

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 24 AUGUST 1965

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QUESTIONS

GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE IN SOLUTION OF TRAFFIC PROBLEMS, BRISBANE AND TOWNSVILLE.—Mr. Coburn, for Mr. Aikens, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) Is the Government prepared to co-operate with and assist the Brisbane City Council in the solution of Brisbane's traffic problems, consequent on the release of the report by Wilbur Smith and Company?

(2) If so, will he inform the House, in as much detail as possible, as to the extent of such co-operation and assistance and the amount of money involved?

(3) Is the Government prepared to co-operate and assist the Townsville City Council in the solution of Townsville's traffic problems to a similar degree and, if not, why not?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "The cost of Stage I proposals have been estimated at £27 million of which the Government has conditionally offered to find £17 million free of cost to the City, whilst the Brisbane City Council will have to find some £10 million."

(3) "At present a joint Main Roads Department—Townsville City Council Technical Planning Committee is carrying out a similar comprehensive Transportation Survey in Townsville. In this regard I might mention that the Government is contributing 80 per cent. of the costs thereof. I can assure the Honourable Member that, when the road needs of Townsville are known following the completion of this survey, any approach by the Townsville City Council on the question of financial assistance will receive sympathetic consideration."

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY IN SOUTH-EASTERN QUEENSLAND.—Mr. Sherrington, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Industrial Development,—

(1) What is the present peak loading of electricity in South-eastern Queensland?

(2) What is the maximum generating capacity, what power houses are involved and what is their individual capacity?

(3) What is the expected peak load for the winter months next year?

(4) What will be the peak generation at this time and how will it be supplied?

(5) Is he aware of the occurrence of blackouts in South-eastern Queensland during recent winter months and is there any assurance that this will be overcome?

(6) Was there a recommendation by engineers of the State Electricity Commission for the purchase of a 10 megawatt gas turbine to temporarily supply the aluminium refinery at Gladstone?

TUESDAY, 24 AUGUST, 1965

The House met at 11 a.m.

ABSENCE OF MR. SPEAKER

The Clerk informed the House that Mr. Speaker had accepted an official invitation to be present this day at the Ceremonial Opening of the Parliament of New South Wales.

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. Hooper, Greenslopes) read prayers and took the chair as Acting Speaker.

APPROPRIATION BILL No. 1

Assent reported by Mr. Acting Speaker.

(7) Was this recommendation cancelled and, if so, why?

(8) From what source is electricity for this refinery to be supplied?

Answers:—

(1) "The estimated peak load on the South-Eastern Queensland electricity supply network reached 643,000 kilowatts on July 20 when conditions were exceptionally cold and wet. The anticipated demand for this winter was 575,000 to 580,000 kilowatts."

(2) "The normal maximum generating capacities of power stations connected to the network are as follows—Tennyson B Power Station, 130,000 kilowatts; Tennyson A Power Station, 128,000 kilowatts; Bulimba B Power Station, 192,000 kilowatts; Bulimba A Power Station, 95,000 kilowatts; New Farm Power Station, 67,000 kilowatts; Abermain Package Plant, 10,000 kilowatts; Tennyson Package Plant, 10,000 kilowatts; Somerset Dam, 3,000 kilowatts. The aggregate of the normal maximum generating capacities of these stations amounts to 635,000 kilowatts. Very wet coal resulted in a maximum capability of 630,000 kilowatts and minor shedding resulted for something less than 15 minutes. The peak loads mentioned included the supply of 7,000 kilowatts to the Wide Bay-Burnett Regional Electricity Board to supplement their own plant loading."

(3) "The winter conditions of 1965 were exceptionally severe as indicated by the peak loads recorded throughout Queensland as well as elsewhere in Australia. In South-Eastern Queensland an increase of peak demand of 23 per cent. was recorded compared with 1964 peak loads. This compares with a longer term growth rate of 9.5 per cent. per annum and is clearly an exceptional occurrence. An analysis of loads in 1965 has not been completed, but it is expected that peak load in 1966 under normal weather conditions will be 640,000 kilowatts."

(4) "The construction programme for Swanbank Power Station provides for commissioning of the first 60,000 kilowatt set (which has a capability of 66,000 kilowatts) prior to the winter peak of 1966. When this set is in operation a total of 701,000 kilowatts of normal plant capacity will be available to meet peak loads estimated at 640,000 kilowatts. The Swanbank Plant programme is based on a further two machines (of similar capacity) being available before the Winter of 1967."

(5) "As stated previously shedding on a comparatively limited scale did occur during the July peak period but some black-outs also occurred due to overloaded feeders in the distribution networks and not to shortage of generating capacity. It is the practice of electric authorities to maintain a margin of spare plant capacity which is available to meet most eventualities including higher peak loads than the forecasts

indicate. However, an extraordinarily high increase such as the 23 per cent. recorded in 1965 can be catered for only by increasing this spare plant margin to an extent which would involve substantial additional capital cost and correspondingly higher operating cost. Having regard to the relatively small chance of its being required and to its minor significance, the expenditure could not be justified."

(6 and 7) "No recommendation was made for the purchase of a gas turbine. Shortly after it was learnt that the ship carrying the second 30,000 kW set for the Callide Power Station ran aground near Aden, tenders were called by the State Electricity Commission, by arrangement with the Capricornia Regional Electricity Board, for gas turbines to ascertain their price and availability. This was done because of the absence of information on the extent of the loss and on possible delays involved if replacements were required and so that their purchase could be considered, if practicable, to ensure supply to the alumina plant at Gladstone by the due date. However, before a decision was made on the tenders, information was received and assurances obtained that the items lost at sea could be replaced to enable the second set to be commissioned in time to meet load requirements. Consequently, it was not necessary to proceed with the acceptance of a tender for gas turbines."

(8) "The alumina plant at Gladstone will be supplied from the 132,000 volt system of the Capricornia Regional Electricity Board connected with the Board's Callide and Rockhampton power stations. Summarising the position may I say the Honourable Member can rest assured this Government will not fail to take adequate steps to ensure that the increasing demands for electricity in this State are met. The unqualified success of the Government's industrialisation policy has of necessity resulted in an increased demand for electric power. This, however, has been met by the positive action taken by the Government which has resulted in the installed generating capacity of the State being increased from 483,000 kilowatts in 1956-1957 to 950,000 kilowatts at the present time. The current programming of electricity production provides for a total estimated installed capacity of 1,600,000 kilowatts by 1970."

UNDESIRABLE PRACTICES IN SALE OF ELECTRICAL GOODS.—Mr. Sherrington pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Justice,—

(1) Is he aware of the ever-increasing volume of false and misleading advertising relating to the sale of electrical goods?

(2) Are any steps being taken by his Department to investigate (a) the huge discounts being offered in connection with the purchase of refrigerators, washing machines, &c., and (b) the gift of a suite

of bedroom furniture or similar articles to the purchasers of certain type refrigerators?

(3) What steps does he intend to take to curb the trade practices of these "Refrigerator Racketeers"?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) "These questions relate to matters coming under the administration of my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Labour and Industry. I suggest that the Honourable Member redirect the question to him."

TOURIST BUREAU PUBLICATIONS ON TOOWOOMBA DISTRICT.—Mr. Duggan pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Labour and Industry,—

(1) Is he aware that a Queensland Government Tourist Bureau publication handed to passengers on the *Canberra* in Sydney on May 3, 1965, and allegedly depicting Toowoomba and the Darling Downs, is years out of date?

(2) Will he take immediate action to remove the photos of horse-drawn operation of farm machinery and pre-war street scenes from the publication?

Answers:—

(1) "No, I am not aware, as no such publication was made available by the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau to passengers on the *Canberra* in Sydney on May 3, 1965. Since August, 1964, the current publication of the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau—This is Queensland—has been used on the *Canberra*, a copy of which I shall table with this reply, for the information of the Honourable Member. The brochure referred to by the Honourable Member is a very old Queensland Government Tourist Bureau publication, the distribution of which ceased prior to the commissioning of the *Canberra*. I would also add that publications on individual Queensland areas, for use on P. & O. ships, have not been supplied, at least since this Government came into power."

(2) "See answer to No. 1. However, in order that the Honourable Member may inform himself from the latest Tourist Bureau publications on Toowoomba, which are currently distributed by the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau, I also table the following:—Toowoomba and the Darling Downs; Tours from Toowoomba. In addition, the Toowoomba Tourist Association publishes a Toowoomba Tourist Guide, a copy of which is also tabled. With the information contained in these brochures I hope the Honourable Member will be able to bring himself up to date, concerning the splendid tourist attractions of Toowoomba and its environs."

Papers.—Whereupon Mr. Herbert laid upon the Table of the House the papers referred to.

ROYALTIES ON OIL, BAUXITE, COAL, AND MINERALS.—Mr. Lloyd, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

(1) What were the amounts received by way of royalty for the year ended June 30, 1965, from (a) Moonie oil production, (b) bauxite export from Weipa, (c) coal exports from Moura, (d) Mt. Isa Mines, and (e) Mt. Morgan Mines?

(2) What were the production figures upon which the royalties were based of (a) Moonie oil in barrels, (b) Weipa bauxite, and (c) Moura coal?

(3) What was the formula used to assess the royalty payable on Moonie oil, showing the expense deductions on the price per barrel received by the company at the borehead?

Answers:—

(1) "(a) £158,583 1s. 7d. (based on 1964-1965 production). (b) £7,514 13s. 6d. (based on 1963-1964 tonnages). (c) £29,786 16s. (based on 1964-1965 production). (d) £242,526 (based on 1963-1964 financial accounts). (e) Nil (based on 1963-1964 financial accounts). (The Act allows up to 30th September for payment of royalty for the year ended the previous June.)"

(2) "(a) 2,186,044 barrels. (b) Based on an export tonnage of 238,422 tons and Australian sales of 62,165 tons during 1963-1964. (c) 1,191,472 tons."

(3) "Royalty in accordance with the Petroleum Acts is payable on the net amount realised by the Company, less gathering costs and pipeline tariff charges. Gathering costs varied throughout the year according to monthly production, as also did tariff charge. Gathering charges varied from 6·85622 pence per barrel to 5·02810 pence per barrel. The tariff charge varied from 8s. 6d. per barrel to 7s. 6d. per barrel from 1st September, 1964, reducing to 5s. 10d. per barrel from 1st February, 1965, and since that date has varied in accord with production. The latest tariff charge is 5s. per barrel."

COMMITTEE TO EXAMINE INDUSTRIAL PROBLEMS.—Mr. Lloyd, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Labour and Industry,—

(1) Has a committee been established to examine industrial problems in Queensland and to recommend amendments to the State's industrial law as was promised by the Premier at Warwick and reported in *The Courier-Mail* of April 28 last?

(2) If so, (a) what is the personnel of the committee and what organisation or section of industry does each member represent, (b) what is the function of the committee and (c) has the committee met?

(3) If no committee has been appointed, will he explain why?

Answer:—

(1, 2 and 3) "The Government's intentions will be made known at the appropriate time."

TRAINMEN FOR RAILWAY DEPOTS WEST OF TOWNVILLE.—Mr. Tucker, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

(1) Is there an intention by the Railway Department to depart from the present system whereby depots west of Townsville are supplied with drivers, firemen, cleaners and guards by advertising the vacancies and filling them through the Weekly Notice, and substitute a rotary transfer system in which men will be transferred to western depots for periods of three to six months, with Townsville as the recruiting and supply depot?

(2) If there is such an intention, will he seek the opinion of trainmen through their Unions before attempting to implement such a system?

Answers:—

(1) "No."

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

SURPLUS TRAINMEN IN NORTH QUEENSLAND.—Mr. Tucker, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

(1) With the completion of the Mt. Isa line rehabilitation and the close of the present busy season, will there in fact then be a considerable number of surplus trainmen in North Queensland?

(2) If so, then before any decisions are made, will all the Unions involved be consulted with a view to arriving at a method of dealing with such redundancy and which is acceptable to all parties?

Answers:—

(1) "Action has already been taken by the Department to suitably place trainmen who had become surplus in the Northern Division consequent upon the rehabilitation of the Mt. Isa Line and the dieselisation of that section of railway and it is anticipated the remaining surplus men will be absorbed in vacancies."

(2) "The Honourable Member is apparently not in close contact with the principal Unions concerned, since such Unions are well aware of the Department's practice in this connection, there having been a number of interviews by such Unions with the General Manager, Townsville."

ADDITIONAL STATE HIGH SCHOOL, TOWNVILLE.—Mr. Tucker, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) Has planning begun for the provision of a third State high school to meet the growing demand for secondary education in Townsville?

(2) If so, what stage has been reached in such planning and where is it intended that the school be situated?

Answer:—

"The Regional Director of Education recently conducted a comprehensive survey into probable future Educational requirements of the City of Townsville, both at the Secondary and Primary level. Action has been initiated to obtain additional data respecting the sites suggested for acquisition in the Regional Director's report, but no firm decision will be made as to which site or sites will be acquired for future High School purposes until the relevant additional information has been received."

CO-ORDINATED TRANSPORT SERVICE, ZILLMERE AND GEEBUNG TO BRISBANE.—Mr. Campbell, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

In view of the requests made to the Transport Department for a co-ordinated bus and rail service from Zillmere and Geebung into Brisbane, can he indicate whether this is a practical proposition?

Answer:—

"At the present time the Licensee of the local bus service does provide a considerable measure of co-ordination with rail at Zillmere. However, the bus and rail fare systems are separate from each other. Following the Honourable Member's approach to me, the question of converting and extending this form of service into a complete rail-road co-ordinated service is being examined. In addition, the practicability of a similar co-ordinated service at Geebung Station is also being considered. Owing to the relatively short distance between the two stations, there are certain operational difficulties in regard to the working of buses involved, but I am confident that these will be able to be overcome."

WILBUR SMITH REPORT, BRISBANE TRANSPORTATION SURVEY.—Mr. Houston, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

Will he make available to Members, particularly metropolitan Members, a copy of the report by Wilbur Smith and Associates relating to the Brisbane Transportation Survey?

Answer:—

"All Metropolitan Members were invited to the Presentation of the Summary Report and those who attended received a copy. Several Members who were not able to attend the function have since received a copy following a request by them. Upon request I am prepared to make a copy of the Summary Report available to any Member representing a metropolitan electorate who has not already received one."

PARLIAMENTARY MISSION VISIT TO SOUTH-EAST ASIA.—Mr. Coburn, for Mr. Aikens, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) Did a Minister of the Crown recently visit certain places in South-east Asia and, if so, what is his name, the names of the places visited and how long was he absent from Queensland?

(2) Was the Minister accompanied on this trip by a Parliamentary Member of the Country Party, a Member of the Liberal Party and two Members of the Australian Labor Party? If so, what are their names?

(3) What was (a) the total cost of the trip to the Queensland taxpayers and (b) what benefit did the taxpayers derive from it?

Answers:—

(1 and 2) "A Queensland Parliamentary Mission visited the South-East Asian area during the period June 2 to June 28, 1965. This Mission was led by my Colleague the Minister for Local Government and Conservation (the Honourable H. Richter, M.L.A.), and other members were—Mr. W. M. Ewan, M.L.A., Member for Roma; Mr. S. R. Ramsden, M.L.A., Member for Merthyr; Mr. J. E. Duggan, M.L.A., Member for Toowoomba West; Mr. M. H. Thackeray, M.L.A., Member for Rockhampton North; this Mission visited Manila, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Kuala Lumpur, Penang and Singapore."

(3) "(a) £5,329 4s. 6d. (b) Australia is an integral part of the South-East Asian sphere. This whole area to our North is becoming more important to us both politically and economically and it is vital that there be a clear appreciation by us of the thinking by responsible persons, in those areas. Queensland business is playing an ever-increasing role in its trade with South-East Asian countries and I am convinced that representatives of this Assembly should also have first-hand knowledge of the scene in this particular area."

INCREASE IN ADVANCES AVAILABLE TO HOUSING COMMISSION BORROWERS.—Mr. Coburn, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

As the substantial increase in the price of all types of dwellings since the maximum advance available to borrowers from the Queensland Housing Commission was fixed by Order in Council on October 4, 1962, at £3,500 for any type of dwelling, is making it difficult and, in many cases impossible, for prospective borrowers to accumulate sufficient money to meet the greatly increased deposit now required by prospective home-builders,

will he give early consideration to increasing substantially the advance now available to borrowers?

Answer:—

"The Honourable Member will realise that increased maximum loans would enable fewer persons to be assisted with the same total funds. Furthermore, since 1962 the Commonwealth Government has implemented its proposal for Home Savings Grants under which the subsidy on home savings can amount to as much as £250. Such subsidy is to some measure an offset to increased costs. I can assure the Honourable Member that I am closely watching the position."

SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLMENTS, EMERALD, BARCALDINE, AND LONGREACH.—Mr. Davies for Mr. O'Donnell, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

What are the latest enrolment figures in each grade of the secondary departments at the Emerald, Barcaldine and Longreach State Schools?

Answer:—

" —	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Emerald ..	59	49	29	8	7
Barcaldine	49	41	38	9	9
Longreach	60	46	39	3	2 "

NEW HOUSING COMMISSION ESTATE, MT. GRAVATT EAST.—Mr. Newton, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

(1) What is the number of building sites that will be available in the new Queensland Housing Commission estate off Wecker Road, Mt. Gravatt East?

(2) Have any sites been set aside for a shopping centre?

(3) Has this project been connected to the local sewage treatment plant which is directly opposite?

(4) If so, what was the cost of the sewerage connection mains and who carried out the work of connecting the mains?

