducting the station at Bamaga, when the Government proceeded to reconstruct it entirely at its expense. Those are indisputable facts that show that the Government, in bringing down this legislation, is facing up to its responsibilities to the aboriginal people.

It is true that missions are conducted on a shoe-string basis, and it is equally true that the State must face up to its responsibilities more and more as the years go by and finally, working hand in hand with the churches, assume full responsibility for education and health services in native settlements and in the mission fields. On this point, I should like to congratulate the Minister on introducing the first constructive legislation on aboriginal affairs that this State has seen in the last half century.

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) (8.7 p.m.): The hon. member who has just resumed his seat said at the beginning of his speech that he had no wish to delay the House. Having listened to his contribution, I am still unable to establish why he did delay the House.

Mr. Ramsden: It would be hard for you to understand; I appreciate that.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Everything that the hon. member for Merthyr says is hard to understand. I am, however, not going to waste a great deal of time on that matter because I feel that the Bill now before the House could be history-making legislation. I think that Parliament's decisions and actions to overcome the problems of our indigenous people will possibly be viewed internationally, because the problem is not confined to this State or country. As a matter of fact, it is a problem that exists throughout possibly all the English-speaking nations of the world. It will not be solved easily, and it will require patience, tolerance, and understanding.

The Bill is, I feel, a further step in the rehabilitation of aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, which races have been largely destroyed by contact with white people. Whilst the Aborigines Preservation and Protection Act and the Torres Strait Islanders Act did serve a useful purpose, the time has come when they must of necessity be superseded. The Act dealing with the preservation of aborigines was brought down because it was necessary at that stage of colonisation to halt what could have been the extinction of the race. During the time in which it has operated, it has performed a useful purpose.

As time has passed, however, the Act has become outmoded. It becomes necessary, then, for us to reorientate our thinking, and the stage must be reached when legislation is enacted to improve existing legislation.

The measure before the House is not directed towards finding employment or providing housing. It is not a question of legislating for industrial conditions or merely conveying to these people those things that should be theirs as a birthright. This legislation involves human problems. It involves, first of all, the adaptability of the aborigine; it involves his capacity to meet and mingle with the white population; it involves his desire to be accepted into the community; it involves his desire to improve his knowledge and to find the employment to which he is best suited; it involves the extent of his desire to take part in community activities. Furthermore, it involves also the question of the aboriginal people attaining the knowledge that will equip them to handle the very many problems they will meet in their everyday life after they have been assimilated into the white community.

Aborigines will have to face problems that are common in our everyday life. As I mentioned by interjection this morning, they will need protection against the actions of door-to-door salesman. They will need guidance in hire purchase and many other similar things that are part of the life of the community in which we live. Overriding all these things is the question: what will the white people do to assist aborigines to fit into our community? In my opinion, that is possibly one of the most important aspects of the problem that we have before us.

The Bill is designed primarily to give our indigenous people equal rights of citizenship with other people in the community, but it will not be good enough for us to enact legislation and then sit idly by and see how it works out. Assimilation and intergration will be meaningless if legislation is not revised continually in an endeavour to assist these people to live in our community. It will be meaningless, too, if we do not keep closely in touch with these people during the transitional period of their entry into the community in our towns and cities. As other hon. members have said, possibly this can best be achieved by social workers or welfare workers—call them what you like—because by referring to “assisted persons” in the Bill we recognise that these people must receive guidance.

Mr. Pizzey: There are very few mature social workers. You would not suggest that we use the young ones just out of the university?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: No.

Mr. Pizzey: It is very difficult to get mature ones.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I agree that this is a very difficult problem. We must look at it from every angle. We have to look at what will be required in a social worker.

Mr. Pizzey: That is right. It is more than simply an academic degree.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Quite true. After all, as I said earlier, we are dealing with human rights and human dignity. We have to decide, first of all, how best we can train our social workers, what we require of them, and, what is possibly more important, what the aborigine himself would require in order to have confidence in these social workers.

I feel that during this transition period there will be great need for every care to be taken that those who are assisting these people are not only capably trained but are able to use the right psychological assistance for them. I think that one very important way in which we can assist these people is to survey their occupational potentialities. I was speaking quite recently to Dr. Kingston on this subject and I discovered that only a very limited survey has been made of the occupational potentialities of these indigenous people. There has to be a greater move to establish firmly the occupational potentialities of those who are to be our future citizens.

This subject was dealt with by the International Labour Organisation. It was dealt with by a committee of experts who recommended that there should be a study of the occupational activities and the prospects of improving and developing those activities within the framework of the national economy. They recommended that we should explore the occupational potentialities of the indigenous populations and distinguish the types of activity for which their initial or further training can be encouraged with a view to improving their standard of life.

They say we should establish for the use of these populations vocational training centres and services with provision for vocational guidance in an indigenous community. They say that we should take special steps to develop vocational training for women and young workers to improve their vocational skills, and that we should take appropriate economic and social action with a view to enabling the indigenous persons who have received the advantage of instruction to use their newly-acquired skill or knowledge. I believe that is one of the things that will play an important part in any move towards integration or assimilation.

I dealt with this question at the introductory stage, when I spoke about making provision to raise the level of intelligence and capability of these people to a certain plane. If we refer to a book titled “Indigenous Peoples”, which is another publication from the International Labour

Organisation, we find under the heading "Occupation Classification" that, according to the 1933 census, 2,345 full-blooded aborigines were employed in industries such as fishing and trapping, agriculture and grazing, forestry, and mines and quarries. In the other occupations, listed as industry, transport and communications, commerce and public administration, and the professions, only 395 of these people were employed.