Answers:—

(1) "277 sites."

(2) "No—15 Shopping sites immediately adjoining the Commission's land are being provided in the private estate to the south of the Commission estate."

(3 and 4) "Reticulation to connect to the local sewerage treatment works has been arranged at a cost of £52,745 and the work of connecting the mains will be carried out by the Brisbane City Council."

LAND HELD BY HOUSING COMMISSION IN NORTH BRISBANE.—Mr. Melloy, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

(1) What land is held by the Queensland Housing Commission in the Brisbane metropolitan area for use in future housing projects on the north side of Brisbane?

(2) Does the Government intend to build houses on the north side of Brisbane for tenancy purposes only? If not, will he give consideration to such a building project to alleviate a very serious need?

Answers:—

(1) "For the purpose of providing housing on the north side of Brisbane, the Commission has acquired land at Arana Hills, Banyo, Bardon, Boondall, Bracken Ridge, Ferny Grove, Lawnton, Petrie, Stafford and Strathpine."

(2) "Except for houses built for a specific purpose such as for the Armed Services, houses constructed under the group system are not limited to tenancy purposes only. They are available for purchase in the first instance, and if not sold are rented. Every consideration will be given to the construction of houses on the north side of Brisbane."

CRIBB ISLAND DENTAL CLINIC.—Mr. Melloy, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

(1) What is the waiting period at the Cribb Island dental clinic for (a) examination and (b) treatment?

(2) What was the number of patients treated at the Cribb Island dental clinic for each of the years 1960 to 1965, inclusive?

(3) What was the number of dentists employed in Government dental hospitals and clinics for each of the years 1960 to 1965, inclusive?

Answers:—

(1) "(a) The period varies from immediate attention in an emergency to between five and six months; (b) Except in cases of emergency, about four weeks after examination. In August, 1964, I was asked by the Honourable Member if I would give consideration to increasing the hours of attendance of the dentist at the Cribb Island Dental Clinic in order to reduce the waiting time for treatment. As from November 17, 1964, the dental service was increased until the situation improved and became better than at the Brisbane Dental Hospital. The position is being closely watched in relation to the overall dental commitments and the availability of staff which presents problems which are not peculiar to Queensland."

(2) "1960-1961, 356; 1961-1962, 292; 1962-1963, 358; 1963-1964, 392; 1964-1965, 655."

(3) "1960-1961, 99; 1961-1962, 99; 1962-1963, 105; 1963-1964, 107; 1964-1965, 121."

REHABILITATION OF MT. ISA RAILWAY.—Mr. Melloy, pursuant to notice, asked The Treasurer,—

(1) What amount of mineral royalties were received from Mount Isa Mines Ltd. in each of the years ended June 30, 1964 and 1965?

(2) What was the total amount spent on the rehabilitation of the Mt. Isa railway line, including loans and grants from the Commonwealth Government?

Answers:—

(1) "The question should be addressed to the Minister for Mines and Main Roads."

(2) "The amount charged to July 31, 1965, was £25,523,854."

HOUSING COMMISSION RENTAL HOUSES, IPSWICH.—Mr. Donald, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

How many State rental houses in Ipswich are occupied by tenants other than members of the Armed Forces?

Answer:—

"Other than the houses let to the Commonwealth for the Armed Forces, there are 93 State Rental Houses in Ipswich. A small number of these houses are occupied by persons who were members of the Forces when they qualified for tenancy on a personal basis under the normal points system. Tenants are not required to advise when they change employment, and some of these tenants could now be in civilian occupations."

FREE TRAVEL TO BRISBANE FOR COUNTRY PATIENTS.—Mr. Wallis-Smith, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

In view of the many far-distant patients requiring specialist treatment in Brisbane, will he consider the elimination of the present means test and investigation, so that these patients can travel free with sleeper accommodation and so obtain specialist attention on almost the same basis as Brisbane patients?

Answer:—

"There is no Means Test in respect of the provision of air or rail transport to Brisbane or other centres for persons suffering from a malignant, pre-malignant, near-malignant or suspected malignant condition, which might necessitate treatment at

the Queensland Radium Institute or a Sub-Centre of the Institute. Although a Means Test is applied in respect of the issue of air or rail passes to persons requiring specialist treatment for other conditions, such Means Test is applied sympathetically so that no hardship is inflicted on any person. If the Honourable Member has knowledge of any case in which he feels that hardship has resulted from a refusal to grant free transport, I shall be happy to re-examine such case if it is brought to my notice."

HERBERTON STATE SCHOOL PLAYGROUND AREA.—Mr. Wallis-Smith, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

In view of the fact that the Herberton head teacher's residence has been removed from the school grounds so that extra playground space would be available and that this area now presents a danger hazard in its existing state, will he include this area in the plan to level the whole area to the existing playground level and grade and prepare the area across the road so that tennis and basketball courts can be established there?

Answer:—

"Reports received from officers of the Department of Works and my Department do not disclose any danger hazard in the state of that portion of the school grounds on which the official residence was previously erected. An estimate of cost is awaited from the Herberton Shire Council for the general tidying up of the land in question and for attention to the batter of an existing bank but it is not proposed to grade this area to the level of the adjoining playground. The grading of the area proposed for tennis courts and basket ball courts is a project which must be considered by the Parents and Citizens' Association under the conditions of the School Ground Improvement Subsidy Scheme whereby my Department meets 50 per cent. of the approved cost."

MOTOR TROLLEY TRANSPORT FOR RAILWAY GANGS IN CAIRNS DISTRICT.—Mr. Wallis-Smith, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

(1) Is he aware of the fact that several Flying Gangs in the Cairns district are using hand pump-cars to convey the gang to and from work and to transport sleepers, rails and materials to the actual site of their requirement?

(2) Will he consider the provision of a suitable motor trolley to replace the present hand pump-cars?

Answers:—

(1) "There are four (4) flying gangs attached to the Cairns District. No. 4 Gang working on the Almaden-Forsyth Section has been issued with a heavy 'Fairmont'

Section Car. No. 1 and No. 2 Flying Gangs use Pump Cars. No. 1 Gang is camped at Edmonton and is working in the Edmonton Station Yard and is not required to travel long distances. No. 2 Flying Gang is working within a mile of their camp at Stoney Creek. No. 3 Flying Gang is working on the 2-foot Innisfail Tramway."

(2) "The Department has a progressive programme to purchase new section cars each year. New section cars are allotted to the gangs which will obtain the maximum benefit from their use, but, to date, it has not been possible to issue section cars to No. 1, No. 2 and No. 3 Flying Gangs, but their requirements will be kept in mind."

PLATFORM LEVEL, TULLY RAILWAY STATION.—Mr. Byrne, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

In view of the difficulty and danger to passengers in alighting from railway carriages on to the low-level platform at the Tully Railway Station, is it proposed during the current financial year, to effect much-needed improvements, particularly in respect to the raising of the platform?

Answer:—

"Yes."

ADDITIONAL HOUSING COMMISSION ACCOMMODATION, MACKAY ELECTORATE.—Mr. Graham, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

As a serious accommodation shortage exists in Mackay and is affecting the progress and development of the area, will he endeavour to make immediate finance available for the erection of Housing Commission homes and flats in the Mackay Electorate?

Answer:—

"I am well aware of the Honourable Member's concern for the Mackay Electorate, but I have repeatedly informed him that, for housing purposes, Mackay comprises the residential areas on both sides of the river. To assist this overall area I recently approved an allocation of £30,000 from the Home Builders' Account to the Mackay Co-operative Housing Society—this is the first allocation from that Account to Mackay and recognises the expansion taking place in the district. The Housing Commission accepted tenders in May and June for eleven houses at North Mackay and is dealing with applications to have a further five houses erected for purchase on Commission sites selected by the applicants. The provision of further group houses will be considered in the light of the demands in all the developing areas of the State, and for this purpose the Commission desires to acquire land at a reasonable price."

POLLUTION OF BAKER'S CREEK, MACKAY.—Mr. Graham, pursuant to notice, asked The Treasurer,—

As Baker's Creek, a tidal creek adjacent to Mackay, is continually being polluted by sugar mill effluent resulting in the destruction of large numbers of fish, &c., besides destroying the creek as a picnic and swimming site, will he endeavour to have some action taken to prevent this most undesirable practice?

Answer:—

"Baker's Creek is polluted and it seems likely that this is destroying some fish life. The extent of the pollution is being determined by the Department of Local Government at the request of the Pioneer Shire Council. The Department's report to the Council will include advice as to measures which should be taken to prevent this pollution. I will await a copy of the report before considering what action might be taken."

MARIAN WEIR.—Mr. Graham, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Local Government,—

(1) In what year was the Marian Weir completed, what was the cost of its construction, including cost of repairs, and what is its storage capacity?

(2) What number of irrigation licences were in force in the years 1960 to 1965, inclusive?

Answers:—

(1) "Marian Weir was completed in 1952. The cost of construction and repair was £187,533. It has a storage capacity of 3,100 acre feet."

(2)

" ———"	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965
On Weir Storage	1	1	2	5	7	8
Downstream of Weir	11	12	13	13	16	16

These figures do not include Mirani Town Supply, taken from the storage, or four licences issued to Marian and Pleystowe Mills for industrial purposes."

MARTIN REPORT ON TEACHER TRAINING.—Mr. Bromley, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) Does the Government intend to implement any of the recommendations of the Martin Report, relating to the training of teachers, in spite of the refusal of the Commonwealth Government to enter this field through the medium of granting financial assistance to the States? If so, which recommendations will be implemented and when is the commencing date?

(2) In the light of the increased demand for teachers, envisaged by the Martin Report within the forthcoming decade, what plans has the Government to expand the existing number of teacher-trainees?

(3) What plans does the Government have for integrating the work done by the University faculty of Education and the Teachers' Colleges in the training of teachers?

Answers:—

(1) "In making its recommendations relating to the training of teachers the Martin Committee also recommended that financial assistance for this purpose be provided by the Commonwealth. The implementation of the recommendations of the Martin Committee concerning this matter is beyond the unaided resources of the States. This Government has restored the two-year training period for primary teachers which had been reduced to one year by the Labor Government as an emergency measure and will aim to increase the minimum course of preparation for teaching to three years, by progressive stages, when finance is available. The implementation of other recommendations in the report will also be considered in the light of funds available."

(2) "The number of scholarships available for teacher training will be increased to provide staff to cope with increasing enrolments, particularly at the secondary level."

(3) "None. As a matter of interest it might be noted that this is not a recommendation of the Martin Committee."

FEE FOR JUNIOR PUBLIC MUSIC EXAMINATION.—Mr. R. Jones, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) Is he aware that a music examination fee of £3 is imposed and payable by students who wish to take this subject in the Junior Public Examination in addition to the normal fee of £3?

(2) Will he take early steps to eliminate this anomaly of double fees on parents of children nominating for the Junior Public Examination, who choose to take music as a subject?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "There are no tests in music as a Junior Examination subject. The fee of £3 for the Junior covers the subjects in which tests are held. Students who so desire may obtain credit for Music in the Junior and Senior Examinations, upon presenting evidence that they have satisfied the requirements of the Australian Music Examinations Board in specified grades of that Board's examinations. Entrance fees charged by the Australian Music Examinations Board for its various examinations are common throughout the Commonwealth."

ADDITIONAL HOUSING COMMISSION HOUSES, CAIRNS AREA.—Mr. R. Jones, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

As there is a heavy demand for Housing Commission rental accommodation in the Cairns area, will he give early consideration to having additional homes in this category erected there?

Answer:—

“As the Honourable Member is aware, the Housing Commission has had road-works and drainage carried out by the Cairns City Council to provide twenty-nine house sites at Hoare, Clarke and Birch Streets. A substantial number of these sites are subject to purchase applications and requests, and these are now receiving attention. On 20th instant a quotation was received from the Council for further works to provide an additional seven sites, and I anticipate that the Council will be authorised in the very near future to proceed with these extra works. As soon as the site requirements of the purchase applicants have been established I will consider calling tenders for a group of houses on sites not absorbed. These group houses will be available for rental if not sold during construction.”

ISSUE OF MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION PLATES IN CAIRNS.—Mr. R. Jones, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

(1) Is he aware that a delay of some six weeks generally occurs for the supply from Brisbane of number plates for vehicles registered in Cairns?

(2) If so, will he consider on-the-spot issue by establishment of a Department in Cairns or Townsville in order to eliminate or minimize the delay to receipt of vehicle registration number plates in this area?

Answers:—

(1) “Under normal conditions, the average time from the payment of registration fees in Cairns to the despatch of the number plates from Head Office of the Department of Main Roads in Brisbane is about three to four weeks. If there should be anything not in order in the application or the associated papers which has to be adjusted, naturally, the time is extended. During recent months, however, due to the additional work involved in preparing for the changeover to computer operation as a result of the increasing volume of new business from all over the State, the time lag has been up to five weeks. Plates are despatched in advance of the posting of certificates and registration labels. The issue of number plates upon registration involves a considerable amount of work for Officers in Charge of Police Stations and Clerks of the Court, as well as in the Department’s Head Office.

Upon registration, the owner is issued with a temporary number to attach to the motor vehicle windscreen and in Queensland this temporary number is to all intents and purposes as good as a pair of plates in the period until they arrive.”

(2) “Number plates have been issued from Townsville Court House upon registration since April, 1961. It is not proposed to create another State Department for this purpose, nor is it proposed at this stage to increase the number of centres at which official number plates are issued.”

PAPERS

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

Reports—

Operations provided for by Part III.—Aid to Development, of “The Financial Arrangements and Development Aid Acts, 1942 to 1947,” for the year 1964-65.

Golden Casket Art Union for the year 1964-65.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Proclamation under The Traffic Acts Amendment Act of 1960.

Orders in Council under—

The University of Queensland Acts, 1909 to 1960.

The Grammar Schools Acts, 1860 to 1962.

Regulation under The Traffic Acts, 1949 to 1965.

PETROLEUM PRODUCTS SUBSIDY BILL

INITIATION

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

“That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to subsidise the distribution of certain petroleum products in certain country areas.”

Motion agreed to.

FIRE BRIGADES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. J. D. HERBERT (Sherwood—Minister for Labour and Industry): I move—

“That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Fire Brigades Act of 1964, in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES BILL

INITIATION

Hon. J. D. HERBERT (Sherwood—Minister for Labour and Industry): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to promote, safeguard and protect the well-being of the children and youth of the State through a comprehensive and co-ordinated programme of child and family welfare and to amend the Adoption of Children Act of 1964, in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

OVERTIME PAID IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

ORDER FOR RETURN

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition): I move—

"That there be laid upon the Table of the House a return showing the amount of overtime paid in each Government department (all funds) in 1964-1965."

Motion agreed to.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—FIRST AND SECOND ALLOTTED DAYS

Debate resumed from 18 August (see p. 18) on Mr. Newbery's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) (12.2 p.m.): I should like, as is customary, to offer my congratulations to the mover and seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

The mover, the hon. member for Mirani, entered the House following the untimely death of Hon. E. Evans, the former Minister for Mines and Main Roads. The new member has had quite a close association with many activities in the Mackay district, particularly the sugar industry, and I am certain that he will bring to the House an informed mind on that particularly important subject. His speech covered many subjects important to his electors, and I hope that as a member of this House he will participate in a constructive way in proposals likely to assist in the wise and ordered development of the State.

The seconder of the motion, the hon. member for Ithaca, will not be here next year. He has indicated his intention to retire from Parliament. I wish the hon. member a long and happy retirement, and I hope that his association with this House will enable him to form some appreciation of the responsibilities and duties of officers

of Parliament. I feel that according to his political light he has striven to carry out his responsibilities.

Mr. Aikens: Do you think he would make an excellent Governor?

Mr. DUGGAN: The question of determining who is to be the next Governor is something that does not necessitate my expressing an opinion at this stage. I might do so later this morning. It is obviously a matter for the Government to submit a nomination.

Reference is made in the Administrator's Opening Speech to the impending departure from Queensland of the Administrator of the Commonwealth, Sir Henry Abel Smith. I record, both personally and on behalf of the Australian Labour Party, our appreciation and acknowledgment of the debt Queensland owes to Sir Henry for the manner in which he has discharged his duties as Governor of this State for many years, and also to Lady May Abel Smith. It can be truly said that no other State Governor has travelled so extensively or has made himself so familiar with the problems of the State as has Sir Henry. One of the greatest tributes that can be paid to him is the fact that, more than any other public figure I know of, he is genuinely interested in the State and the problems of its people. When he undertakes an assignment, he invariably clothes himself with all the necessary information about the project, the district, and the people. He seems always to be genuinely interested in the matter in hand. In this I think he has set a splendid example when carrying out the responsible duties attaching to his important office under the Crown. I wish him a very happy retirement, and I hope that it will be possible for him to make periodic visits to Queensland to renew friendships made here.

I noticed in this morning's newspaper that the Premier has indicated, following a Cabinet decision, that he will attend a sugar conference in Geneva very shortly. I should like to say that I have absolutely no objection at all to this proposal; indeed, I commend the decision to send our chief Parliamentary figure overseas, particularly as the Premier, since assuming his office, has not accepted the opportunity to travel overseas. I therefore feel that it is timely and appropriate for him to have the opportunity to go abroad, particularly to deliberate at a conference that will have very great consequences for Queensland.

Among other matters that the Premier proposes to go into when overseas is that of submitting a nomination to fill the vacancy that will be caused by the retirement of Sir Henry Abel Smith as Governor. I do not consider that filling this office should mean a tremendous amount of canvassing. I hope that the precedent now established in the Federal sphere of appointing an Australian-born person to such a post will be followed here. I feel that it would perhaps be

appropriate for the Premier to indicate here and now that the Government has given some consideration to the matter and will endeavour to select a distinguished Australian for this role. I feel that the only possible justification for appointing men from outside Australia to these important positions would be the existence of reciprocal arrangements between members of the British Commonwealth for the appointment of distinguished representatives of other countries to act on an interchange basis. That is not, of course, the policy of the Australian Labour Party, which is that Australians should be selected for these appointments. That is a policy that I advocate because I feel that there are many Australians possessing the necessary ability, general disposition and personality to fill this office extremely well.

Sir Henry Abel Smith set a very high standard of efficiency. He is a dedicated Englishman who, as an Englishman serving his Queen, felt that he had great responsibilities and was mindful of them and anxious to succeed in carrying them out. In doing so, he has worked much harder than most people work. I do feel, however, that the practice of appointing someone from England is becoming a little outmoded. As a matter of fact, I do not think it inappropriate to suggest that perhaps consideration could be given to the cost of establishing the Queen's representation in Australia. In round figures, I think it now costs between £1,500,000 and £2,000,000 a year to maintain the Governor-General and the various State Governors. It is perhaps timely to look into this matter and see whether the granting of assent to bills can be streamlined and made simpler and less costly.

I suppose it might be said that the overall figure of £1,500,000 to £2,000,000 is insignificant when one considers the national income of Australia. I concede that that point can be well taken, but I think the time has come to examine these things a little more realistically than they have been examined up to the present time.

I think we have some anachronisms in this country. The retention of the right of appeal to the Privy Council is one that comes to mind readily, and I think that the sooner appropriate steps are taken to make the final right of appeal to the High Court of Australia in matters affecting the interpretation of our statutes, the better. It is gratifying to me to see that some learned lawyers from England subscribe to that view. In my opinion the present arrangement is costly and unnecessary, and as soon as possible we should assert very definitely our sovereign status in this regard.

Before proceeding to deal with some matters generally, as is customary in this debate and for which some latitude is allowed by the Standing Orders, I should like to deal briefly with two matters in particular.

The first of these includes the reply to a question that I asked of the Minister for Labour and Industry this morning relative to a brochure that was distributed on the overseas liner "Canberra" on its arrival in this country on 3 May, 1965. I do not wish to be in any way presumptuous in this matter, but the question that I asked was not offensive, and if the circular to which I referred was issued—I have a letter stating in writing that the person received on the vessel in question not only this pamphlet but some others to which I shall refer later when I elaborate on the point—I think it will be agreed that I might have expected my question to be answered courteously. It would have been appropriate for the Minister to have said that the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau had no knowledge of this particular publication's being distributed with the authority of his department and that it was taking appropriate steps to see that suitable pamphlets were distributed. If he had said that and then said that, for my information, he would table the type of pamphlet that was available, I should have been quite happy with his reply and would have thought that it was in accordance with what I conceive to be the responsibility of Ministers of the Crown in dealing with matters of some public importance.

When one addresses questions to some Ministers—The Minister for Education and the Minister for Primary Industries are two who come to mind very quickly; there are others—one invariably receives courteous replies. I rather resent the type of reply that I received from the Minister for Labour and Industry, in which he rebukes me and says that he wants to tell me what the tourist potential of the Darling Downs is, and so on. I live in the city of Toowoomba, and I am well aware of its tourist attractions and of the steps that are taken by local bodies and by the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau for the promotion of items of interest in that city. Indeed, when I was a member of Cabinet I played a very prominent part not only in establishing an appropriate place in Toowoomba for the dissemination of information for that purpose, but also in endeavouring to attract industries to the city.

Last Thursday I commended certain action taken by the Government relative to the Wilbur Smith Report, and I think I am always fair enough to give credit where credit is due. On this occasion I asked the question not so that I might be informed of the position in Queensland but so that migrants coming to this country might be informed of it. The Liberal Party has no hesitation in paying, out of its well-filled coffers, sums of money to enable people to be appointed to approach migrants when they reach Australia and to influence them to join the Liberal Party and, very often, to paint a damaging picture of the Australian

Labour Party in this country. It does that, and it does it very readily. But Queensland is one of the few States of the Commonwealth which has shown a loss of population—we have received fewer migrants on a per-capita basis than any other Australian State—and one would think that the Minister in charge of tourism and the Government generally might welcome any suggestion by which migrants, on reaching Perth and being bombarded with propaganda relating to the various States, might be induced to come to Brisbane instead of staying in Melbourne or Sydney. There are some obvious temptations for a migrant to disembark before he reaches Brisbane, and I should have thought that the Government, in view of its proclamations and attempts to bolster Queensland and its talk about Queensland and the amount of money allegedly being spent on tourism, would join the Opposition in making a united appeal to migrants to come to this State.

I could have tabled other pamphlets issued at the same time, on the same vessel, to the same person. I have them here. Here is one of Surfers Paradise which shows the corner of the Surfers Paradise Hotel and the rest of it is merely palm trees and other types of trees. Everybody who knows Surfers Paradise knows that for the last ten years there have been brick buildings running from the Surfers Paradise Hotel to the beach-front. Everybody who knows the place knows the "Seabreeze" apartments, three or four storeys high, yet on this pamphlet one sees only a few trees.

Another pamphlet relates to Maryborough, the population of which, according to it, was 17,000 in 1950. We are now living 1965.

Mr. Hughes: Do you suggest that those are still being distributed by the official Tourist Bureau?

Mr. DUGGAN: I would not have raised the matter further if the Minister had given me a courteous answer. I merely want to know just what the position is. If the Minister had said that these circulars were issued without the authority of his department, that he was not in favour of that sort of thing and that steps were being taken in the matter, I would have commended him for adopting a responsible and appropriate attitude. However, I contrast his attitude with my own. When I raised this matter, "Sunday Truth" came to see me and asked me if I would elaborate on the queries. I said that, as a matter of courtesy to the Minister and in view of the fact that I had addressed a question to him, I would refrain from any comment until the Minister gave an answer. I could have had some sort of publicity in this matter but I elected not to because I believe it is my responsibility to treat the Minister in a courteous fashion, and, in return, to be treated courteously.

I want to protest very strongly about this sort of thing. I suggest, as a constructive contribution on this matter, that all tourist pamphlets should bear the date of publication so that people will know that at that point of time it was a fair representation of the position then existing in various parts of the State.

I also have here a similar brochure dealing with the North Coast. The Premier saw this one. It is not quite so outdated as the others but it goes back to the time when the population of Nambour was 5,000. I think the hon. member for that district would well know that it is now substantially in excess of that. If all these booklets bore the date of publication people could arrive at their own conclusions as to the worth of their contents. That is the point I made about the Toowoomba pamphlet, which depicted horse-drawn farming equipment. It is very difficult to find a horse on the Darling Downs at the present time, except perhaps for use at the Show. There may be an odd one on various farms. The pamphlet makes reference to the Club Hotel, which has been out of existence for, I suppose, 15 years. The photograph of Surfers Paradise shows just how outdated these brochures are.

And so I make an appeal on the basis that these matters are raised for the purpose of being of some help to the State, and there is a duty on a Minister of the Crown to co-operate instead of trying to be smart.

In a similar category, I wish to refer to a reply I received from the Treasurer last Thursday. The Treasurer is usually fair in these matters but his answer to me on that occasion was not quite worthy of him. I referred to what I thought to be an undesirable practice developing amongst certain local authorities in that people who are not authorities on a matter, possessing no specialised knowledge, are undertaking trips associated with the purchase of equipment. I said I deplored the practice and thought it was a waste of the local taxpayers' money for these people to travel to the South and to other places to purchase machinery and other equipment. That job should be left to experts in the particular field.

I said also that I thought there was some merit in trying to establish a central borrowing authority for local authority requirements. Subject to some reservation, I think I should say that in the old days there were Treasury-approved loans for local authorities. This took from local authorities the responsibility of making individual applications for loans, outside the Treasury Department. There were probably good reasons why that system should have been superseded. It perhaps enabled the local authorities to gather into the overall local government revenue greater sums than were possible previously. I do not know whether the Treasurer felt a little hurt and that he could effectively retaliate in his reply, but he likened the practice to members of Parliament visiting South-east Asia or somewhere else, knowing

full well that I was a member of the recent delegation that went over there. I point out that if there was anything wrong with that proposal, the blame attaches to the Government. It was a carefully considered governmental decision, which I think had some general merit. We did not ask for it. We were given an allocation of two members on that mission. We were not charged with the responsibility of buying equipment.

The purpose of the mission was well publicised by the Premier. He said it was primarily a goodwill mission which would enable members to familiarise themselves with problems that are becoming of increasing importance to Australia. I have tried to play my part in a small way. I have made a few public speeches and written a couple of articles, in addition to appearing on television. I think the report I gave was a fair one, giving a reasonably intelligent resumé of what I saw. What I did say—the Treasurer could not possibly have misunderstood me; I even linked his name with it—was that neither he nor I, when I was in a position of ministerial responsibility, felt it necessary to go around the State, or anywhere else for that matter, interstate particularly, for the purpose of personally examining a whole lot of detailed equipment which could be examined by specialist officers in the department. I do not mind one alderman who is a member of a committee, or even a mayor, making such investigations occasionally.

The Treasurer mentioned the number of specialists that had been sent overseas from the Forestry Department, the Railway Department and the State Electricity Commission. I have no quarrel with that. I have never had any quarrel with it. If I had, it might be that I think we should have done more of it when we were in power. I certainly have no quarrel with sending people overseas if it is to be of general advantage to the State. If we argue along those lines, why not argue that we should abandon the Loan Council agreement and let the States, as the local authorities are doing, go wherever they can to get money? The very purpose of the formation of the Loan Council was to prevent competition for available funds, and thus avoid the payment of extravagant rates for the available money.

On many occasions the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, has said that money was available from Switzerland, America and other places to finance certain developmental projects of great benefit to this city, but because of the rule applying to these matters that money has been denied to the Brisbane City Council. The Treasurer even said that he felt that there was merit in my remarks, but he went on to assert that he was not going to interfere with the right of local authorities to send people on these various missions. Had he contented himself with doing that it would have been fair enough—

Mr. Hiley: You stated your opinion, and I responded.

Mr. DUGGAN: This is not in the same category as the matter I previously complained about. The hon. gentleman was trying to be a little bit smart in his reply. I do not think the occasion demanded it. I am not labouring the matter; I merely wish to make quite clear what I said and the reasons for it.

Mr. Hiley: I will try to have more respect for your tender skin in future.

Mr. DUGGAN: I am not wanting any special treatment or consideration.

Mr. Hiley: You are asking for it.

Mr. DUGGAN: I do not care how the hon. gentleman takes it. I do not like falling back on the hon. member for Townsville South, but if the Treasurer wants dog-and-goanna rules, that is all right with me. I do not care what standard he lays down. If he wants it hot and heavy that is all right with me. From my talks with many ratepayers it would seem that my proposal has some merit in it. The Treasurer acknowledged the merit but then he tried to be a little bit smart in the matter. I like to pay the Treasurer the respect his position entitles him to. Probably I have commended him more often than I have commended any other Minister about the quality of his speeches in this Chamber. They are generally on a very high level and I only hope that he may continue to win my respect by continuing in the same way, instead of departing from his normal level and trying to be a little smart. It is all very well to try to be smart, but I remind him that it can be a case of two-way traffic.

Mr. Campbell: You are a little sensitive today.

Mr. DUGGAN: No, I am not. I try to be fair in these matters. I know that on occasions, in the heat of debate, one says things that one would not say in calmer moments but I think that usually I try to be constructive and fair. In fact, I am criticised for being too fair to the Government. That may or may not be right, and I do not think it is material to the present debate. I do not think I am unduly sensitive. I have been in politics for a long while and anyone who takes an active part in all sorts of situations knows that he is open to involvement in many controversial questions, emotional outbursts, and personal attitudes. I have become a little seasoned to expecting to become involved in various ways from time to time, and I think I am somewhat philosophical. Of course, one matter that gives me a measure of amusement is the quality of speeches made in motions of condolence—and I suppose this sometimes applies even to Labour's attitude—when the person concerned had very little political virtue. We find that he had advantages and merits which were not revealed during his lifetime.

I think the Address-in-Reply debate is a proper occasion for considering the general question of safe-guarding industries

in this State. A question was asked by the hon. member for South Brisbane about Queensland's excess of imports over exports. If the period chosen by him was last year it would form a reasonable basis for comparison, because the State was not then gripped so intensely as in more recent times by the ravages of drought. No doubt our export income will be affected by the drought. I think we all view with concern the fact that the so-called great development in Queensland is not so extensive as is claimed periodically by the Government. I have a very vivid recollection of speeches that were made when all the troubles occurred in 1957. Some impetus was given to the then Opposition's bid to become the Government by the claim that once there was a transfer of the Opposition to the Government benches a great effect would be felt in Queensland; industry would come here; capital would come here in increasing quantities; there would be a feeling of confidence, and all things would flow from the transformation. The Government has done certain things to its credit but I do feel that, generally, a rosy picture has been painted that this is the State of the future.

In his position the Premier is obliged to make many public appearances. I must sympathise with him in his role. He tries to do the job very well and I know that he does not spare himself in travelling throughout the State. However, I often feel a little sorry for him in that on each occasion he has to try to say something a little different about the potential of the State and, in the course of time, he must run out of appropriate phrases. He has had to rely on his Public Relations men to help him, to give him some new phrases about the giant that is awakening, the State that is stepping off into the future, and other high-sounding expressions. However, the Minister for Industrial Development probably let the cat out of the bag a little in Toowoomba recently when he shifted ground somewhat about the tremendous industrial development that is supposed to be occurring.

The report of Mr. Dewar's address to the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce at the Canberra Motel, contained in "The Toowoomba Chronicle" of 13 August, 1965, is headed, "State's forte primary industries and foodstuffs: Dewar," and contains the following:—

"With the anticipated doubling of the world's population in about 37 years, Queensland, with its natural capacity to produce foodstuffs, would find its greatest future wealth in feeding the masses of the world's population."

And later—

"Because Queensland was destined to become a wealthy primary producing State, the two most important factors were electricity and irrigation."

He said that in trying to encourage industrial development in this State he was invariably asked, "What is the population?" When he replied, he always got the same answer: there were not enough people to absorb the type of product these people manufactured.

The report also contains the following:—

"Closer home he got virtually the same answer from southern industrialists when trying to interest them in coming to Queensland.

"One of the greatest problems was that industry generally had to have concentration of population to absorb its products; and to have a concentration of population, jobs had to be found for them. When someone came up with the answer to that problem they should patent it, Mr. Dewar said."

For the first time there is this slight movement away from the idea that we are to become a State with tremendous industrial development, because in this particular article the Minister says that the avenue in which the development of Queensland was most likely to make any progress is in the factories to be built for the processing of the food resources of this State.

I think that is probably a little more factual than many other Government statements in this regard, because we have at Wacol the unhappy result of the Government's first major venture in the direction of industrial development. I am not certain whether Rocla Pipes Pty. Ltd. is encompassed by the boundaries of the Wacol industrial estate but, as far as I can ascertain, it is the only company there, despite what we were told some five years ago by Mr. Morris, then Deputy Premier. I do not think there is more than one factory in the area of this ill-fated undertaking, which is now in receivership. It has been a tremendous flop.

It was reported the other day that Bruce Pie, a firm which has been in operation for many years, is closing its doors and that 200 operatives will be thrown out of work. Felt and Textiles, one of the largest industrial concerns in the Commonwealth, is unable to place these people in Queensland, so they will be thrown onto the labour market. I do not say that with any great glee. I consider—and I have long held this view—that many of the larger industrial establishments will come here if there is population growth.

We have heard many claims by the Government about the establishment of two oil refineries in Brisbane. It was ironic to hear how Cabinet was unsympathetic when Ampol Petroleum (Qld.) Pty. Ltd. first submitted its application. It is recorded in "Hansard"—if not, it will be vivid in the memory of most hon. members—how, when it was pointed out that an Australian-owned company should have priority in this matter, it was claimed the company could not get the

requisite capital for that undertaking. Yet it came "on stream" earlier than the big international cartel, Amoco, a subsidiary of Standard Oil of Indiana, I think it is, with its tremendous financial ramifications throughout the world.

It is also worthy of note that, although Government spokesmen talk frequently about our great potential now that we have found oil, neither oil refinery is designed to handle Moonie oil.

Mr. Knox: You know that both of those oil refineries were planned before oil was discovered here.

Mr. DUGGAN: If that is so, I am surprised at the hon. member's making such a song and dance about the basis of our commercial development. If the Government was confident that oil would be found in this State and was prepared to spend large sums of money and give valuable concessions for oil exploration and development, would it have been unreasonable to specify that preferential treatment would be given to a company prepared to accept the responsibility of refining in this State oil discovered in Queensland? My main concern, however, is that the Government "rubbished" the application of the company whose refinery came "on stream" first, and then was prepared to bask in the attendant publicity when the refinery's wheels started to turn.

This brings me to the second point that I want to make. I understand that the Government intends to introduce legislation dealing with natural gas. So far as the Opposition is concerned, this information remains confidential till the legislation is brought down, so I do not know what the Government plans to do. I do know, however, that following the discovery of oil adjacent to the Victorian coast, where it is also said that gas in commercial quantities has been found, rapid steps have been taken to develop the opportunities thus presented for the use of natural gas in that State. The intentions of the Government in Queensland should also be made known quickly. Natural gas deposits in the Northern Territory, too, are said to be perhaps greater than any yet discovered elsewhere in the Commonwealth. Perhaps ultimately lines could be established to these deposits. If this cannot be done, the requirements of Brisbane could be met from reserves at Roma and other areas in Queensland, and the use of the gas could gradually be extended south.