If we study those figures we find that there has been this inclination on our part to place aborigines in employment as forestry workers, pastoral workers and workers in mines and quarries. In other words, we have had a preponderance of thought that they should be confined to the menial tasks in the community. That is why it is essential when endeavouring to give these people full citizenship rights that we aim at doing much more for them than we have in the past. We could well undertake through the university and similar institutions a very searching occupational study or occupational estimation of the capabilities or work potentialities of young aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. Although over the years we have endeavoured to provide these people with employment, I am satisfied that we have not done enough by confining them to the tasks I have enumerated. Because the preponderance of our thinking seems to have been based on placing them only in menial jobs we have not helped them very much. I believe that much could be achieved by an intense study of their occupational potentiality.

In order to assist them to take their rightful place in the community we need to instil in them the self-confidence which, over the generations, has been destroyed by their contact with white people. There is no doubt that the coloured man's contact with the white man has been to his detriment. Only this afternoon when I was reading a book titled "The White Settlers and the Native People" it was brought home to me that as recently as 1928 the white people were perpetuating atrocities on the coloured people in our community. From 1928 to the present time is not a great length of time in the history of the world, but if over that period we have been destroying their self-confidence it will take a long time to restore it. I feel that the restoration of their self-confidence will play a very important part in their assimilation or integration. The move in this legislation to provide for aboriginal councils is a step in the right direction for the restoration of their self-confidence. I dealt briefly with this at the introductory stage. I believe that amongst the coloured community there are many who can give a lead to their brothers so that they, too, might take their rightful place in the community.

Mr. Ewan: Don't you admit that the majority who are exempt—

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I would not admit anything to the hon. member for Roma. He is a bush lawyer and is likely to put any construction that he cares to on what I might admit. I do not think the hon. member should sit there interjecting merely for the purpose of letting his electors know that he was in the House on a certain night.

This is very important legislation, so important that it behoves every person in this Assembly, and every right-thinking person outside, to apply himself to it thoroughly. Whether we agree or disagree with the speeches made here, as long as they are made in sincerity, as long as they are made with a view to uplifting our aboriginal population—

Mr. Pizzey: Almost all the speeches today have been very good in that respect.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I am very pleased to hear the Minister say that. We all approach this problem with different psychologies. All of us may feel we have something to contribute. Even though what we may contribute may not be sound or practical, if it is from the heart, if it is for the purpose of assisting our aboriginal population, then everything that is said in this debate is worth while.

The establishment of an aboriginal council will encourage what the Minister described this morning as the transformation of the existing large settlements into normal towns. I must agree with the Minister. I do not often agree with the Government, but on this occasion I agree with the Minister that the sooner we can transform the larger settlements into normal towns the sooner we will be able to say we have done something for our aboriginal people.

Mr. Pizzey: Within a very short time Yarrabah could be a normal seaside community.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I believe this is important, not in the sense of freeing our coloured people from controls of any sort, but because, by doing this, we will build up their self-confidence and self-respect. The sooner we encourage aboriginal councils to full participation in local-authority affairs the sooner we will be able to say we have taken a step forward.

I approach this subject in a very sincere manner. I do not expect great benefits to flow from this legislation in five or ten years. If we can say in 30 years' time that we have seen the full impact of this legislation we will have achieved something. There must be a starting point at some time. We cannot hope to undo all the damage that has been done to these people by 150 years of contact with the white people.

On an examination of the proposals concerning the aboriginal council, it would appear that their duties are to be limited to a certain extent. In dealing with the islanders' affairs the Minister has seen fit to grant local government and to lay down the holding of

elections and so on. I was a little concerned to read that the Governor in Council may, by regulation, establish in a reserve or community of aborigines, an aboriginal council—or a council that shall be called an aboriginal council. We must develop in these people the psychology that one day they will run their own affairs. I should like the Minister to explain why the Governor in Council will carry out the duty of establishing these aboriginal councils.

Mr. Pizzey: They will establish their own. At Cherbourg, they are authorised to set up their own council.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I accept that. Without having a great knowledge of the islands off the coast, I can understand that they may have reached such a degree of advancement that they are able to control their own affairs. I am glad to have the Minister's assurance that this legislation will enable aborigines to establish their own councils. In Cherbourg, many people are advanced to the stage that they are responsible people who, with assistance, training, and understanding, could very capably administer Cherbourg if it became a town. If that is so, then we have to encourage the people resident in that area to accept the responsibility of electing their own council.

This could play an important part in future legislation to grant voting rights to these people. It would be a good training ground for these people to understand how precious it is to have a vote, and to realise what a great privilege it is to be able to vote for a chosen representative, even though that chosen representative may not at all times do what the elector wishes. Electing aboriginal councils would be an important step towards getting them to appreciate the value of the right to vote.

While we may enact legislation and give these people the opportunity to elect their councils and do all these things, we must ensure that when they are elected to these positions on councils, their efforts are never hampered by lack of finance. They are impressionable during this transition period and it will be important to see that adequate finance is available at all times when these people finally attain the privilege of running and controlling their own communities. I feel that there will be ample opportunity during the Committee stage to suggest various amendments that will strengthen the legislation. For that reason, I shall content myself with the remarks that I have made this evening.

I feel that an obligation rests fairly and squarely on each of us. Although we might be critical of legislation brought down by the Government, our criticism is made in a constructive way and is aimed at strengthening and improving the Bill. I have no doubt that mistakes will be made in the legislation. Nobody can see the problems that will arise from new legislation. All that we can do is approach the problem with the hope that what is being done will enable these people to take

their place in the community. We hope we are doing something that we will not be ashamed of, something that will provide a lead to other States and countries similarly faced with this problem.

Although it can be fairly said that we have not done all that should have been done for our indigenous people, and whilst our actions can never be excused by the fact that we have not handled this problem as badly as it has been handled in some other countries, I think it can be said that in more recent years legislators have made an honest attempt to do something about the problem. I hope that in some small way my contribution to the debate may assist aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders to take their rightful place in the white community.

Mr. ARMSTRONG (Mulgrave) (8.37 p.m.): I do not intend to take up a lot of time; I think hon. members have been sitting here long enough since this session started. One of the heartening things in what has been heard during the debate and read in the Press is the great interest taken in these people by many organisations. For a long time nobody seemed to care very much about the welfare of aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

Mr. Davies: Absolute rubbish!