Mr. Campbell: Do you think the State should construct the line?

Mr. DUGGAN: Yes, I think that would be a fair proposition, or it could be established as a common carrier, in association with other interested people. As a matter of fact, the Gas Fuel Corporation of Victoria is spending approximately £2,250,000 on construction work, including the laying of a pipeline to the Dandenong plant, and

provision has been made in the contemplated expenditure and engineering specifications for the line to be used for natural gas.

Mr. Campbell: That is not a Government concern.

Mr. DUGGAN: No, it is not. What I am concerned about is that something should be done before it is too late. It is obvious what is being done in Victoria, and it will be only a question of time before heavy industry there will be making great demands on this type of fuel. Perhaps it is a case of "first up best dressed". This is a matter that I intend to develop in some detail when the relevant legislation is introduced. Interest in oil exploration is declining, and it is obvious that the Government should be doing something about the matter. I would be interested to hear from the Premier how many wells are being drilled in Queensland at present. I think there has been a decrease. I know of five rigs operating, and of that number I think three are out of commission through lack of funds. The depressed share market might be responsible for the inability of companies to obtain fresh capital for continued oil exploration in Queensland, and I think it is a matter for regret that the Commonwealth authorities have not increased subsidies to help in this work.

Undoubtedly there has been a lessening of interest in oil exploration, and today the price of shares in companies engaged in this work is almost at a record low level. I do not know where the money will come from. If the Government takes action to define its intentions in regard to natural gas, the State as a whole will benefit. I understand from statements by the South Brisbane Gas and Light Co. Ltd., and one or two by the Government, that it is hoped that reticulation of natural gas for domestic use in Brisbane and for other purposes will be possible within a fairly short period, but I think that if this source of supply can be developed further it will be of considerable assistance in bringing overseas investment to this State.

(Time, on motion of Mr. Thackeray, extended.)

Mr. DUGGAN: I thank the hon. member for Rockhampton North and hon. members generally for their courtesy. I shall not speak for very much longer on this subject.

As I said, the question of the development and use of natural gas has been raised in this Assembly by the hon. member for Roma and other hon. members from time to time and is of very great importance. I hope that the Premier might see fit to indicate in a general way that the Government is alive to its responsibility in this respect and that early action will be taken to consolidate the position of the people of Queensland. If he does that, I think it will tend to help increase the flow of funds for oil exploration and natural gas exploration in this State.

The costs are very high. Take the discoveries of natural gas in the Northern Territory as an example. The cost of a pipeline linking Adelaide with the gas field and another pipeline from a point on that line opposite Bourke to channel off gas to Sydney and to Victoria might be £100,000,000 or more. That is a great deal of money, and the economics of the scheme have to be worked out. I understand that a supply for a minimum period of 20 years is required to justify the construction of a pipeline such as that. I am well aware that the Government did engage the services of a qualified man to advise it. If he has determined that we have not yet reached that stage, I want to say in fairness to the Government that it has taken some initial steps that are prudent and appropriate. However, in view of these unexpected developments off the coast of Victoria, the Government might have to proceed a little more quickly so that this State will not be confined merely to serving defined sections of industry and the domestic gas market.

We would not get any very great and real value from using gas only for those purposes because we are already using Queensland coal for gas making, and there would be no real saving if we were to substitute natural gas for coal. Oil imported from abroad to meet the many requirements of industry is probably responsible for between 35 and 40 per cent. of Australia's total energy requirements. Although there will not be 100 per cent. acceptance or utilisation of natural gas, it would be a very good thing if we could reduce that percentage substantially. At present I think about £117,000,000 a year is being spent on the importation of crude oil into this country, and it might be possible to effect a fairly big reduction in this expenditure. Of course, the saving will not be so great if it is at the expense of coal.

I will generalise on the next matter because several hon. members on this side of the House will be dealing with it in more detail. In my opinion, the matter that is worrying the people of Queensland most at present is the vicious circle and cycle of rising costs. There is a disposition on the part of all governing bodies from the Commonwealth Government down to increase charges and costs. Admittedly the State Government has not increased taxation, but no doubt it will be confronted soon with the problem of meeting some of its financial obligations. Of course, the Government of Queensland introduced the T.A.B. and endeavoured to obtain additional revenue in certain other directions, but the Treasurer will justify this action on the ground that it is channelling into Treasury funds money that previously found its way into illicit fields. However, as I say, the State Government has not, to any great degree, imposed new forms of taxation. Defence requirements will certainly have to be met but I think it is appropriate to say at this stage that the estimated Federal Budget surplus almost approximates

the proposed increase in personal income tax. Just why Mr. Holt felt it desirable to impose a 2½ per cent. additional tax on personal incomes to provide a sum of money approximately equal to the anticipated Commonwealth Budget surplus is not known to me, unless it is that he wants to drain off public spending. That, as I say, is already being done by other charges he imposed in the Budget and, in addition, prior to the introduction of the Budget there had been a steady increase in the cost of the whole range of goods and services which the public have to use. Doctors' and dentists' fees are going up, and so are the costs of many other professional services. In fact, every phase of activity is affected in the same way and we have the spectacle of this Government, for the first time in a long period, deliberately intervening in an application for an increase in the basic wage and opposing the increase of 6s. a week which is being sought by the industrial unions. Previously the Government merely elected to act in the role of producing evidence of the impact of any decision on the state of the economy and certain other information relevant to the matter.

The public is getting a very raw deal in these things. We are told that under the free-enterprise system which operates here the public is protected against increases. The hon. member for Salisbury has on the business paper a motion which will enable him, if the opportunity is provided for us to discuss it, to go into this point in considerable detail. It is sufficient for me to say at the present time that between 1956-57 and the last quarter of 1964-65 the average cost of living in Queensland increased more than that in any other Australian State. That disproves the theory that private enterprise, under the sympathetic eye of a Country Party-Liberal coalition, will see that prices are kept in check.

Whether it likes it or not, the Government will have to face up to the position because it is reflected in higher Government expenditure. Ultimately, the Industrial Commission must recognise that these added costs are being borne by the consumer and that some wage applications should succeed and some basic wage adjustments, although belated, should be made. I do not know what the current figure is, but it used to be estimated that an increase of 1s. in the basic wage represented, annually, £50,000 added cost to the Crown.

All these additional costs, including those from court judgments, have to be met by some reimbursement. The Queensland Treasurer and the Treasurers of the other States have been receiving, by way of taxation reimbursement, many millions of pounds more than was the case before 1956-57. As I say, the position is deteriorating in this regard. The Queensland wage-earner is being smacked in both directions because the average weekly earnings per

employed male, according to the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, Canberra—Monthly Review of Business Statistics, July, 1965, page 30, for the year ended June 1957 approximated £19.21. That figure increased in 1964 to £25.43, a rise of £6.22. In 1957, Queensland earnings were on an average, £1.79 less than those of other States. In Queensland we are now £2.09 behind, and the average earnings of employees in Queensland are down about 8s. as compared with the previous period, despite the fact that during this intervening period our increase in the cost of living has been about 4.7 per cent. above the Australian average. I do not think those figures reflect any comfort for the consumers. It is time the public of this State were protected from these increases which, unlike wages, which are determined by the Industrial Commission, are arbitrarily agreed to by the suppliers and are generally implemented without delay.

Hon. members who follow me will develop in some detail what I think to be one of the most pressing problems confronting people in Queensland at the present time, and with which the Government is showing a strange reluctance to grapple.

For the record I wish to comment on the recent statement by the hon. member for Townsville South concerning the salary of the Leader of the Opposition. I am not raising this matter for the purpose of dealing with parliamentary salaries. As yet the party has not dealt with that matter, but will accept its responsibility in due course. For the record I merely wish to correct a statement made by the hon. member for Townsville South which was given considerable publicity in last Sunday's "Sunday Truth". The Press report stated—

"Mr. Aikens said one of the gravest anomalies—and he had figures to prove this—in the present parliamentary salaries situation was that the Opposition Leader, Mr. Duggan, received more money than some Cabinet Ministers."

A comparison was then made between the salaries of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the Chairman of Committees. If the hon. member has the information I hope he will produce it to the appropriate tribunal. I do not mention this in a desire to deal with the salary of the Leader of the Opposition. I do not care what it is. As long as my colleagues have confidence in me and appoint me as their leader, I think I am entitled to whatever emolument attaches to that office. If I am not satisfied with it I have the free choice of not standing for office. If I think that generally parliamentary salaries are not acceptable I have the alternative of resigning.

I am not urging for any figure at all. I am not trying to establish a case for any revision, either upwards or downwards, nor am I making any claim as to what it ought to be by comparing the responsibilities and

duties of the Leader of the Opposition with those of Cabinet Ministers. I make no reference at all to that matter. But for the record I point out that the salary of every Minister is in excess of that of the Leader of the Opposition by a minimum of £350 a year. No Minister has a salary under £4,000 a year, whereas the salary of the Leader of the Opposition is £3,650 a year. I do not want my remarks to be construed to mean that I think the Leader of the Opposition is getting either too much or too little. I am merely wanting to scotch these untrue statements that received publicity. I should have thought that a responsible newspaper might have been able to state accurately what the rates are. I am not trying to determine the proper remuneration of the Leader of the Opposition. Unaided by me, that determination will be made by the tribunal. Its recommendations, whatever they might be, will be considered by the Government. After accepting them, altering them, or rejecting them, the Government's intentions will be made known through legislation. At that point of time the Opposition will accept its responsibility in making its decision known in whatever direction is required. This is purely an observation for the record to have these facts set right.

There are one or two other matters I should like to mention. I started to refer to sugar but my attention was diverted. I will now confine my remarks particularly to the problems the Premier will encounter overseas in the sugar negotiations. In 1963 the average price of 94 n.t. sugar was £64 2s. 2d. a ton, whereas last year it dropped, on the average to £47 15s. 4d. Undoubtedly the industry faces a very difficult time, and, because of developments following the expansion in the industry, I think it might be pertinent to examine the matter at some other time. It is obvious that the sugar industry is in a sickening state because of the price paid for the product. Larger areas are being planted and the price of sugar is at an almost record low. In the last few months sugar has become freely available from countries which previously did not have an exportable surplus. It appears that the American authorities are tending to sharpen that country's legislation to prevent the entry of Australian sugar to that profitable market. Under the quota system we were allowed about 190,000 tons a year, although our average was 220,000 tons, and an application is being made for an extra quota.

While the catastrophic drop in the world price of sugar reduces very substantially the overall income of the established cane-farmers, perhaps it can be controlled by them. However, I have tremendous sympathy for new growers who have come into the industry and are heavily committed for plant and equipment, and other necessary forms of expenditure for developing their properties. I know that many of them are in great difficulty and, because of the tight liquidity

position, banks in some instances are forcing the sale of properties or cutting down on the availability of funds.

The Premier is going overseas at a time when the economics of the sugar industry are not as strong and as sound as they were previously. It is only about 18 months since we received a world record price for sugar, yet a few weeks ago we had a record low price. Those fluctuations are of tremendous importance to Queensland and the sugar industry, which last year earned £88,000,000. Thus a very great responsibility devolves on the Premier and others constituting the delegation to see if they can iron out some arrangement of benefit to the sugar industry and the State as a whole. I wish him well in his mission.

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

Mr. WHARTON (Burnett) (2.15 p.m.): I rise to join in the debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the speech given by His Excellency Sir Alan Mansfield in opening Parliament a week ago. I pay tribute to him for the excellent manner in which he carried out his duties at that ceremony and for the clear, concise and dignified manner in which he declared this session of Parliament open. I know that all members of Parliament and visitors appreciated the opening ceremony.

I pay tribute to His Excellency for the able work he has carried out during the year as Administrator of Queensland representing Her Majesty. He has followed a man who would be very difficult to follow, because Sir Henry Abel Smith did a wonderful job for Queensland. He represented Her Majesty most fittingly and travelled a good deal throughout the State. Very few Governors in this era would know more than he of matters affecting Queensland.

I express to Her Majesty the loyalty of the electors of Burnett and those who represent her in this State.

His Excellency referred to the development that has taken place in Queensland under this Government, and to the plans for the future. I am sure that the most humble of us recognise the work that this Government has done.

I was interested in what the Leader of the Opposition said on this particular matter, and I appreciated the Premier's remarks on the development of the State. I listened carefully to what the Leader of the Opposition said about its being not so good. But I do not think we need to be guided by either of those hon. gentlemen. It is only necessary to open one's eyes and use a little common sense to realise the development that has taken place. If one travels around Brisbane one can see the activity that is going on in the field of industrial development and general progress. Whichever way one looks one can see development. One can also see the development that is taking place in other areas of the State.

Mr. Davies: More development took place under the Labour Government, but you did not move around in those days.

Mr. WHARTON: The fellow who moves around lives in Maryborough. He is as blind as a bat. I should like to lend him my glasses.

My point is that we do not have to listen to either the Premier or the Leader of the Opposition to discover what is going on. The people know what is going on in the State and appreciate it sincerely.

I congratulate the hon. member for Mirani on his election to this House. I congratulate him also for the manner in which he moved this motion. My only regret is that he replaced the late Ernie Evans, who was a close friend of mine. I know that all hon. members join with me in saying that he was quite a figure in this House, in the State, and in the Commonwealth. I appreciate his work as a member of Parliament and as a friend of mine.

When I say that I was pleased with the speech of the hon. member for Mirani, I do so meaningfully because I concur in many of the sentiments he expressed. I was particularly pleased when he raised the subject of increased representation for certain areas on the Queensland Cane Growers' Council. I have mentioned this matter before, and it seems ironical that it should be raised again by a new member. I raise it now because the fault has not been rectified. I believe that I am quite justified in referring again and again to problems in my electorate that have not been attended to.

Firstly, Ayr, Mackay, and Bundaberg encompass 16 mill areas which have four members on the Queensland Cane Growers' Council of 13 members. The nine other executive districts have 15 mills and nine members of the 13 on the Queensland Cane Growers' Council. At annual conferences the three districts that I represent have 16 votes of 31 that can be exercised, but on the Queensland Cane Growers' Council their voting power is reduced to four out of 13 votes. The three districts have approximately half the assigned sugar land, half of the growers and mill peak, and consequently meet some half of the cost of Queensland Cane Growers' Council administration.

These facts alone appear to me to be sufficient reason for introducing reform in the matter of Queensland Cane Growers' Council membership. The fact remains that three executive districts comprising 16 mill areas must be at a disadvantage with only four members out of 13 on the Queensland Cane Growers' Council, and the charge put forward in evidence that the addition of three members would give the three districts control of the Queensland Cane Growers' Council is wide of the mark when it is clear that what is sought is seven council members for 16 mill areas, leaving nine council members for the other 15 mills. The representation would be equalised with a 16-member council.

I do not want to go through all the pros and cons of this matter. A committee of inquiry was appointed to guide the Government, and, on behalf of the cane-growers of Bundaberg and the surrounding district, I ask for the implementation of the findings of that committee. The status quo is not good enough.

Mr. Davies: Tell the House the Minister's attitude towards this.

Mr. WHARTON: It has not been done, and I have much pleasure now in putting it on the Minister's plate. For obvious reasons I believe that there is a good case for some adjustment, and that I am well justified in bringing the matter forward.

Another thing that pleased me in the speech of the hon. member for Mirani was his reference to the need for the Snowy Mountains Authority to undertake developmental work in North Queensland. I agree fully with his remarks.

Mr. Davies: What do you think about Dr. Patterson's joining the Labour Party?

Mr. WHARTON: I think it is quite irrelevant to refer to Dr. Patterson. All I want to say is that my electorate is in an area in which development should come, and representatives of the Snowy Mountains Authority have in fact been in the field in the Burnett electorate. I deeply appreciate the efforts of the Premier and the Minister for Conservation in arranging for that visit with a view to developing the water resources of the area.

Mr. Davies: There should be more of it.

Mr. WHARTON: And there will be more of it, I might say. A committee has been set up in the Bundaberg district and its members have done a great amount of work. They gave considerable assistance to the representatives of the Snowy Mountains Authority, and their work has been greatly appreciated. The results of the survey are awaited before any specific plan can be adopted. The sugar industry has one large problem, namely, lack of water. However, it is not only the current drought that has created the problem. It is caused also by lack of dams to store the water and widespread irrigation schemes to carry it to a large area in the years in which good rains have fallen.

The Lower Burnett area produces not only sugar but also cotton, grain, milk and dairy products, fruit and vegetables, and cattle. While the problem remains, the economy of Queensland, and indeed the economy of the nation, must suffer. The level of sugar exports could fall; the income of cane-growers and sugar-millers will be slashed savagely. All of this lessens their buying power and reduces the revenue of State and Federal Governments and the turnover of Australian industry and commerce.

I am sure all hon. members know that the Wurruma dam is being built on the upper reaches of the Burnett River, and it is proposed to build another dam in the area at Gayndah. There is no question that when these schemes are completed the Upper Burnett will be well served for water conservation. However, in the words of the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply, that water will not get past Walla-ville, and on that basis it seems that the Lower Burnett is in dire need of huge capital works to meet the requirements of that particular area. A committee has been formed in the area; it comprises people using irrigation, representatives of the sugar industry, and representatives of local authorities.