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I do not know whether it is absolute rubbish or not. It is not many years ago that people who found themselves living next door to an aborigine would try to move as quickly as possible. Over the last seven or eight years there has been a complete change of attitude.

Mr. O'Donnell: Never mind about that. They are doing it now.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: If the hon. member for Barcoo would keep quiet and listen, he might learn something.

Mr. O'Donnell: Not from you.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: It is very heartening to realise that interest in these people has arisen over a comparatively short time. Some people taking an interest in this matter do not understand the problems of aborigines, nevertheless they are making a sincere effort to assist, which I think is all to the good. Unfortunately, there are many, referred to by the hon. member for Nudgee this afternoon as "do-gooders", who are endeavouring to help without having any background knowledge of the problems to be met.

It has been said that perhaps there should be no legislation at all to control these people. I am sure that all would be pleased if the problem could be conveniently approached from that angle. But those of us who have had the opportunity of mixing with them, particularly of talking to them and observing their habits and their way of life on the various settlements and missions, know full well that that time has not arrived and that it may be many years before we can repeal any legislation that relates to them.

In the early days the churches took a great interest in the aborigines, and they have continued to take an interest in them down through the years. Many people on the missions and settlements have had years and years of experience in trying to lift the aborigines out of their own environment and into the environment in which we live. I think we should be generous enough to admit that history shows that the churches have gained a good deal of ground in the comparatively short time that they have been associated with these people.

In my opinion, all of us who are interested in the problem expect too much to happen too quickly, and it was heartening to me to sit here today and listen to the views expressed by various hon. members on this problem. They realise that results cannot be obtained overnight with these people. It is true that some of them will make rapid headway—I have met some who have been in charge of gangs of white men—but unfortunately they are few and only time and circumstances will enable most aborigines to take their place in the community beside us.

History shows that we must have some type of legislation to govern and care for these people, and I think this Bill is a really genuine attempt to assist them. It is likely that flaws in the legislation will be discovered when it is being applied; but it will not be very difficult to meet the problems as they arise and amend the Act from time to time in the light of experience.

As I said, the churches have endeavoured to assist the aborigines over the years, and I believe that their approach was genuine and sincere. Let us take our minds back to the time when protective legislation was first introduced. Although there is room for much criticism, I think we must admit that, with all its flaws, it has served a useful purpose in the community.

Mr. O'Donnell: That is different from what you said at the beginning.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: It is not. I accepted it with all its flaws. I am certain that if we had not had it we would not have as many coloured people in the State as we have today. In fact, we might have been in a position similar to that of other States. That is undeniable. My knowledge and experience lead me to believe that the churches have been endeavouring over the years to lift these people onto a higher plane. The various stages were very evident to hon. members who visited church missions and settlements, and they were particularly evident on Mornington Island. Very many and difficult problems have faced the churches, and I think we must commend all those who have dedicated themselves to the task of improving the status of aborigines and have given a lifetime of service to them. A number of them have been in a particular area for very many years, and even young girls have endeavoured to make their contribution by serving in isolated

places. We should be very grateful to those people for the efforts they have made. Their resources were limited; their knowledge was limited in many fields. After all their years of endeavouring to get the aborigines onto a plane somewhat comparable with that on which we live, I do not think it is right to say that they have failed; in fact, they have achieved a good deal.

But, as I said earlier, public opinion is not always on the side of the churches. Some hon. members have heard statements by various people to the effect that it is almost a waste of time and money endeavouring to do something for these people. Nevertheless, the churches have persisted and the Government has come into the field and assisted them to do all they possibly could with the resources at their disposal.

I think hon. members realise that on missions and settlements there is limited work for these people to do, and again we hear much criticism because they are not paid award rates for the various tasks they do. There are some pitfalls in this system, nevertheless there has been much success. Generally speaking, these people are all kept in a very high state of health and there has been a marked improvement in hygiene and the various other fields of our society.

Mr. Hughes: They are a credit to the director.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I am glad the hon. member mentioned that. We are very fortunate in having a director of the calibre of Mr. Killoran. I do not suppose there would be many men in Queensland, or Australia, with a better understanding of these people than Mr. Killoran. It is for that reason that I am very confident of the success of this Bill. Although we have been very heavily criticised all over the world on the legislation we are repealing, those hon. members who have had an opportunity of discussing the problem with Mr. Killoran and of moving around the various settlements must know that he has administered with justice and mercy. I only hope that we can get many more Killorans in this field because one of the great problems, as I see it, is not so much the social worker, of whom we can get plenty, but the need for men and women with a great understanding of these people, such as Mr. Killoran has. If we are successful in obtaining people of that calibre the problem will not be nearly as great as we might think.

But I am afraid it will not be easy. It will be very difficult to get people who really understand the background and the general handling of our aborigines, more than the Torres Strait Islanders. I feel sorry for the director, because he will need a lot of patience and will be caused much worry in getting the right type of people into the field. It is very necessary that, as we endeavour to place these people into

our society, we have officers who understand them, people who have their confidence and are able to give them the necessary guidance and assistance at the right time. Otherwise we will have many failures.

I think it is important, from the psychological angle, that we do not have many failures because, if one family sees somebody else go out and settle into a community successfully, it will give them the necessary encouragement to follow. We know from experience that these people have to be watched very closely. They have a different social outlook from us. They are prone to overcrowd into houses. They do this from the goodness of their hearts, trying to assist their fellow-men.

Mr. O'Donnell: It is only because they cannot afford houses.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: That is not so. It is a natural habit they have and it is not acceptable in a European community. It is something that must be closely watched. I feel that today the average person's sympathy leans very much towards these people and that, if we can get the right type of people to assist them into our society, we will meet with much success.