The Lower Burnett sugar-producing area, near Bundaberg, is suffering from its second successive year of drought—on top of 63 years of recorded, unpredictable rainfall, much of which has been inadequate. Although there has been drought for two years in succession, the variations of climate generally warrant some type of water storage that will give stability to cane-growing in the area.

The effect of the current drought is little short of catastrophic. For example, in 1962, when sugar peaks for the six mills in the district were 189,000 tons, actual production was 285,000 tons, showing how in a normal season additional sugar could be produced. Between then and 1964, after expansion the peak grew to 271,000 tons, but actual production of sugar was 213,000 tons—the first effect of the drought. This year, after more expansion, the peak was lifted to 335,000 tons. The best estimates of actual production provide for a dismal 190,000 tons.

Too much emphasis cannot be placed on the 1965 position in which, because of drought conditions, full advantage could not be taken of the increase in peaks and land assigned for cane-growing. In fact, estimates indicate a production of only 56.6 per cent. of the peak allocation.

Mr. Davies: Who said that?

Mr. WHARTON: It would be a waste of time to tell the hon. member.

Many cane-growers have contributed to the multi-million pound capital outlay on clearing and preparing new land assigned for cane-growing under the expansion plans adopted by the Queensland Government from the recommendations of the Sugar Industry Committee of Inquiry which, in 1963, examined and reported on the future prospects of the sugar industry.

An amount of £15 million has been committed to expanding the sugar industry in the six district sugar mill areas since 1962. This development must continue, notwithstanding the fact that earnings will be well down.

Throughout the Lower Burnett area, which last year produced only £9.1 million worth of sugar, compared with a possible £18 million in good seasons, cane-growers, milling companies and local authorities are unanimous that only a large-scale irrigation scheme based on new dams can solve the long-term problems of the area.

Drought relief, while greatly appreciated, offers only temporary relief and attacks the symptom and not the cause. It is probably too late for the industry to gain any relief for the 1965 season if the drought broke almost immediately.

From the surveys made in the six sugar growing districts of the Lower Burnett area, it is estimated that 1,410,000 tons of cane—only slightly more than half of the 2,250,000 tons which is the district's current cane peak—will be crushed this year. Under good seasonal conditions production would exceed this. Only 190,000 tons of sugar—little more than half of the 335,000 tons of sugar which has been allotted as mill peaks to the six mills in the area—are expected to be produced. In 1963, the area crushed 1,883,000 tons of cane and produced 265,000 tons of sugar. Gross sugar revenue from the Lower Burnett area, estimated this year at £9,070,000, yielded £10,214,000 in 1964 and £17,024,000 in 1963.

With the capital irrigation and storage works envisaged and the water from them, Bingera, Fairymead, Isis and Millaquin could each produce 100,000 tons of sugar and Gin Gin and Qunaba could produce a combined tonnage of 100,000 tons. This would total 500,000 tons of sugar from the area compared with the total mill peaks I mentioned earlier of 335,000 tons.

We have in addition, of course, other types of industry, such as dairying, butter production, vegetables, citrus, beef and grain, all of which have suffered greatly because of a lack of water. The Bundaberg District Committee has prepared a brochure which I will table in the House. It is very comprehensive.

I should like now to refer to the capital invested in the sugar industry in the area. The capital invested in the sugar industry in the whole area is between £60,000,000 and £70,000,000. Currently there are 1,530 growers and their working sons and families in the area and about 3,200 employees on the farms and in the mills, all of whom form part of the 42,510 people in the whole of the Lower Burnett area.

While these people will be hardest hit by the effects of the drought, the whole economy of Queensland, already suffering a down-turn because of drought elsewhere in the State, and because of the Mt. Isa dispute, could be a major sufferer.

Mr. Davies: Are you satisfied with what the Government has done in the way of drought assistance?

Mr. WHARTON: I shall come to that later. I have no complaint with what the Government has done.

The wages bill alone for 1965 is estimated to be £1.6 million below what it could have been if peak production had been achieved in a normal growing season. The effects of the long drought will therefore continue to be felt in future years as well as this year.

I hope the hon. member for Maryborough will remember that we are concerned also with employees in our area. It would be good for him to apply some of this thinking in his own electorate.

The committee that has been set up believes in self-help. It is trying to do something for itself. It was set up and raised money from its own people—£10,000—to help finance the cost of the survey. It has sought help from the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority, as I said before, and is prepared to contribute more. The local authorities, too, threw in some money to continue with the survey and I am concerned to help these people in what they have done and to ensure that it is not thrown down the drain.

I should like now to say a word or two about the Gin Gin sugar mill. In the Gin Gin mill area alone last year 39 growers with either fully irrigated or partially irrigated farms produced 39 per cent. of the total crop of cane harvested in the district. The remaining 61 per cent. of the crop was produced by 170 growers, none of whose farms were irrigated. This year in Gin Gin there are 234 growers of whom 71 have irrigated farms. However, some of these farmers, who are depending on the river for irrigation, are either working under restricted pumping periods or are unable to draw any water because of the dangerously low level to which the Burnett River has receded. In the Gin Gin area, the mighty Burnett has dwindled to almost the dimensions of a small creek whose body of water is scarcely moving.

In this district last year, 492 acres of cane were destroyed because it did not reach cutting standard. Of 3,200 acres stood over in the hope of a better season in 1965, about one-third would by now have been drought-ruined and destroyed—at a replacement cost of £50 an acre on top of the loss in revenue. Gin Gin mill is in dire financial straits because of two successive years of drought. This mill, with its financial problems, could succumb to destiny—something that we do not want to happen. If a sugar mill is taken from a district, what happens? We do not only lose the value of the farms to the community. We can ill afford to lose anything from the country. There is already far too much drift to the cities; we want it to go the other way.

When I express concern about the Gin Gin mill I have in mind that the same pattern could apply to the other five mills in the

Bundaberg area. I urge that something be done to try to maintain stability in the Lower Burnett area through irrigation.

I do not emphasise so much the common plan because it is written in many places. It envisages a dam in the upper reaches of the Kolan River, a major dam on the Lower Burnett, dams on the Gregory and/or Isis Rivers, the recharge of the underground basins, a dam on the Elliott River and, of course, an investigation which would cover the feasibility of utilising lower-reach weirs on the Burnett in association with the major upper storage. To depend on the rainfall in the Lower Burnett area is fatal.

Naturally, all this would be very costly. Something in the vicinity of £10,000,000 or £12,000,000 would be needed and it would be beyond our capacity to do it in one year. It is obviously about five times our annual commitment for irrigation. We cannot have one department spending huge amounts and another department spending nothing, but I express the hope that in the future more money will be available to the Department of Irrigation and Water Supply so that irrigation can be given No. 1 priority in Queensland.

Only a Commonwealth grant to Queensland, or the provision of low-cost capital from another source, backed by the Commonwealth, can provide the means to carry out this immense task which, when completed, will benefit the Lower Burnett area and its 42,510 people as well as the State of Queensland generally. It must also be a factor in assisting the overall economy of Australia.

The success of many irrigation schemes depends on the spending of huge amounts of capital on factors other than irrigation. In developing a new area the establishment of new farms, communities, homes, community facilities and additional transport and communications calls for the committal of capital far above the cost of the irrigation scheme itself. In the Lower Burnett area the only capital to be outlaid to create a new irrigation scheme is the cost of the irrigated project itself. Communities, farms, machinery, milling capacity, shipping and port facilities and proven soils already exist. If this generation does not find it economic to build large water storages, the next generation will have to do so to provide for survival.

Financial assistance from the Federal Government would help the industry considerably. We are greatly concerned about droughts. I mention the present one because it has affected us so greatly. It is a matter of great concern to me that our primary industries should have been thrust into dire straits by drought. Apart from the difficulties caused by drought, primary industries are faced with considerably increased costs; at the same time they are unable to get higher returns for their products. I refer to

something that was said at the meeting of the Council of Agriculture held recently in Brisbane—

“On a total farm income basis, recent estimates are that this fell significantly during 1964-65. The fall in gross value of production was not accompanied by any stability in farm costs. These costs have been assessed as showing a substantial rise of 7 per cent which, together with a drop in gross value, reduced farm income from £753 million to £650 million.”

There is no doubt that it is a matter of concern to primary producers to learn that their costs have increased by 7 per cent.

Mr. Davies: Why doesn't the Country Party do something about it in the Federal and State spheres? You hang onto the Liberals; they are not defending you.

Mr. WHARTON: They are hanging onto us.

We once put sugar on a very high plane. I noted the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition today. I, too, am pleased that the Premier is to attend the International Sugar Conference because I believe that the sugar industry is now facing difficulties which some other industries have passed through. Last week Mr. Pearce, of the A.S.P.A., said there had been a serious and very disquieting change for the worse in the economics of the sugar industry since last November, with the export price coming down to as low as £19 a ton. Australia cannot produce sugar at that price. The position is much worse than it was, and it is very reassuring to know that the Premier is attending the overseas conference.

Mr. Bennett: Why didn't he go before and stop this sort of thing?

Mr. WHARTON: He had no need to go.

I have been referring specifically to the sugar industry, but I now wish to refer to the dairying industry. It, too, has suffered drought conditions and there is no doubt that the price of butter is well below the cost of production. I am concerned about the recent trade agreement with New Zealand and I am glad that butter is not included in the list of commodities to be imported from that country. If it were, it would be the knockout blow for the dairying industry. The details of the agreement have not yet been released and I hope that we will not be worried in the future by finding that butter is included in the list of imports. With the present cost of production, that would be the death knell of the butter industry.

Queensland imports 400 tons of cheese a year, which is a fairly large quantity. I am speaking about Queensland, and I will stick to Queensland. The Queensland cheese industry has tried to meet the demand for fancy cheeses and it has done a particularly good job. However it is disquieting to the industry to know that some imports may effect this forward movement.

Another matter of concern to me is the importation of 3,000 tons of pigmeats a year. That is a considerable tonnage, and it is being imported at a very inopportune time as the State has been through quite a lengthy drought. The pig industry has divorced itself from the dairying industry and is now standing on its own. It has made good progress, although prices are high because of shortages.

Mr. Hanson: That is not true.

Mr. WHARTON: The hon. member would not know.

Mr. Hanson: You would not know.

Mr. WHARTON: I do know. The hon. member will not listen so that he may be informed.

The pig industry is going through an era of expansion. There is no question that, as the season improves, this industry will meet what is demanded of it and the importing of pigmeat will be only temporary. In order to meet competition we must have a healthy vigorous industry.

Mr. Davies: Does the Minister for Primary Industries agree with the importation of pigmeat?

Mr. WHARTON: I do not think the Minister has been consulted. I raise these matters for the benefit of the hon. member for Maryborough and as recommendations to the Minister for Primary Industries so that, when he attends the meetings of the Council of Agriculture, he will be well informed on some of the problems of the sugar industry, the cheese industry, and the pig industry.

Mr. Bennett: It is a bad lookout for him if he has to be informed.

Mr. WHARTON: The hon. member should not judge everybody by himself.

The pig industry is endeavouring to expand its markets. It is trying to increase the capacity of the industry so that more meat will be available and, as production is increased, the product becomes cheaper and therefore the community benefits.

Just as wages have increased, so too have farm costs. But the primary producer's return has not increased. It is disappointing that the primary producer should be called upon to produce cheap food for the masses. I do not think that that is warranted. If we are to survive as a nation, we must have a planned economy in the primary industries. We cannot have one rich and one poor; we must all be on about the same level, all reasonably well off. At the same time those who work in industry must be reasonably well paid so that they can buy our produce. Whether we are primary producers, manufacturers, or work in industry, we depend on one another. We must have some balance of returns. I hope that those who are fighting hard for an advancement in wages will be prepared to pass some of it on to

the primary producers so that they do not have to bear the brunt of increased wages without enjoying the benefit of increased returns. We all have to get along in a balanced way. I hope that will come about.

The problems facing primary industry today are an uneconomic return and the lack of long-term finance. Primary industry is a long-term industry, and in order to plan on a long-term basis there must be long-term finance available. If a quick return with high costs is favoured, high hire-purchase rates, involving high rates of interest, must be paid, but in farm planning it is the long term that counts, and we must have long-term finance available. The private banks are restricted, partly because of hire purchase and partly because of the activities of the Reserve Bank. Industry needs a pool of finance available for major capital works, such as the large dam storages which I mentioned in my area, and that applies to the rest of the State. Our farm water scheme caters for smaller water schemes. The average farmer who cannot irrigate must have finance available for fodder conservation and fodder storage.

Mr. Murray: Have you any suggestion as to how that finance could be set up?

Mr. WHARTON: I think the Commonwealth Development Bank of Australia should have that task. The development of this State is of the utmost importance. There is no question about that. The more fully developed we are, the better we will be able to defend ourselves in an emergency. I believe that such a pool of money should be available for long-term financial assistance to the community so that primary producers can plan well and do what is expected of them.

I think I have made all my points except this one: it is not much use making available a lot of finance during the time of real drought. That is done every time there is a drought. Farmers get into difficulties and naturally ask for help, and the Government does what it can to make funds available to meet the situation. That is appreciated, but money is needed when it can be used to the best advantage, and for that reason it should be available from the pool that I suggest when seasons are reasonably good. If sufficient finance was then available, it would be possible to plan fully to combat the hazards of drought. I am concerned with this matter, as each time there is a drought money is dished out but does not then go very far.

Mr. Bennett: Do you think the farmer has some obligation to do something to meet the hazards of drought?

Mr. WHARTON: If he is allowed to operate economically, yes. I am sure we all realise that primary industries form the backbone of the country, and that on their prosperity depends the prosperity of everybody. If primary industries can be made economic, and Ministers, both State and

Federal, watch their interests and make arrangements for adequate finance to be available when it can be used to the best advantage, something well worth while will be achieved.

Mr. R. JONES (Cairns) (2.52 p.m.): On the occasion of my maiden speech in this Assembly it will be my first and most pleasing duty to associate myself with the address of loyalty. I seek to express and convey, on behalf of the people in the electorate of Cairns, our continued loyalty and affection to the throne and person of Her Most Gracious Majesty, our Sovereign, Queen Elizabeth II.

As it is also customary on such an occasion to extend congratulations to the mover and seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, I desire therefore to do so, and to support the hon. members in thanking His Excellency for his Opening Speech. I should like you, Mr. Acting Speaker, to convey to Mr. Speaker my thanks for his welcome and guidance to me on taking my seat in this House. I am sure that his high and important office is afforded dignity and credit in the traditional manner by his occupancy.

I record my sincere appreciation to the electors of Cairns for the confidence and trust so placed in me. I am deeply conscious of my duty to represent not only those who voted for me as the endorsed Australian Labour Party candidate. I will do my utmost to merit the faith of the majority who voted for me by diligent representation of all the 27,000 citizens of the electoral district of Cairns. I am fully aware of the honour accorded me and humble in the duties and responsibilities now imposed upon me as the member for Cairns. Even more is this so since I have been informed that I am the first member for Cairns elected to this Assembly who was actually born and reared in Cairns.

I am indebted to my campaign director and committee, the members of A.L.P. branches, the Cairns Women's A.L.P., the Young Labour Association, members of the Australian Labour Party, the Parliamentary Labour Party, and the trade unions, all of whom, in the true spirit and tradition of the A.L.P., committed themselves to my assistance as voluntary helpers throughout the campaign and on election day.

The by-election allowed a concerted effort by Government parties that a general election would automatically have confined, and much ado was made over a reduction in majority until the identical situation was reflected in the Mirani by-election. In Cairns the majority was 1,449 votes, or approximately 56 per cent. of the overall vote—quite a comfortable majority, if I may reflect the opinion in the parallel case, for a new candidate, relatively unknown, and a majority which quite a few members of this Chamber would certainly appreciate in any election result.

Here, then, would be an opportune time to pause and pay tribute to the man—and I use this word advisedly—who was the former member for Cairns, the late "Watty" Wallace. How he would have chuckled over the hypocrisy of some of the statements in the newspapers about the election results. I learnt much from "Watty"—mainly that politics is a hard game—and I have been well versed in the school. I can but enjoy the gems of such comments and treat them in the same manner as he would have. "Watty" ably represented Cairns for eight years and five months and served in four Parliaments. Need I add further to his attributes or expound to those who knew him or to members of this Assembly with whom he served and who knew his work well? It is sufficient to say that the work he performed here, in his electorate, and in Far North Queensland generally, conduced to his early and untimely death.

I now have the honour of representing the northernmost city of this vast State, 1,043 miles from the State capital of Brisbane. Statistically, Cairns is the seventh city of the State, and in population is ahead of such cities as Bundaberg, Mackay, Maryborough, Mt. Isa, and Gympie. I venture to add that if the same method of assessment were used as is used in the case of Townsville and Toowoomba, Cairns, statistically, should include Edmonton, Gordonvale, Babinda, Stratford, Freshwater, Redlynch, and the near northern beach resorts, with a consequent significant increase in both area and population.

Our area has continued to prosper despite the isolation of distance, the apparently deliberate isolation by southern influences, and the general neglect of the potential of the Far North by both the Queen Street State Government and the Federal Government over recent years, a neglect that is intensified by their remoteness from our area.

When Governments of the day show respect for the North by material projects of development, not merely by nodding and winter visits for sunshine, then, and only then, can the economy of the State really boom, for here we have the greatest source of development potential in Australia. Neither should there be, as exists at present, the reflex thought that the challenge of developing the North is too great for this State and nation to tackle. Such defeatist thinking provides an easy excuse. Ways and means that spring to mind as incentives to overcome this disadvantage are concessions—preferential freight rates, concessions to resident taxpayers, concessions to manufacturers and development companies, incentives to northern producers, patterned projects, agricultural schemes, electricity development, and water conservation. This is positive thinking and fundamentally must intend primarily to draw residents into the zone above the 26th parallel. Lately all we have received in our area is governmental closure of industries, including railway lines, workshops, police stations, and so on.

But let me digress to illustrate the argument and so effectively convince this Assembly and the people of Queensland of the burden of freight upon residents of Far North Queensland. This is a burden of direct disadvantage and an imposition caused wholly through the location of their domicile. The rail freight on dry joinery and furniture timber from North Queensland to Brisbane is 236s. 9d. a ton. The cost of freighting unglazed joinery from North Queensland to the metropolitan area is 665s. a ton. Allowing for conversion from timber to finished joinery, a wastage content of approximately 15 per cent., allow 64s. 3d. a ton. It will be seen that a southern joinery manufacturer manufacturing joinery from North Queensland timber has a comparative marketing advantage of 364s. for every ton of joinery produced. What option has the North Queensland operator? Only to dismantle his plant and re-establish it in Brisbane.

In more mundane matters, take the daily newspapers. "The Courier-Mail" and the "Telegraph" newspapers cost 5d. and 4d. respectively, in Brisbane. In Cairns, to have the privilege of reading these papers as a supplement to our own local paper, "The Cairns Post", on the day of issue, with air freight each subscriber is required to pay 9d. a copy. "The Sunday Mail" and "Sunday Truth" sell in Cairns for 1s. 3d. It might well be said that with 1,000 miles of air freight the price must be expected to increase. Let us consider "The Australian". At its publishing point, Canberra, the cost is 6d.; in Brisbane, 1,000 miles of air freight away, the paper still retails at 6d. The next 1,000 miles to Cairns attracts another 3d. by air, "The Courier-Mail" another 4d., the "Telegraph" another 5d., and "Sunday Truth" and "The Sunday Mail" another 9d. This lack of equity is reflected a thousand times a day, on every item and commodity freighted to our area, whether by land, sea, or air.

This simple instance indicates that major problems must be solved by systematic examination of the impediments to development, which are all too apparent to Northerners. Transportation costs, viewed from our end of the telescope, are excessive and inconsistent, out of all proportion to relative costs elsewhere in Australia and overseas.

All that is demanded is equity in development and equalisation factors, the lack of which are at present inhibiting major industrial development in the far northern areas.

Local Australian capital and resources are capable of the achievement, if they now seized the initiative and realised the investment opportunities with material encouragement from Governments. At present, particularly in the mining industry, huge profits are remitted from the richness of our country to bring colossal benefit to outsiders and overseas vested interests.

In the Cairns hinterland we have the raw material. Far North Queensland, the State and Australia generally would be well served by developmental mining. But, as well as being won here, minerals should be processed here. Cairns is the central and most suitable location.

The present prosperity of the tin-mining industry is the legacy of an enlightened administration, of various mining Acts, which are so important in the history of the early prosperity of Queensland. However, the present mining policy of granting large exploration rights, followed by prospecting and development leases, to large overseas companies in such fashion as to preclude local miners from any benefits of their own prospecting is most reprehensible. While the bulk of the mineral wealth of Far Northern Queensland is tied up in the greedy hands of the large mining concerns by the present unsatisfactory legislation, there is little hope of the return to mining greatness enjoyed by Far Northern Queensland in the early part of this century.

It should be superfluous to add that the greatness was accompanied by a remarkable prosperity and increase of population in the area, with reflected benefits to the whole of the State generally.

In the June issue of the Queensland Government Mining Journal "Review for the Year 1964", a report by the Under Secretary for Mines (Mr. E. K. Healy), page 269, under the sub-heading "Tin" states—

"There was an increase in tin production from 1,622 tons valued at £1,145,647 in 1963, to 2,079½ tons valued at £2,111,248 in 1964. The major producers were Tableland Tin Dredging N.L. and Ravenshoe Tin Dredging N.L."

Commonwealth Year Book No. 50—1964, at pages 1160 and 1161, gives production figures for Queensland as 1,077 tons in 1962 (the last figures available) and, for Australia, 2,715 tons. Subsequent figures indicate that the Australian production for 1963 was 2,852 tons.

It was also indicated that most of the tin concentrates produced came from the Herberton field, being principally alluvial tin concentrate. Of this production in Queensland, all except about 80 tons from the Stanthorpe area is treated by two tin smelters located in Sydney. The production of refined tin in Australia from locally produced sources was 2,636 tons for 1963.

Consumption of refined tin has increased substantially in recent years following the introduction of tin-plate production in Australia. A large part of the tin mined in Australia comes from the Cairns hinterland. Why not the promotion and introduction of tin-plate production in the port of Cairns? The major production of tin concentrates in Queensland stems from the mineral fields of Herberton, Chillagoe, Cooktown, Mareeba

and Kangaroo Hills in Far Northern Queensland, and is dispersed for treatment through Cairns.

During the A.L.P. by-election campaign in Cairns, I personally advocated, as the candidate—"Canneries for Cairns". This was not done without due thought, advice and research. The two propositions mutually support our claim. The statistics indicate that the output is from the Cairns hinterland, and Cairns is the logical processing point, as a road, rail, sea and air terminal, with an abundance of water and electricity available.

Townsville has its copper refinery. The expansion of the tin processing, tin plate production and tin consumption in Australia justifies the proposition of a processing plant in the city of Cairns, economically as well as politically and nationally.

The tin fields of the North, both alluvial and lode, provide vast natural resources which cry for Australian exploitation and illustrate part of the latent local resources. All considerations indicate that Cairns can make cans—and cans can make Cairns. Needless to say, as the representative for Cairns I will continue to advocate and press our claims until such an establishment becomes a reality. I am sure a future Labour Government would favour exploiting this scheme. Such a project would immediately encourage the development of our mineral fields. Canneries for the processing of all the commodities natural to our precincts would spring up and complement the tin-plate industry, and exploit further our latent natural resources.

Initially, for example, the now futuristic development of the Flaggy Creek scheme would immediately become necessary; provision of additional power and water could be warranted for expansion and industrial purposes.

The harvest of the Great Barrier Reef waters and the Coral Sea, particularly the yellow-fin tuna, could make the establishment of a fish cannery at Cairns a worth-while and attractive proposition.

The dairying industry could benefit by having processed locally, in Cairns, skim milk and other dairy processed products for export to the near-northern market—a market from 1,000 to 3,000 miles closer to Cairns than any capital city of Australia.

In fact, in tropical areas, catering to those near-northern markets—which should be a natural market—would be essential to exploit processed packaging in cans.

No doubt our own Northern Australian Brewery at Cairns, already supplying an area from Mackay in the south to Mt. Isa in the west, and to Thursday Island—in fact, all of Queensland north of the 22nd parallel—may even take advantage of canning the local product in the foreseeable future, to cater for an island and export market, if cans for Cairns beer were manufactured in Cairns.

With the development of the proposed Army site at Townsville in the near future, an immediate benefit to Cairns and hinterland can be foreshadowed. The population increase of an estimated 10,000 at Townsville will require food supplies from our area.

The market garden of the Tablelands can produce—and did so during the last war—due to natural climatic conditions, all the year round, fruit and vegetables, and is capable of vast potential and expansion. The axiom could then be coined, concerning growing and processing: "Eat all we can. What we can't, we'll can."

In this respect, it was reported in "Sunday Truth" under date of 24 January, 1965, that a Mr. H. J. Heinz II was visiting Queensland for a close-up look at the development of his Australian company, which has a 75 per cent. grip on the baby-food market here. I wonder if he was made aware of this potential of the Atherton Tableland and the Cairns hinterland in these fields. I dare say he was not. I venture to say that he was not made aware of our area and its potential in these fields, otherwise he may have been interested and delighted, investment-wise.

I spoke earlier of the abundance of water and electricity potential and resources in the Far North. It may not be well known that Queensland rivers contain half the potential untapped water resources of Australia, or that river discharge from the eastern slopes of the Great Dividing Range within Queensland is three times greater than that south of the Queensland border.

However, I am sure it is not so widely known that present uncommitted waters flowing from the Barron, Johnstone and Mitchell River basins of Far North Queensland equal almost 50 per cent of the total discharge from the Murray-Darling River systems of New South Wales and Victoria.

Electricity in the Far North is, in our area, supplementary to water. Hydro power is at present developed to some extent as the natural economical source of industrial power to develop potential. Again, it must be expounded that unless and until both electric and water schemes are established on the basis of providing adequate power and water resources to be available for development propositions, there is little hope of realising the tremendous latent resources of the Cairns area.

Tourism is flourishing in Far North Queensland, and rightly so. The Cairns district has the natural blessing of being the most picturesque part of Australia. Its scenery is unsurpassed, with the closeness of the ranges, lakes, waterfalls, and jungles of lush, rich green tropical growth. The variety of scenery within a day's drive of Cairns is amazing. Mile upon mile of golden, fine sand beaches, palm fringed, untrodden by man, lie north of Cairns, and the glorious seemingly endless Great Barrier Reef lying in places only 100 yards from the shoreline leaves the Southerner and the overseas tourist breathless in its simple, unique and unspoilt beauty.

The industry of tourism is dependent for its prosperity on the individual efforts of enthusiasts. The Queensland Government Tourist Bureau does an excellent job. Credit must here be given to the staff of the bureau in Cairns for their untiring and unflagging devotion to their task. But in the main the tourist industry has flourished because the local people of the North have worked for its success on their own initiative. The greatest setback was the cessation of the coastal shipping service. But gradually, through the development of a more acceptable standard of hotel and motel accommodation and arrangements, the development of local resorts, and the natural friendliness and general welcome of the Northerner, the industry has expanded. However, the surface is not even yet scratched. This is in an industry that can be developed almost without limit, but other company capital investment or Government grants and subsidies must be encouraged to establish the basic essential services and facilities with which individual investment cannot be expected to cope. On the scale of the unlimited horizons, I again stress that Government assistance is required here before the industry can fully develop its potential. It was pleasing to see the Government realise an aspect but unfortunately arrived at by some unrealistic, lopsided thinking. Or was it politics?

Cairns was less favourably treated in the provision of funds for the small-boat harbour. The people of Cairns have been deprived of a justly deserved amenity and not fairly treated when comparison is made with loan allocations granted to ports throughout Queensland over a period in the provision of small-boat harbours. I cite Townsville, Bowen, Mackay, and Gladstone as instances. The people of Cairns have been made an experiment in financing through repayment of a loan to their local authority with interest and redemption for their small-boat harbour, a loan which was not even sought by the Cairns City Council. I doubt if the council would ever have applied for such a loan of £175,000 for this harbour development. But by an imposition and a reversal of a decision for economic expediency—for ransom—take this or get nothing—not even the choice of a boat harbour or a cultural centre, a cold-blooded direction, “The loan for the boat harbour will have to be applied for and accepted or you will receive no loan funds.” Ransom—call it what you may, but it was not a decision I could tend to cite as an example of a democratic process.

I do not have to reiterate the desirability and the need for increased port facilities for the progress and expansion of our maritime city, our port of Cairns, the hinterland, the area, Queensland, and indeed Australia. This is basic and recognised by all. But I think it is mean to use the project to make economic capital of a local-government matter. There is keen disappointment in cultural circles and amongst the citizens of Cairns generally. It was an unwise decision of the Government and will react against

it in North Queensland. The loan should have been made against the district and the Cairns Harbour Board, not a loan against the people of Cairns to be rated and penalised for harbour development which anybody in Australia in a boating sense can utilise. If the Government continues with this petty attitude, and its interference with the direct responsibility of local government, it will be unwise. This is its own responsibility. It will also be unjust, which is a matter of community concern. No Government should dare interfere with the democratic processes without dire results to itself.

There are a few more aspects of tourism and train travel that I wish to raise while being constructively critical. One is the need to convert the existing dining-cars on the Sunlander to Cairns into buffet and lounge cars, and gradually provide additional buffet cars for a full service. This need is recognised by all train travellers who are bound to two nights and two days in train travel to Cairns. Such a car would provide a break in convivial surroundings to enjoy new company and help to lend a holiday and friendlier atmosphere to train travel. The buffet car principle has been accepted by other rail systems and there is no antagonism to the idea by any traveller I have yet met on this train. It lends itself to further possibilities and could, for example, provide a means of shortening the time of this arduous journey.

I am also a great advocate for the reintroduction of the grandstand train on the Cairns-Kuranda scenic railway. Prior to the last war cars A.L.506, 507, 533, 534, and 540 operated between Cairns and Kuranda for the benefit of tourists sight-seeing along this line, which follows the Barron Gorge to the Barron Falls and on to Kuranda, the garden station. This is a tour that an estimated 40,000 tourists travel each year, 23,000 of them booking through the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau. These grandstand carriages were faced on one side with full-length glass, and two tiers of seats ran lengthways along the carriage. Passengers were seated sideways, viewing from the grandstand, without craning, the scenery displayed like a picture window.

During the war these cars were converted for use with troop trains and have remained as passenger carriages in the district. With steel-framed bogies, they could easily be re-converted to a unique tourist attraction. They could be gaily painted and hauled by multiple diesels D.L.'s 1, 2, 3 and 4. Such an unusual gimmick would provide a revenue source as a quaint tourist attraction and a “must” when in the Cairns district. Running twice daily, the train could be equipped with a public address system. In fact, with the ever-increasing support of this half-day tour the present rail-motor units are proving inadequate and people are turned away from travelling. The need for re-thinking to accommodate the demand for the existing service is well overdue.

When tourist services passed from the hands of the railways, a fence was built across the top of the access stairway to the bottom of the Barron Falls at 19 miles 5 chains on the Cairns-Kuranda railway. This fence, with a "No thoroughfare" notice on a tourist attraction, is ridiculous. I believe that the access stairway should be reopened, repaired, and renovated, to allow everybody the experience of descending to the base of the famous Barron Falls. To save the maintenance cost on the stairway by attempting to prevent sightseeing of a naturally beautiful and scenically wonderful hike is a shameful indictment on a Government which propounds all encouragement to the tourist industry.

Further on, although they are not in my electorate, I support, out of vital concern to my area, the urgent need of development of the Chillagoe limestone caves. The caves in their natural state are fantastic, but are subject to vandalism. They need opening up and developing. The extent of the maze of caves is vast, and they have a surprising potential if made accessible and fully developed. Initially a system of electric lighting should be surveyed and placed to advantage, and a caretaker-guide and kiosk provided. These caves would compare more than favourably with the Jenolan Caves of New South Wales. The primary need, of course, is a first-grade access road direct from Cairns.

No area such as ours, which is so dependent on the natural beauty of flora and fauna in its surrounding districts, can hope to continue in existence and attract tourists unless essentially it is protected and preserved as a sanctuary. We in Cairns are fortunately centred in a large tract of country, extending from Cape Tribulation in the north to Mission Beach in the south and inland to Mt. Carbine and Mt. Garnet, which is so designated as a national park. But it is a national park in name only. Beautiful emerald-green rain-forests are transfigured to gruesome blackened and burned eyesores. Fires rage and ring the hillsides round Cairns, and the offenders and culprits in this stupid destruction go unmolested while our God-given investment is wantonly destroyed.

I am aware that all policemen are flora and fauna protectors and prosecutors of the law. I am also aware that all police manpower is fully allotted and committed to more onerous and pressing duties. In addition, permission of the Police Department has to be obtained in Brisbane to prosecute offenders against the fauna laws. Delay is involved, and enthusiasm is dampened. This should be a matter for local or district jurisdiction.

There are many honorary fauna officers in the North, but these protectors are untrained laymen in matters of enforcing fauna and flora laws and I would not advocate bringing such fine, civic-minded citizens into disrepute by establishing a power of arrest for

them, which could easily become uncontrollable. What I do advocate is a fully trained protector, stationed at this centre, for our area, who would have all the necessary qualifications and power—a dedicated and willing full-time fauna officer, capable of directing and controlling the efforts of the honorary officers and giving general effect to enforcing the law. The chief (and only) fauna officer is based in Brisbane. The influence of Mr. C. Roff, while greatly respected, is lightly felt 1,000 miles away, and he certainly needs assistance.

The city of Cairns is the centre and port of the four sugar-milling areas of Mossman, Hambledon, Mulgrave, and Babinda. Cairns is dependent, for the greater part of its economy, on the sugar industry for its prosperity.

The buoyancy of the sugar industry governs to a great extent the economic trends and issue not only of our area or that portion of the growing districts on the eastern coast north of the 27th parallel but also, indeed, the basic prosperity of the whole of the State of Queensland. We, as a State, should be vitally concerned about the world sugar price on the London market, fluctuating between £19 10s. and £19 5s. sterling a ton. This very depressed price is not realistic and indicates that there is not a controlled flow of sugar stocks onto world markets.

Normally, free market prices have been around the cost of production. About 90 per cent. of the world's sugar is sold under protective arrangements, and the remaining 10 per cent. is bought and sold in the surplus market. It is not so with Australian sugar. At present mill peaks total 2,130,000 tons, of which approximately 1,100,000 tons are sold on the basis of world market prices—a practical ratio of 1 for 1, or approximately half the overall Australian sugar production. Australia has a bigger proportion, comparatively, of its overall production sold on the open market than any other sugar-producing nation of the world.

The expansion and increased peaks following the committee of inquiry on the Australian sugar industry of 22 October, 1963—better known as the Gibbs Report—contains some indigestible "boners" in today's deflated overseas market prices, with the result that at present the established cane-farmer is experiencing difficulty. How much more difficult, then, it is for the man with a new assignment. If he is not broken completely, then not in the foreseeable future will he ever receive a return for the investment of his life's savings and work.