At this stage I should like to compliment OPAL and other organisations which, at great sacrifice, have been trying to assist these people. They have been doing a really good job. It is up to each and every one of us to lend support to organisations that do much to help aborigines. They do it out of the goodness of their hearts. I know that I often feel that married women in my electorate must be neglecting their own family of three or four children to do what they are doing in playing their part in trying to establish these people in their community. While that spirit prevails, I think Mr. Killoran's job as director will be made much easier. I can recall many years ago when the Mona Mona Mission was functioning. The people there were trying to train aborigines to take their place in the timber industry, both on the logging and the sawmilling side. They must have met with some success, because I understand that today quite a number of people from there are working for the Department of Forestry.

Unfortunately the job opportunities are not great. I know the settlement the Minister spoke of a few moments ago. We can be proud of Yarrabah. Since we took it over there has been a great deal of confidence there. The people live like any in a normal community. They have most of the necessary amenities. Most of them live in comfortable houses. Many new houses have been built there in recent times. They are building a modern dairy, improving the pastures and building up a herd. All this is going on so that it will not be long before it will be one of our "pick" spots. I hope that it will not be long before we have a road into the settlement so that we will be able to let some of our greatest critics drive to it to see what is

going on. At the present time they are doing everything the hard way. Everything has to be taken in by boat. Those hon. members who have been there, particularly when conditions were a little adverse, would know all about it. The foreshore has silted up and it is impossible to get a boat within a couple of miles of the settlement. It poses quite a problem when they are taking in their supplies. If they do not get to the landing when the tide is right they do not get the stuff in at all.

There has been a very substantial building programme there for the last four or five years. It is amazing to see what they have done under difficulties. Indeed, it is very heartening to see it. The last time I was there was just a few days before their church was opened. Some visitors commented on what a magnificent building it was and wanted to know who the building contractors were. They were amazed to hear that the aborigines built it themselves, as they did their community hall.

Mr. Wallis-Smith: You cannot live in a church or a community hall.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: Such buildings have a very definite place in our society. If the day comes when they are removed, we will be the worse off for it.

I sincerely hope that when this Bill becomes law, and we try to move some of the people who are ready to be moved, we have the wholehearted support of the communities into which they are placed. I trust that Mr. Killoran is successful in getting people with a real understanding of the problems and interests of these people, so that they may get the assistance they need.

The Bill is designed to meet their needs, to encourage them on their way, to create interest which an hon. member said is lacking, and to build up their confidence. They have been sheltered for many years—for several generations—with somebody else virtually doing their thinking for them. Many of them have been brought up in this way, so we cannot expect to change their way of life overnight. I feel that the administrator will have an understanding of this legislation and that it will be properly applied. I am sure that we will progress well and that any pitfalls or anything lacking in the legislation will be amended in the near future.

We are blessed with a Minister who is extraordinarily keen to assist these people. I think he has amply demonstrated that. It is not long since he became the Minister in charge of these people but he has travelled extensively and tried to make himself familiar with their problems of integration and assimilation. He understands their need for education and is trying to overcome that as quickly as possible. At Yarrabah a school is under construction that is comparable with some of the best

in Brisbane. It was necessary. Hon. members who visited some of the church missions may have observed that some of the schools are very old and quite unsuitable. They are not the right environment in which to educate young people. One hon. member said he hoped there would be no shortage of funds. I do not know how much money is needed to overcome all the difficulties and problems associated with our missions and settlements.

Mr. Bromley: Whatever money is spent will be well spent.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: It is being well spent now.

Mr. Bromley: I am not arguing about what has happened. I am saying what could happen.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: It is happening now. I think the hon. member will agree that there has been quite a change in many of the settlements and missions. There may not be enough equipment, but they are getting better equipment. I was impressed very forcibly by the way they look after it. At Yarrabah some of the equipment is three or four years old but it looks new. They take pride in looking after it.

This afternoon a reference was made to the liquor problem. I think all hon. members know something about this very difficult matter. These people are not entitled to indulge in the luxury of liquor, but we know what is happening. In townships and provincial cities they are buying it through the back door. This creates many problems. In some places a taxi-driver runs the grog backwards and forwards, probably making a little on the side.

Mr. Bromley: There is just as much trouble with the white race with grog, as you call it.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I am glad the hon. member brought that up. That is something that is thrown at us from time to time. I have used the argument that we do not notice these failings in our own people, but if there happen to be a couple of coloured people in a hotel everybody observes them and talks about them. I do not think they are any worse than our own people. A good deal of interest is being taken in these people at the present time. I feel that the sooner we give them the right to drink the same as we do, the better. I will not refuse them that privilege.

We have read a good deal of what happened in New Guinea when drinking rights were given to the natives. I had the opportunity of discussing this matter with the hotel-keepers and the police there. I was in one hotel where up to 100 coloured people were drinking in one lounge, not because they had to, but it seemed to be something like a club where they went occasionally to indulge in social drinking.

Mr. Bromley: They are entitled to do that.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: That is right. They are entitled to be in any hotel. They can be found in lounges sitting amongst visitors and other people, nicely dressed, drinking as any decent citizen should. I discussed this matter with the hotel-keeper in Port Moresby. I knew him. He had been a hotel-keeper in Cairns. I asked him about it and he said, "Sometimes they are a problem, the same as our own. There are plenty of our own who, when they over-indulge, get a little out of line and cause trouble." He gave me to understand that the problem was a simple one and that he had little trouble with it. Some of them do not behave correctly. But it is certainly not the major problem the Press reports have led us to believe.

These people are controlled by their own very efficient Police Force. It is amazing to see them on traffic duty. Here again they do an excellent job. They seem to be able to handle their own much better than white police could. There seems to be a better understanding among them. I did not see anybody get out of control in New Guinea. I would say that the Police Force is very much alert. Its members are poking about at night-time, and you do not see them. But if anything goes wrong they are on the job and are in complete control.

Mr. Bennett: They are not subject to any interference from headquarters.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I do not suppose they are subject to any criticism from the hon. member for South Brisbane.