The mill peak is based on the production of sugar, virtually guaranteed by acquisition, and represents a stable and high price and a reasonable security, to the extent that the mill peak of the mill and the farm peak of the grower are taken in conjunction by banks and financial institutions as the yardstick and as safely indicating and determining the extent of credit where the grower is concerned. To elaborate this point, I cite

Hambledon proprietary area—the largest mill in our area—as an example. The average prices per ton for cane paid to farmers since 1956 have been—

	£	s.	d.
1956	4	6	0
1957	4	19	11
1958	4	11	11
1959	4	14	1
1960	5	8	10
1961	5	12	6
1962	5	6	10
1963	6	6	0
1964	4	1	1

The 1964 figure is the lowest since 1956, yet relative costs have risen terrifically, thus fleecing the grower.

Again citing Hambledon for the overall price of sugar—

	£	s.	d.
1956	46	10	6
1957	49	5	0
1958	46	3	2
1959	47	8	1
1960	48	17	9
1961	47	19	11
1962	47	15	2
1963	64	2	2
1964	47	15	4

The price in 1965 is estimated at, and could be as low as, £43. This price is due partly to low sugar content and partly to low world price. The industry has not yet felt the full impact of the reigning depressed, low world price.

Reverting to the basis of the 1965 estimated price of £43 a ton, I point out that this amount would return to the farmer approximately £4 5s. a ton. Prices returnable to growers in Goondi and Mourilyan mill areas could be well under £4 unless there is a sudden and unexpected upsurge in world sugar prices. It is uneconomical to grow cane at £4 a ton, and the price is too low to enable the farmer to subsist.

A price of £19 a ton returns approximately £2 5s. a ton to the grower. Production costs to the average good farmer are £3 10s. a ton. In 1963, the boom year, mill peaks were 1.235 million tons, of which less than 25 per cent. of our Australian production was sold on the basis of world market prices—that is, approximately .3 million tons.

Protection in the form of tariff embargo was granted to Commonwealth producers over a considerable period of time before the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement was negotiated. Stability of negotiated prices, and their long-term character, which assure producers for at least a determinable number of years in advance that they will be able to sell a considerable proportion of their production, are desirable and warranted. A fixed tariff preference cannot protect its beneficiaries against a low market price; a negotiated price can. But what has the Government done—the Government of a State that is the major sugar producer in the Commonwealth?

Economic factors are perhaps the greatest obstacle to development in our area, but the continued drift to the cities is the most damaging. Unless the Government realises this and arrests the trend by creating new industrial centres on the English pattern for distribution of our population, the battle will be lost. Already 56 per cent. of the Australian population resides in its six capital cities—in an area less than one-quarter of 1 per cent. of our total land area. Queensland has followed this trend in recent years. Yet, by dispersal of its ports, roads and railway system, it is ideally laid out to combat this trend.

It could be combated by systematically planning to the extent of offering incentives to city-bound dwellers—incentives such as adequate housing, educational and recreational facilities, health services equal to those in capital cities, concessions in travel, equal opportunities for advancement and higher wages in isolated areas. Until this is done, the bright lights will attract and hold the major portion of the State's populace, keeping them away from areas such as the Cairns district.

The industries of the North—sugar, meat, timber, tobacco and tourism—also suffer the one common disability, that of seasonal employment. Following the hustle of these busy seasons comes the lethargic seasonal unemployment—the slack. With increased mechanisation the slack is becoming more lengthy every year and, in these industries, simultaneous. The slack season, and the drift away to the cities, means an annual exodus not only of migratory seasonal workers but lately, in effect, of many of the resident population.

(Time expired.)

Mr. RAE (Gregory) (3.33 p.m.): I listened to the address given by His Excellency the Administrator at the opening of Parliament and was very impressed with the words he used. He is obviously a great son of Queensland who knows precisely where he is going and who can go about the job entrusted to him by the people and the Parliament of the State and do it very well.

The Address in Reply was moved by the new member for Mirani, Mr. Tom Newbery, who also has indicated that he is on top of his job. He knew exactly what was required of him in order to entice and be given the votes of the people in the area which he now represents and which was so ably and faithfully served by one of Queensland's outstanding men, the late Ernie Evans.

Mr. Walsh interjected.

Mr. RAE: The hon. member would have difficulty in convincing anybody. He cannot even convince himself.

The Address in Reply was seconded by the hon. member for Ithaca, Mr. Windsor, who, after spending many years in this Assembly, has now decided to retire from

politics. I trust that his retirement will be a very long and happy one, and that it will give him a great deal of pleasure. He has certainly earned it. He is a good fellow. At all times he has played a very sincere and realistic part in this Assembly.

This debate enables one quietly and realistically to praise or condemn certain aspects of the Government's contribution to Queensland. Under the leadership of Frank Nicklin, I think a general compliment should be paid to the Government not only by those who support the Government but also by those who support the Opposition. All know full well that this Government has achieved a great deal. The State is going places. Queensland has never had it better. When we make an analysis of everything that has been done we can trace much of it back to that very responsible member of the Cabinet, Mr. Hiley, the Treasurer. A special compliment should be paid to that man. In his business life outside Parliament he proved beyond a shadow of doubt that he had ability. Undoubtedly he has proved himself one of the most able men ever to serve in the Queensland Parliament.

Mr. Aikens: Tell us what you think of "Basher" Burns.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Gaven): Order! I ask the hon. member for Townsville South to conduct himself in an orderly manner.

Mr. RAE: We need a Treasurer who has a ready appreciation of the State's tremendous problem in the field of housing. Throughout the State, whether it be in Brisbane, in the major coastal cities and towns, or towns out in my electorate, we have to face up to the task of providing homes for those without them. I know that thought has been given to home-ownership on the basis of a deposit of £300 or £400, with payments of £5, £6, or £7 a week for 25 or 30 years.

I should like the Government to give consideration to new designs for houses for people in my area. It is important to keep the people there and the only way to do so is to provide them with an adequate home. Very few young people who are considering getting married today have the necessary deposit for a house, which is normally about £400 or £500. I should like to see a scheme introduced whereby they can get a home for a straight-out rental of even £5 or £6 a week. They would be happy to pay it.

Mr. Coburn: They would be lucky to get it on £700 deposit.

Mr. RAE: Yes, which is quite ridiculous. If we are to keep people in the Outback we must provide homes for them. On the wages paid to them they can never hope to have £500 or £700, or whatever the amount may be, in the bank. They do not have that sort of money. Heaven knows, the Basic Wage is low enough.

I should like the Treasurer to give every consideration to a completely new line of thinking for the housing of people. This is the responsibility of the Minister for Housing who, I know, is devoting quite a lot of time and thought to such a plan. It is very important for us to give greater consideration to methods which will enable people in the West to have a home they may call their own, either by a form of rental, or by some means of buying a home with an acceptable small down payment. It is obvious to me that the present system is completely out of balance.

Mr. Aikens: You agree that they should get some special consideration?

Mr. RAE: Yes, most assuredly they should.

I have gathered a few figures, and one matter has impressed me greatly. It costs almost £500 in freight alone to build a house costing £3,400 in Longreach—£500 in freight alone is a lot of money. That is one item to which the Government should surely give a great deal of thought.

There is another problem in providing housing for the men who come out west to do a job for us, whether they be research officers of some kind, men from the Department of Primary Industries, the Main Roads Department, or the Police Department. All these men who are asked to go out to the West have the same problem with housing. A short while ago a veterinary officer was sent to Longreach, and he did a very good job. He was a married man and he wanted a home, but he could not get one. He was paying £8 a week for a little flat that was completely inadequate for him and his wife, and for his standing as a senior officer in the community—not that I hold with snobbery in any form. He was then transferred from Longreach to Rockhampton, where a home was available for him and his family. Surely when officers are appointed it behoves the department which has seen fit to employ them at Longreach, Winton, Blackall or Barcaldine to provide them with a home. What in the name of fortune is the good of sending them there without a home? All those departments should—it is a "must"—provide homes for them. We need those officers. They are responsible people and are helpful to us in our way of life in that part of the world. Why should they be continually running to the coast just because there is a home there? We have our problems and, whether they lie with the land or the stock, we need those officers there. The Government should and must provide housing for these citizens.

Over the last 12 months Queensland has been set back by two sad mediums: the drought and the industrial strike at Mt. Isa. The Mt. Isa story has unfolded in its true concept. A lot of nonsense has been spoken by responsible people. It is sad to think that the State should be millions of pounds down on its earnings because of that tragedy.

On the land today we are experiencing one of the most severe droughts ever recorded in Queensland's history. It is a national calamity.

Mr. Aikens: Not all of the State is drought-stricken.

Mr. RAE: Not now. We have had some relief, but it was very patchy. The true effect of this drought will not be known for another 12 months.

Mr. Walsh: The next drought?

Mr. RAE: No. The hon. member should not talk like that. He has been around. In many parts of my electorate the drought has continued for about eight years. There have been occasional respites for a few months, but in reality we have had a long, tiring, and almost sickening experience from the want of rain. I travelled 2,000 miles in the area to see for myself how the drought was affecting the people there. It is all right for people in Brisbane. They can enjoy life and go to the pictures, but the people in the West have nought beyond the fact that from dawn to dark they are breaking scrub, and one has to break scrub before one realises how dull, wearisome, and expensive the whole set-up can be. It is a very sad state of affairs, but it is going on and has gone on for a long time.

Years ago the banks provided most of the money for the man on the land. They would provide at least 40 per cent. of their valuation of a property. Then the broker was introduced as a man who would provide stock and some form of purchasing requirements. Then, if there were other requests upon the purchaser, they were normally accepted by an insurance company on a long-range scheme at a rather high rate of interest.

As the years have passed and droughts have become more and more severe, banks have shown a resistance to helping those to whom they initially gave assistance. They feel that if anything is to be done towards the feeding and welfare of stock, it has to be done by the broker. He has only limited finance and cannot go beyond his original commitment. He has already borrowed to the point of absurdity. Most of our brokers are extensively committed. Their part in the whole business was to stock the property with sheep or cattle, and their interest was usually returnable within a year.

Mr. Aikens: The banks today are more concerned with the hire-purchase racket.

Mr. RAE: Exactly; I agree with the hon. member for Townsville South. There is no way in the world that he is not right when he says that. Unfortunately there is little that we can do about it. With wool prices as they are, which is not very spectacular, and shortage of stock, as there will be, men who normally shear 7,000 or 8,000 sheep are today shearing 3,000 or 4,000. They rely on assistance from their broker, who is literally out of money.

Mr. Bennett: You are breaking my heart when you speak about the brokers.

Mr. RAE: I hope I am, because I will be the first one who has even broken a legal man's heart.

I feel that the £50,000 allotted for drought relief would not even feed the working horses on Thylungra. That amount is quite ridiculous and will be of no significance at all to people who are going through a shocking time. One has to see these things to realise just how bad they are. With the exception of the hon. member for Warrego and a few others, no-one would have a clue about what is now happening in this State. The real story is quite unappreciated by many in the House today. Fortunately the Premier travelled round and had a good look for himself, and he agreed completely with a few ideas that I submitted to him.

Mr. Bennett: The Premier has had the stockwhip about you.

Mr. RAE: That is all right. That does not worry me. I am here to do a job for my people. I am endeavouring to have the seriousness of the drought recognised, and to my way of thinking £50,000 is paltry.

As the final dash of salt rubbed into the wound, as it were, the Minister for Transport cannot provide N-vans or K-wagons to enable people who are completely at the mercy of the seasons to get stock away in under nine weeks. They have gone on hoping for years and years that they would receive some assistance. They cannot walk their cattle along the stock routes; they are all bare and eaten out. The whole thing is ridiculous.

Mr. Thackeray: What about the road transport that they have been using for years?

Mr. RAE: I will come to that in a moment.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Campbell): Order! Hon. members on my left are continually interrupting the hon. member for Gregory. I ask them to desist.

Mr. RAE: The people of whom I am speaking are going through a drought the like of which the State has never known. By comparison, the 1901 drought was a minor one. If my Government were really desirous of doing something for the people concerned, it would provide a means by which they could get their stock away from their properties. It could be done quite easily—at a cost to the Government.

Mr. Aikens: Is there any agistment for them?

Mr. RAE: No, but there is a market. Because of the shortage of beef cattle and of sheep, the present demand at stock auctions

is very keen. If one goes to Dalby, Toowoomba, Rockhampton, Townsville, or Brisbane—it does not really matter which centre one goes to—one finds a ready outlet. This is a very important point, because the Minister for Transport still demands that people in drought-stricken areas pay this very high road tax although he cannot supply them with trucks in under nine weeks. What can happen in nine weeks? Heavens above, the stock could all be dead!

I do not know where all the wagons are, but they are usually tied up by the big companies—C.Q.M.E., Swifts, Vestey's, and so on. They should be made available to people in drought-stricken areas instead of being tied up to meet the fat-stock requirements of those big companies. It is aggravating to think that company buyers can tie the trucks up for their own needs when the poor fellows who are really battling cannot get a K-wagon or an N-van for weeks on end.

The Minister for Transport is growing farther away from me and from other hon. members on the back benches. In my opinion, he should show a stronger sense of co-operation and a knowledge of one's problems. He and the officers of his department refuse to recognise my problems and leave me out on a limb, and I want to let him know that I am very displeased and dissatisfied. I think it is very wrong that he should sit there and think only of the money that is going into the coffers of the State. It is not good enough.

Let us have a look at the problems raised by the drought. They are very serious indeed and they have never been sufficiently recognised by the Government. I urge my Government to prevail upon the Reserve Bank to release funds for re-stocking purposes at a low rate of interest.

Mr. Walsh: You are certainly being very critical.

Mr. RAE: That is all right. I believe in speaking my mind.

Another matter that has been exercising my mind for quite a while is the set-up of the weighbridge as we know it. This is the one State in the Commonwealth which says, "You have to work to the ounce." I feel quite certain that these duly-elected commissioners, under commissioners or deputy commissioners, whatever they are—

Mr. Bennett: Sheriffs.

Mr. RAE: That is right; they are sheriffs. In New South Wales they allow, for a lorry-load of cattle, a certain concession with respect to weight.

Mr. Sullivan: Two tons.

Mr. RAE: That is so. Here, if you are 2 ounces out you have to pay. In America the latitude is 2 tons. The point is, what man can adequately fill a lorry with cattle and say whether it will weigh 7 tons, 9 tons, or 11 tons? Many experienced buyers in the business would not know whether such

a load would weigh 7 tons, 9 tons, or 11 tons, but unfortunately the machine does know and it simply says, "You are 3 tons, 4 tons, or 5 tons over," and that is that—you are fined. This is an embarrassment to the driver, to the owner and to the man who has supplied the machine, as well as to the set-up generally. Yet these things are so unnecessary. We must be more tolerant.

A vehicle is of a certain width and a certain length. That being so, does anyone here think for one moment that any owner will jam it so full of stock that they will fall down and smother one another? Of course not. He will load it prudently and wisely, to get whatever stock the vehicle will hold to market. If they are loaded too loosely trouble can be encountered, just as it can if they are too tight.

Mr. Aikens: Seventeen fats to a K-wagon.

Mr. RAE: I have seen it down to 14.

Mr. Murray: It is on a standing-room basis.

Mr. RAE: That is right. It is stupid to work as they are, merely on a weight basis. One can get fat or thin cattle and there is no realistic bush approach to this problem at the moment. It is being handled by fellows down here with a few figures and little knowledge of what is happening in these areas today. This is a tremendous problem, one that should be handled by people knowledgeable enough to handle it.

Mr. Aikens: Some understanding of the man in the back country and his problems.

Mr. RAE: Thank you.

I turn now from transport, because I have not unlimited time, and deal with hospitals in my area. I had the privilege of going to Longreach with Mr. Tooth, the new Minister for Health, on the occasion of the opening of the new nurses' quarters there. I must say that it would be rather difficult for any new Minister to have been fully conversant with his portfolio at the time but I came away feeling that there was one spark of disturbance in relation to the opening of the Longreach nurses' quarters. In the plan that was submitted and approved by the department provision was made for air conditioning. On most summer days the temperature in Longreach gets up to 100 degrees. Everyone would imagine that that was not an unreasonable request. But the Minister had but one fixed thought in his mind when he came up. He said, "Provision has been made for Air-conditioning. That is not right." He said he would not agree to it. I said, "What are you going to talk about? That is all I want here." He came and he went with the fixed idea in his mind that there would be no air-conditioning in the Longreach Hospital. How silly can you be in a State like this! We have to put up with very torrid conditions in the West.

Without being unduly critical of the Minister, let me ask that we have a sensible approach to the set-up. Let us draw a

line from Normanton to Cunnamulla, or between some other points, beyond which this privilege is to be enjoyed. It is not easy to entice staff to come out and stay in western towns with their extremely hot conditions. We want to encourage them to come out there and do a job.

Mr. Walsh: He lived out there.

Mr. RAE: He taught a few people out there but apparently he did not teach himself. I ask that the Minister give very full consideration to this matter. Air-conditioning in the West is a "must".

The establishment of a rural school in Longreach is an excellent idea and receives my full support, as it would receive the support of the shire chairmen of the Longreach and adjoining shires. However, at the moment it is planned to build the school on a Maneroo block, part of Strathdaar, no less than 40 miles from Longreach, simply because it has been given to the department as a school site. That is too ridiculous for words. It is so far from sane thinking that it does not bear second thought. We must have that building adjacent to the town where people can see it, and where the people who are giving of their knowledge can enjoy some of the privileges which only a town can give. If a building is going to cost £100,000 it should be built where the people can see it and point to it with pride.