One of the greatest problems is the work opportunity. In the Gulf Country or on the Peninsula the opportunities for work are not plentiful, apart from in the grazing industry. I think we should all have an understanding of this problem. The relevant award is at present being considered by the Industrial Court. The system we have now has worked very well for many years. Many people are involved in this industry, and many of them are now enjoying award rates. We must be careful in this, because if we do have some who are not quite efficient and we ask the employers to pay them full wage rates, some of the work opportunities might not be there any longer.

I suppose it could be argued that there could be some form of exploitation in this field. However, knowing Mr. Killoran and his officers as I do, I assure hon. members that they would be very quick to act at the first sign of exploitation. I have actually witnessed Mr. Killoran protecting these people in that way. As soon as he has evidence that an employer is not treating an aborigine fairly, he can be relied on to put the matter right.

Mr. Bromley: You are not seriously suggesting that Mr. Killoran has control over employers?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I am not suggesting that at all. I am quite sure that the hon. member understands the set-up. Some of these

people are not drawing wages at award rates. If they are as efficient as white men, we expect them to enjoy the conditions of employment applying to white men. I think it is necessary to understand that problem. If care is not exercised, aborigines could be denied opportunities of employment. There are some jobs that they are able to do very capably. If we do not watch what we are doing, however, we could take some job opportunities from them.

Mr. Bromley: I still think you are pushing the barrow for the U.G.A.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I am not particularly interested in the United Graziers' Association. I am, however, very concerned about the welfare of aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, and all who have seen what I have seen would share my concern. There are many able-bodied aborigines who are able to work.

Mr. Bennett: What have you done about it?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I think I might have done a little more than the hon. member for South Brisbane has done.

Mr. Bennett: I doubt it.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: This is something that has to be faced up to. In many fields today there is a shortage of labour. Here is a source of supply that can be tapped if we go about it the right way.

Mr. Bennett: You only want cheap labour.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: The hon. member would not know what I am talking about.

Mr. Bromley interjected.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: You are getting into a different field.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Hooper): Order!

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I am sorry if I disregarded the Chair, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Quite a number of aborigines are able to do work in this field. For apprenticeships and skilled trades it is necessary to look to the younger people, and in this matter education must play its part. I know that the Minister is wide awake to this necessity and will lose no opportunity to play his part fully. Whilst on this subject, I might mention that I think the unions could assist considerably in this direction.

Mr. Bromley: They are only too willing to.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I sincerely hope so. There are on some settlements mechanics who have never served any time as apprentices but who are practical men able to do the job and keep machinery working. I have seen them welding and doing fitting and turning.

Men with similar skills are found in sawmills. However, without sympathetic treatment from the unions, they are denied jobs when they look for work. I appeal to my friends on the other side of the House to do whatever they can to assist in this direction.

Mr. Bromley: I should like to inform you that my union employs three aborigines in Sydney.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: That is very good to hear; I hope it continues. Many of the homes at Yarrabah have been built almost without any supervision by white men. In spite of that, when an aborigine capable of doing this work goes to the mainland and wants a job as a carpenter, he runs into difficulties. Assistance must be given wherever possible. I feel that the greatest chance of success lies with the younger people. We have to try to educate them and get them into as many fields of industry as possible.

An Opposition Member: You are stonewalling.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I am not stonewalling; I am trying to enlighten hon. members opposite.

There are opportunities for employment in the Railway Department and in some sugar mills, and these should be exploited to the full. I have seen Torres Strait Islanders working on the Mt. Isa railway line; I have seen them working in railway gangs in the Cairns district. They have been doing a very good job, and we should do everything possible to assist them to get employment such as this.

I was interested to hear the hon. member for Tablelands suggest that there had been a general clean-up at the missions and settlements to make them spick and span before the Parliamentary party visited them. I think those of us who made the visit on that occasion know that that did not occur. Some leaves may have been swept off the ground, but, generally speaking, there is not very much else that could have been done. The people could not brighten up their homes. I have visited the missions and settlements on several occasions, sometimes unannounced, and I know that they are usually kept in a state similar to that in which we saw them.

Mr. Sherrington: Have you lost your place?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: No. I just want to skip over a few pages of notes because I know that the hon. member for South Brisbane wants to enlighten hon. members as much as he can.

In conclusion, I again ask the Minister to give some consideration to training a certain number of these people as policemen so they can be stationed at Thursday Island and in other remote parts of the State.

Mr. BENNETT (South Brisbane) (9.12 p.m.): I agree with the attitude and remarks of my Leader, the Hon. Jack Duggan, in relation to this matter.

Mr. Armstrong: You always do.

Mr. BENNETT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, at one stage hon. members opposite say that I disagree with everybody; at another stage they say that I always agree with certain people. They cannot be consistent for two minutes. Certainly, when I do make an agreement I adhere to it, which the hon. member for Mulgrave did not do tonight. Anyway, I always agree with good people and those who have some intelligence. That is why I disagree with the hon. member for Mulgrave.

What I was about to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was that my Leader has made the observation that in these sessions—I have observed it over the years since I have been a member of this Assembly—very important and controversial legislation is always introduced in the twilight stages of the session and the Government then attempts to bludgeon it through without proper discussion. The stage is reached where it is inopportune to consider legislation as important as this—

Mr. Nicklin: You do not suggest that this has been rushed?

Mr. BENNETT: I say to the Premier through you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I think the Bill would have been given much more careful consideration if it had been introduced and given its second reading earlier in the session.

Mr. Nicklin: It has been on the sheet for three weeks.

Mr. BENNETT: For three weeks we have been sitting, very often till after midnight, and considering many other Bills. It is perfectly obvious, without drawing attention to the state of the House, that many Government members have become weary of the session and cannot remain here to listen to the debate on this particularly important Bill. That is the point I am making.

Mr. Lickiss: How often have you been in court in the last three weeks?

Mr. BENNETT: I have not been in court at all in the last two weeks.

Mr. Tooth: Where have you been?

Mr. BENNETT: I have been here every day. If hon. members opposite persist in interjecting, I shall certainly deal with them and I will speak for much longer than 15 minutes—I will take my full time, if necessary. As far as being in court is concerned—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Hooper): Order! The hon. member is under no obligation to answer interjections.

Mr. BENNETT: I certainly propose to, as is my right, if they are rude and untruthful. In any case, I think this Bill lends itself to a great deal of discussion, academic and otherwise, on a subject which is of great importance. I do not propose at this stage to engage in the discussion of all aspects of the betterment of aborigines in this State. Perhaps I shall be more topical in that I will make reference to something that concerns my own electorate and to which reference has already been made by one or two speakers during the course of this debate.

I must say that I was reared in North Queensland, in the Lower Burdekin area, and I mixed with and observed the conduct and conditions of the aboriginals—as they were universally referred to—who at that stage lived on the banks of Plantation Creek. I think it is fair to say that their lot has not considerably improved since those days.

The legal advisers, or those who have been commissioned by the Government to edit the reprint of the statutes, deal in their preliminary note with the conditions of aboriginals and so forth, where they say—

“It appears that there exists no distinction between aboriginals and persons of European race for purposes of acquisition of British nationality by birth or naturalisation . . .”

They quote authorities, and then they go on to say—

“Owing to the comparative backwardness of the aboriginal race in acquiring the arts of European civilisation legislation designed to protect its members and differentiate them in certain respects in the administration of law, became essential; and it was to this end that the Acts below were passed.”

I feel that much of the discussion, both inside and outside of Parliament, by various authorities does become academic. I believe that, so far as the aboriginal question is concerned, too much time is devoted to academic considerations rather than the practical application of ideas and thoughts designed to immediately assist these people. I fully believe—and I say it conscientiously—that many organisations are functioning whose aims are mainly political rather than for the purpose of assisting aboriginals living in bad conditions to better their lot and be assimilated into the community. Unfortunately, their situation or condition is very often exploited by politicians and organisations whose main interest is their self-aggrandisement or the furtherance of their own political objectives.

For instance, one speaker tonight mentioned the still-persisting attitude that certain people will not tolerate coloured people as neighbours. Unfortunately, that is only too true. I have had that experience in the area in which I reside because I have taken a keen personal interest in Opal

House. Originally it was not because it was Opal House but because I have a personal friendship with Mrs. Wilding, who has been honoured for the work she has done.

Mr. O'Donnell interjected.

Mr. BENNETT: The hon. member for Mulgrave will have to listen to the absolute, stark truth in relation to this matter. I knew Mrs. Wilding long before she interested herself in Opal House, long before she turned over her dwelling as a habitat for aborigines. My friendship with her was not associated in any way with her work for aborigines. But there was a time after she had done much work in this direction when she persuaded certain people of influence to sell to the authorities an ideal building, or two sets of buildings, in a good residential area at West End where these people could have been looked after admirably and well in good residential surroundings.

The deal was almost completed—I took some interest in it from a legal point of view—when the hon. member for Kurilpa, with the assistance of others who adopted a snobbish attitude to the proposal, organised a petition to stop the proposal. As a result, the scheme had to be abandoned and in its stead the present Opal House in Russell Street, was purchased. It is not nearly as suitable, for many reasons—firstly because of the structural nature of the building, but essentially because of its proximity to the Adelaide and other hotels in West End. Because of its proximity to that building we find that the Adelaide Hotel is described in the Press—no doubt truthfully so—as Skid Row. I believe also that it is not essentially the fault of the proprietors of the place, although I do not know them. But it is true to say that those people who have been released from the restrictions of the Act and who are entitled to drink in hotels find that the Adelaide is almost the only hotel where they can obtain a drink, so they drink there.

The conditions there are shocking, deplorable, disgusting and revolting. The Government must know because the police patrol car—the Black Maria—is on a continuous circuit from the Adelaide Hotel to the watchhouse. I have often observed it myself. The trade is so busy at times that the Black Maria cannot cope with the demands of the customers, and the police patrol car is used.

I have often watched policemen putting men and women in one side of the police car and as quickly as the police were putting them in one side they were getting out the other and going back into the hotel. That is one of the results of Opal House being in close proximity to the Adelaide Hotel.

Mrs. Wilding, the proprietress of Opal House, was rightly honoured for the work she has done. She is an angel; she is dedicated. Although OPAL are given a lot of the credit for the success of Opal

House—and they deserve their proportion of it because of the funds they contribute—beyond contributing funds they do little in the management of the place. That is left to Mrs. Wilding. It is she who has to drag her people away from the Adelaide Hotel in their intoxicated condition. She is helped sometimes by others in the area, perhaps by those kindly policemen who know where these people come from and take them home instead of putting them into the watchhouse.

All that goes on. During the small hours of the morning some of these people come home intoxicated. It is Mrs. Wilding who has to get up and let them in. It is Mrs. Wilding who has to restrain them. Little lady though she is, she sometimes has to use force to restrain them in their intoxicated condition and get them to bed. Sometimes after being in and out of bed several times she finds the task impossible and has to seek outside assistance. All that is going on, so let us not close our eyes to what has been done and what might be done under the conditions that prevail. True it is that Opal House has done a great deal of good and is still continuing to do good. But this is only because of Mrs. Wilding's efforts.

Beyond the fund-raising activities of OPAL I give no credit for the success of Opal House to any other than Mrs. Wilding and the staff assisting her. It is a very small staff. The report says that there are 60 people living there from time to time, but over the Exhibition period with the influx of people from the country there are many more than that staying there, some of them sleeping in the garage.

This concerns the Minister in his capacity as Minister for Native Affairs, and as Minister for Education. I am extremely disappointed in that he closed the South Brisbane State School, the school which many of the children from Opal House attended as toddlers, unaccustomed to traffic, not knowing their way around the city. They were doing well at that school; they looked happy; they were developing well and were contented. When the school was closed they were sent all over the place. Mrs. Wilding could get them to the South Brisbane State School as it was just up the road, but it became difficult for her to get them to schools farther removed.

Mr. Hughes: You speak about Mrs. Wilding; would you care to repeat what I understand you said about me—alleging that I presented a petition against OPAL?

Mr. BENNETT: I gave an undertaking to the Minister that I would be brief.

Mr. Hughes: You haven't got the guts!

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Hooper): Order!

Mr. BENNETT: On a point of order—I cannot accept that remark. I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Kurilpa has used an expression that is not acceptable to the hon. member for South Brisbane and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. Hughes: I will withdraw it if the hon. member is prepared to withdraw his odious accusation.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do I understand that the hon. member for Kurilpa has withdrawn the statement? I have not actually heard him say so.

Mr. Hughes: Yes, according to the Standing Orders and parliamentary practice I do so.

You are still not game to repeat the basis of your odious accusation.

Mr. BENNETT: There is one thing I am not game to do and that is to float dud cheques, which the hon. member for Kurilpa has done on at least two occasions.

Mr. HUGHES: I rise to a point of order. That statement also is baseless and odious, and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member for South Brisbane, in turn, has used words which are not acceptable to the hon. member for Kurilpa, and I ask him to withdraw them.

Mr. BENNETT: In accordance with Standing Orders I do, and for that purpose only.

There are only two small points in the Bill with which I wish to deal. In effect, the Bill removes the embargo which erstwhile existed on drinking by aborigines. They can now do so. It is rather significant that, at the same time it is no longer an offence for a person other than an aborigine to have carnal knowledge of an aboriginal girl. At one time it was an offence to do so. I have been wondering whether there is any association between the right of aborigines to become intoxicated and the removal of the prohibition on a white man having carnal knowledge of an aboriginal girl, particularly when she is intoxicated. I wonder if there is any significance in the removal of the two prohibitions by the same legislation.

The final matter on which I wish to comment is that previously there was an onus on a judge of the Supreme Court, or any other judicial authority to satisfy himself that an admission of guilt, or a plea of guilty, was properly understood by an accused aborigine. The judge did that by argument in his chambers before any matter went to the court or the jury. That onus is no longer imposed on the judge or the judicial authority. Unless the accused or his counsel or the district officer raises that question the judge not only has no responsibility to satisfy himself that the aborigine fully understands the circumstances of his admission and his plea of guilty, but he has no right to make those inquiries unless and

until the aborigine's counsel, if he is represented, the district officer, or he himself raises the question.

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis—Minister for Education) (9.31 p.m.), in reply: We have had a long debate in which many speakers have taken part. Generally I commend the House for its approach to this problem. With very few exceptions members applied themselves diligently to the problem of considering a Bill for the well-being and progressive development of these people. I regret that one or two instances spoil what otherwise would have been one of the best debates we have had on any legislation as important as this. I was very pleased at the general approach of most hon. members. While there was not general agreement with all the propositions, there was real sincerity in an effort to find, in a sense of decency and respect for our fellow beings, the best way to approach this problem.

Before I knew much about the islands, the missions, or the settlements, I felt I knew all the answers. However, the more I see and the more I study the problem, the more complex it becomes. It reminds me of the United Nations mission to New Guinea. It goes there and tells the people what they should have and what they should want, when they are reasonably content with the development and progress that has been made. I do not know whether it is our responsibility—I do not think it is—to try to assimilate and integrate them into our community at a speed which would be detrimental to their own needs.

Mr. O'Donnell: We will want to move faster than we are.

Mr. PIZZEY: I think everybody agrees that we are moving faster than we were. I do not think it is in their interests to spill 8,000 or 10,000 of them into the community and say, "Right! You should be normal citizens in the community. Take your places as responsible people. Here is your freedom. Go out and fend for yourselves."

This legislation enables any one family—or any one person—to go out and take their places as normal citizens if they want to. I give the House an assurance that there will be no opposition to any application to leave a mission or settlement except that we must be sure that the person is reasonably capable of maintaining his family outside.

Mr. O'Donnell: In a house?

Mr. PIZZEY: In a house. It is not much good 20 or 30 families going from Cherbourg into Murgon if they have nowhere to live.

Mr. O'Donnell: They do not live in one house in the settlements; they live in separate houses. In a town many families are likely to clamber into one house. They cannot be blamed for that, because it is an old tribal custom.

Mr. PIZZEY: It is an old tribal custom and there is still a tendency to do it. There are different views on that matter. There is a problem there, because they feel that they cannot turn down relatives who need shelter. As progress is made, it will be our responsibility to provide more and more houses for them.

Education was mentioned. No special provision is made for it because it is assumed that aborigines will receive the same education as is made available to others. Generally speaking, they have these facilities now. Perhaps in the islands and on some of the more remote settlements there could be more trained teachers. That position is changing year by year. As more people well qualified for the task become available to go to these areas, the Government will move in that direction. I do not think anyone would suggest that teachers should be virtually shanghaied to these places simply by being told, "You go and serve there." A dissatisfied person unhappy in his job could do more harm than a contented one with less training. Fortunately our young people are responding fairly well to the call. As regional directors of education move round they sound out various teachers, and so far they have been fairly successful in getting teachers to take these positions.

Mr. O'Donnell: You could stipulate a period of time to be served there.

Mr. PIZZEY: That is done; the maximum period is one year unless they request to go back, as some do.

Secondary education was mentioned. The Government guarantees secondary education for every boy and girl on missions and settlements who can benefit by it. At present the Government is paying the full boarding-school expenses of over 70 children in various church, grammar, and independent schools. Responsibility is not taken for the children of those who have left settlements. Here is an opportunity for service and welfare organisations to lend a hand. The scholarship recently announced by the Queensland Aboriginal Advancement League was an excellent contribution in this field, and other organisations could with advantage sponsor bright young lads or lasses living in one of the communities and whose parents are in no position to provide further secondary education. I can assure the House that the Government will accept its responsibility to provide secondary education at settlements and missions.

There was a lot of discussion about land and land titles. I do not know of anyone in the House who would like to accept the responsibility of trying to sort out land titles in these areas. Consider, for example, an island where for generations there has been a tribal division of the land. Land is not held in one block, and portions

of land do not take a regular form. They cannot be surveyed. One family has a small piece here and another piece there. The boundaries may be an old post here, an old stump here, and where the goanna died over there. One man may point to a clump of grass and say, "That is my area there." In addition, he may share another piece of land somewhere else. I do not think the time has arrived for the Government to say, "We will survey the whole island. This land will be yours, this will be yours, and this will be yours."

I think that Bamaga, where there is no tribal recognition of particular plots of ground, is a place where we could get the surveyors in, survey the land, and give the aborigines title. On some of the missions it is very difficult to say, "You must have this piece of land; you must have that piece of land." Each of them has a bit of good land; each of them has a bit farther out. It may be in three or four parts and irregularly divided up. The House has my assurance that progressively, where it is opportune and where it is practicable, certain parts will be surveyed and people will eventually be given title to that particular land.

As I said earlier, all this legislation will fall by the wayside unless it is administered properly. Just as the Bill is a re-thinking of the old approach, so also will the administration have to be a re-thinking. Officers from the director down will have to apply themselves to the task of thinking of things in a new light—in other words they must get away from paternalism. They will have to be prepared to give more and greater responsibility to these people. Even though they may sometimes make mistakes, these people will have to learn to run their own affairs and how to accept responsibility.

Perhaps the only three hon. members who got away from the general principles of the Bill were the hon. member for Norman, the hon. member for Tablelands, and the hon. member for South Brisbane. I should say that the hon. member for Norman would make a very good television "Meet the Press" subject. He could talk for 40 minutes and at the end one would wonder what he had said. In between his usual hilarious little excerpts, he gave his views on certain aspects of health, education, and so on.

Mr. Bromley: Things that should be done.

Mr. PIZZEY: Things that should be done administratively, perhaps, but they will not have to be done under the principles of the Bill.

The hon. member for Tablelands wanted to criticise some administrative acts. I think he was the only hon. member in the whole of the debate who tried to do that. I hoped that aspect of the matter would have been kept out of the debate, because once we

start to slang this way and that about what this Government has done and what former Governments did, we lose the main purpose of the debate—trying to plan for the future. I will leave the hon. member and not reply to him, as I ordinarily would, in very scathing terms.

The hon. member for South Brisbane intended to speak constructively for a quarter of an hour. However, he was led astray by a few interjections, and when he is led astray by interjections he just cannot help himself. I thought that this was one time he would resist replying to interjections and engaging in cross-firing with the hon. member for Kurilpa. No doubt the hon. member for Kurilpa will take the opportunity, at an opportune time, to repudiate some of the statements made by the hon. member for South Brisbane.

The hon. member for South Brisbane seemed to forget that OPAL is more than just Opal House.

Mr. Bennett: I concede that. I was only speaking about OPAL as it applies to Opal House.

Mr. PIZZEY: The hon. member said that OPAL did not do much other than provide the money.

Mr. Bennett: As it applied to Opal House.

Mr. PIZZEY: That may be so in regard to Opal House. I think everyone will pay a very high tribute to Mrs. Wilding, and it is open to anyone to visit Opal House at any time and see her great responsibilities there. The hon. member made some reference to the South Brisbane School. Opal House is really meant to be a transit camp, not a permanent home although some of the families are there for a very long time. Mrs. Wilding's original intention was to make it a place where people could feel secure until they were able to get a flat or a home, or to get established somewhere else. However, there were families that had been there for a very long time. For them it was a home rather than a transit camp. I think that those who have been there for a fairly long time should make an effort to get out. From time to time OPAL itself gets houses or flats for them to move to. They have been obtained at Inala, Mt. Gravatt and other places in Brisbane. It is not meant to be a permanent home away from home, but a home away from home for the time being. I hope it does not develop into a permanent home for some who are not prepared to shoulder their responsibilities and find a home for themselves.

OPAL does have a wider field. There are branches and they do quite a lot of welfare work. There are many branches in the larger cities and one of their main responsibilities is to seek out people who need

assistance and advice, in some cases to raise money, to report to our department upon a likely family that would be a fairly good guarantee for success in a Housing Commission home, one that is worthy of our giving a £250 advance so that they can put down their deposit—without interest, of course. I think so far about 30 families have been found homes by OPAL. Those families, once they go to these homes, are not then just left to themselves. Members of OPAL, very often leaders in the community such as clergy, people in professions, people who have the interest of others at heart, keep an eye on them. Sometimes they visit them and help them with advice on the economics of running a home. They drop a friendly hint here and there, to make these people feel they are wanted in the community and put them on the right path. Often within a year or two they can nearly forget about them and very often these people themselves help other people to get into their own homes. Many of these families who have been helped earlier have done great work for OPAL and have assisted in bringing others of their people in and helping them to get established.

As I said before, this is the beginning of a new approach. It is a move away from the old paternalism. It is a move to throw greater responsibility on the shoulders of people themselves. I hope it has the effect of encouraging as many families as possible to leave the settlements and take their places with thousands of their fellows who have done that in the last 30 or 40 years and have become excellent citizens, contributing to the development of our State and working harmoniously with others in the community.

Generally speaking, the House has debated this Bill exceedingly well. I do not like singling out certain people but several very fine contributions were made today. It is obvious that many hon. members have studied the Bill closely and have given much thought to this problem over the months and years, trying to find a way to solve one of our most difficult problems. This is the first but I hope it will by no means be the last important step taken by this Government towards solving the problem.

Motion (Mr. Pizey) agreed to.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

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

“That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Wednesday, 7 April, 1965.”

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 9.50 p.m.