Before concluding, I wish to say a few words about the Co-ordinating Board, the barrier fence and aerial baiting. I have here a telegram from the police in Winton and letters from various people concerning the loss of dogs just seven miles out of Winton. Two expensive sheep dogs were lost and no fewer than 15 baits, which were dropped in this aerial dingo-baiting campaign, were picked up within seven miles of Winton. It is unnecessary, and I record my strong disapproval on behalf of those who are affected. It is not good enough for Mr. Brebner to sit quietly in his office and say, "You will be very disturbed, Mr. Rae, to learn that I have a letter here saying that this man is completely free of all charges concerning this matter." He is not free at all; he is anything but free! This is the telegram I received from the police—

"13th Inst. Mitchell Windermere handed in fourteen Government Dingo Baits found his property and adjoining Stock Route 12th Baits recovered over area of quarter mile unknown number Baits over stretch of seven miles Windermere to Colane."

These baits were dropped under the auspices of the Co-ordinating Board, which I have always felt is one board that needs correct and proper supervision. Its service to the State is very questionable.

Mr. Davies: Who is the Minister in charge?

Mr. RAE: The Minister for Lands; the hon. member should know that.

Many of the disturbing things which are occurring in Queensland are traceable to officers who are getting away with far too much. That is not good enough. We need someone who knows what is happening, who can be invited to attend the discussions now and again on these matters and keep an eye on what is done. That is extremely important, whether it is industrial development, bigalow development, land development, or public buildings. The representative of the area, 99 times out of 100, is left out on a limb while officers make the decisions for fantastic alterations to this or that plan, or scheme.

Mr. Duggan: You and Mr. Murray should get together, after all.

Mr. RAE: There is no way in the world we will get together. We probably put him there but he can fend for himself from now on. He reminds me of an old stud ewe with its twin lambs at foot, rejected. He would not know where he was going politically—neither he nor his brace of supporters. However, he is an intelligent man—which is more than I can say for some.

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East) (4.13 p.m.): As Sir Henry Abel Smith and Lady May will not be here for the opening of the new Parliament next year I should like to take this opportunity to extend my appreciation to them for the very valuable work they have done for Queensland during their term of office. They have won not only the respect of all, but also the hearts of all. Their services have never been surpassed and I have very great doubts that they have ever been equalled.

I also wish to express my pleasure that the conservative Government of the Commonwealth has seen fit to take a plank from the Australian Labour Party's platform in the appointment of an Australian to the very important position of Governor-General of Australia. If Lord Casey can follow the example set by two Australians who previously held the position of Governor-General, namely, Sir Isaac Isaacs and Sir William McKell, he will justify the confidence that the Government, and the people generally, have placed in him. I am not going to say that his appointment has met with opposition. It is a very popular appointment, and one that has met with the approval of the people. That gives another instance of the fact that what Labour stands for and advocates today becomes the policy of and is put into operation by a conservative Government at some time in the future.

There has been some publicity in the Press recently about the signing of Magna Carta by King John at Runnymede in 1215, and a considerable amount of controversy as to whether the signing of this very important document and the agitation which preceded

it really laid the foundation for the freedom enjoyed by British people and other peoples throughout the world.

This has prompted me to express my own opinion on the freedom we enjoy today, and to ask just how far ordinary, private citizens should be allowed to do whatever they want, and how far the Government can step in and restrain the individual.

I realise fully that this is a problem that has exercised the minds of many people since and before the signing of Magna Carta. The power of the Government to suppress individual freedom is generally acknowledged to be much wider under the arbitrary rule of a dictatorship than under democratic conditions where the Government is elected by the people, is answerable to the people, and can be dismissed from office by the people. Nevertheless, even in a democracy we have a real problem.

In modern society a great deal of authority is exercised over the individual not only by the Government of the day but also by various organisations. Has this resulted in a diminution of our personal freedom? If we admit that it has, can it be justified by the gains to the community generally? Has society gained more than we have lost as individuals? In the world of today we are constantly hearing of high-handed behaviour by authority. Here are some examples of the impact of authority on private people.

A landowner wants to erect homes on part of his land. The local planning authority refuses him the necessary permission. After an inquiry a decision is given against the landowner under the town planning or some other relevant Act of Parliament.

A pensioner owns his own home. He unsuccessfully appeals against a compulsory purchase order and his home is demolished so that a road-widening scheme can be put into operation. Although the pensioner can obtain another home and he is not subject to any great financial loss, or perhaps no financial loss at all, it has to be admitted that he is put to a considerable amount of worry and a great deal of inconvenience through no fault of his own.

A man joins a trade union so that his interests as a worker can be better protected, and he agrees to be bound by the laws of his organisation. He is later expelled from the union for breaking one of its rules. On appeal to the courts, his expulsion is quashed on the ground that he was not given a fair hearing.

These cases involve clashes between individuals and authority. Property is affected in the first two cases and authority decides that the rights of the individual should be subordinate to the interests of the community. The third case is an example of authority intervening on behalf of the individual against the rights of a voluntary organisation to run its own affairs.

The Australian Labour Party recognises and strives for those liberal freedoms, usually called civil liberties. Our concept of them is much greater than that of our political opponents. The Government parties, although they have been forced to concede civil liberties, have opposed the development of the other freedoms. Socialism aims at society resting upon the following bases—

1. Concentration of power, military, political, and economic, should serve and be seen to serve the whole community, and not to dominate it;

2. Privileges of the few must be transformed into rights available to every citizen;

3. A fairer distribution of wealth and opportunity must be advanced by positive State action with the assistance of a free trade union and co-operative movement.

4. Effective civil liberties and an independent judiciary must safeguard personal freedom against abuse of power by either the State or any organisation.

The existence of privilege based on class prevents the growth of a really free society. By "class privilege" we mean rights and liberties available only to a minority which rests on wealth gained by inheritance or speculation.

It is right that special ability and industry, including thrift, inventiveness, and excellence in the arts, should be especially rewarded. However, such recognition should be on merit alone and should not be allowed to lead to a new privileged class. We believe that the only political framework within which a free society can flourish is that of a parliamentary democracy with full rights of opposition. We reject the anti-socialist illusion that the really free society will develop of its own accord. On the contrary, we maintain that it is necessary for a Government consciously to plan the economic system. It is this planned advance towards an equal society, combined with a belief in the vital importance of common ownership, that primarily distinguishes the Australian Labour Party from the Conservative parties that form the Government of this State, the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia, and the Governments of some of the other States.

To us, freedom means something quite different from a mere absence of restraint. The welfare State and full employment have undoubtedly widened personal freedom. We reject as complete rubbish the view that this has sapped the moral fibre of the nation. This is a point always made with indignant emphasis by those who have enjoyed hereditary social security. Undoubtedly there is a great deal still to do before equality and complete freedom are secured.

The Australian Labour Party believes that the State is made for man and not that man is made for the State. We affirm that the individual, though a member of the community, also has an inviolable personal identity with rights of his own. We therefore agree that the ownership of personal property

is a human right, but this right is not absolute. The right to property always carries with it the responsibility to use and develop it in the interest of the community. Whenever the accumulation of property brings with it decisive economic control over others, the use of that power must be subject to public control.

The extreme contrasts between wealth and poverty are of themselves morally intolerable and obstacles to freedom. Thus our concept of the community's interest is wider than that of our political opponents, and our policies may sharply impinge on those rights associated with the ownership of property and the use of economic power. However, we are well aware that the authority of the State can damage personal freedom. The modern State exercises great control over its citizens, and it could quickly become oppressive if the safeguards of democracy were not carefully maintained. But the authority of the State can also be used to extend freedom in a very real sense.

There is no more important extension of personal freedom than a publicly provided system of education that ensures that the capabilities of each individual are developed to the full. Far from wanting to destroy the best kinds of education, we want them extended to everyone in the community.

Our view is that freedom and equality are inseparable. If freedom with gross inequalities is hardly worth having, equality without freedom is worthless and foreign to democratic Socialism. Right from its birth the Australian Labour Party has been concerned with personal freedom. The freedom of workers to join trade unions and to have the right to vote was won from reluctant Governments only after long and bitter struggles.

Socialists are frequently accused of wanting centralisation of power at the expense of individual rights and liberties. This charge is erroneous and is made only in the hope that it may damage the cause of Socialism. We certainly do not recognise as right an individualism harmful to the community. On the other hand, far from wanting an all-powerful State or excessive centralisation, we hold that many important decisions and activities should be left to voluntary local effort and organisations. For example, when adequate collective bargaining machinery exists, wage negotiations are best left to trade unions and employers' organisations. However, the State should be able to reinforce the work of voluntary organisations in promoting economic, social and cultural advancement.

The Labour movement grew out of the harshness and miseries of the industrial struggles of the last century, a largely unregulated society, with fantastic extremes of wealth and poverty, of security and destitution, of opportunities enjoyed by the few and a deadly, hopeless grind endured by the many. We recognise that some of these inequalities could be removed only by State action. Only the Government was powerful enough, or sufficiently responsive to popular pressure, to begin the protection of workers

in the fields, the factories, and the mines, to promote public health, to provide educational facilities, and to redistribute the wealth of the nation more fairly. The workers' political movement had its birth in trade unions, which were formed by the workers in an attempt to escape by their own efforts from the degradation of the Industrial Revolution.

The Labour movement has not regarded State action as the only means of social progress. The development of self-help within groups independent of the State was an objective of early socialists. In addition to trade unionism, self-help was practised through co-operatives and friendly societies, many of the societies being attached to the trade unions. However, action by the State was necessary to provide conditions in which the group of individuals could function properly. Acts were passed to enable trade unions to function lawfully, and certain legal rights necessary for their practical operation were granted to them. Friendly societies were controlled in the interests of their members.

In various ways people have extended their freedom, both by action within groups and directly through the State. In the process of extending the freedom of the many, the liberties of a few have necessarily been reduced. What employers regarded as their rights were restricted when they had to bargain with trade unions instead of with individual workers or when factory legislation prevented them from being absolute masters in their factories.

The Australian Labour Party believes in striking a balance in the use of the powers of the State. In practice, this means that Parliament has to decide between the often-conflicting claims and interests of social and economic groups. A government with a bold programme of reform is immediately confronted with this dilemma: how far can the rights of the majority be advanced while safeguarding minority rights? It is because we look to the State to provide measures and machinery for reform that we are jealous of the citizen's rights against the State.

During recent decades we have witnessed both a diffusion and a concentration of power in society. The advances towards social democracy have resulted in a diffusion of power. Thanks primarily to the trade unions and to near-full employment, workers certainly enjoy more freedom than ever before. However, side by side with this development, there has been a great concentration of power. Almost everyone comes into direct contact with Ministers of the Crown, members of public boards and local authorities. Such parties exercise authority in many ways in deciding the issue of licences, in handling Social Service benefits, in providing essential public services such as transport, electricity and gas, and so forth.

It is our duty to see that these authorities shall not behave as if they were laws unto themselves and degenerate into irresponsible bureaucracies. I feel that I can claim with justification, and certainly with confidence, that the public servants of Queensland are

just as honest, efficient, incorruptible and non-political as any in the world; but in an age when everyone has dealings with public servants of all kinds, their standards of humanity, courtesy, and helpfulness are as important as their honesty.

In some instances it is claimed that it is still necessary to be backed by someone well known in order to receive considerate treatment by a public body. If this is so it should not be allowed to continue. These bodies were created in order that they might serve the public interest with scrupulous fairness.

When hon. members opposite refer to the modern concentration of power, they mention only public bodies, or the State; but concentration of power in private industry has been at least as remarkable, and subject to less control. It is no doubt true that the organised workers have had certain advantages in negotiating with large or federated firms, but freedom of the consumer has certainly been reduced by the growth of monopoly in private business. It is important to make clear that the men who manage our great private industries are more remote from public control, and less open to criticism, than are those who manage our various Government departments, namely, our Cabinet Ministers and their Under Secretaries, departmental heads, and public boards.

Any activity or lack of activity can be and is discussed in the Parliament and so are the affairs of public boards. Committees of inquiry into the nationalised industries can be set up. The aggrieved citizen can enlist the services of his member in order to take up complaints against a public body. Consultative committees, if properly used, can bring consumer influence to bear.

These safeguards cannot guarantee that authority is always tempered with humanity and justice, but they are vastly superior to the redress offered to private citizens by the concerns of private enterprise.

This concentration of power is also found in the organs of public information. Control of the Press is falling into fewer and fewer hands. The independence of even local newspapers is disappearing as they become absorbed in national and regional chains. The position is further aggravated by newspapers having substantial financial holdings in commercial broadcasting stations and television.

A free Press is vital to democracy—free, that is, from Government or other official interference. So long as Labour was fighting for the bare essentials of life for the working class, there was no great need to bother about the respective claims of freedom, equality, and fraternity, in a welfare State.

Since the birth of the Australian Labour Party approximately 70 years ago a quiet social revolution has been taking place. Parliament has established social rights for the industrial worker. The trade unions, after

a long and bitter struggle, have won their place as an indispensable part of the nation. As a matter of fact, trade unions and the trade-union movement have not only become respectable; they have certainly become respected and so have their power and service.

The Government's responsibility for full employment and higher production is widely admitted. The welfare State, even in its present uncompleted form, has removed the sharpest anxieties from millions of working-class and middle-class people. The improvement in educational facilities provided by the State has done much to reduce educational inequalities. Near-full employment has brought not only raised living standards but a new dignity and a great extension of freedom to the people as a whole.

Undoubtedly these are great advances but we cannot rest with them. We of the Australian Labour Party are obliged, and indeed eager, to think out the next steps towards Socialism, and to state them in terms relevant to the modern society which we have largely created. No-one who benefits from the welfare State, from full employment or from better education, can contract out of the social obligations which must support these reforms. The Australian Labour Party is convinced that only a democratic socialist government can provide the climate of co-operation which is so necessary for the growth of a sense of responsibility throughout society. Many people do work of much value through voluntary organisations. Trade unions representing the working people, and co-operative societies working on behalf of consumers, are good examples of voluntary bodies which offset excessive concentration of State powers. Voluntary effort is also valuable in fields in which the State must carry the main responsibility, for example, in education and social welfare. Many people render valuable assistance voluntarily in catering for the needs of our old people; in educational and cultural activities; through the Red Cross, the ambulance, the Blue Nursing Service, the Blood Bank, and social welfare generally. The citizen's sense of responsibility must keep pace with the increase in his rights and powers if society is to renew itself spiritually and materially.

After many years of struggle and sacrifice the basic civil liberties are secure throughout the Commonwealth of Australia. Individual religious, political and legal rights are not now at issue. But there are still problems of civil liberties—not nearly as obvious as of old, but nevertheless real. In this country the rights of political democracy are enjoyed by all, even by those who would seek to destroy those rights if they could. Therefore the public safety must be protected from those who seek to destroy our hard-won freedom. Australia has a fine tradition of political and religious toleration. I make bold to claim that we will do everything in our power to maintain that tradition. We

of the Australian Labour Party are determined to do so at all costs. Much of the freedom enjoyed by the citizens of Australia today has flowed from the thinking, advocacy, struggle and legislation of the Australian Labour Party. No matter what people might think or say to the contrary, that cannot be denied. It is there for everyone to see.

Tens of thousands of workers throughout the Commonwealth of Australia have fought and suffered considerably so that the many could enjoy greater freedom and the many benefits that spring from it. Therefore no section of the community, nor any organisation, will fight more vigorously than the Australian Labour Party and its members to ensure the freedoms we have won are adequately protected, and further freedoms gained. This can best be accomplished by placing in essential and productive employment all those who are anxious and willing to work. By "essential and productive employment" I mean those services and commodities which are essential for the well-being and development of our State and its citizens. Our primary, secondary and tertiary industries are essential services, as also are our health, transport, education and housing.

The possibility of unemployment is a real threat to the most basic freedom of all, that is, the freedom to work, to live a normal life, in the knowledge that one is wanted. Unemployment is something that, even in these days, when we claim we are living in an affluent society and a welfare State, still has to be corrected. To the unemployed without an income of their own there can be no real freedom. I deliberately say, "the unemployed with no income of their own" because we do know there are unemployed with an income and to them, of course, unemployment means nothing at all. To be unemployed, with no income of your own, means that you have no freedom at all. Freedom is what we boast about and what we want. The biggest contribution any Government can make to ensure economic freedom is to see that gainful employment is available for all who are willing to work. When this is accomplished the world will be a much happier place and freedom will be almost unlimited.

However, while we are doing our best to abolish unemployment and all the misery and privation that accompanies it, we must see that the other freedoms are not lost. Of recent years, we have seen in this world nations where there was no unemployment, but there certainly was not much freedom, and it is freedom that we want and it is freedom that many are unable to enjoy.

For some time now we have been hearing and reading glowing reports for the future of the Australian and Queensland coal-mining industries. These optimistic reports are based solely on developing the export trade with Japan. However, I feel that we must give some consideration to several aspects of this

trade for they raise questions of vital interest to all engaged in the coal-mining industry—the employer as well as the employee and, indeed, the nation. I have spoken in this Chamber many times emphasising that tens of thousands, or hundreds of thousands, of pounds have been invested in the Queensland coal-mining industry, and recounting the service which the people in the coal-mining industry have given to the State. Never in any crisis has the coal-mining industry let the State down, and it never will. At present, with hundreds fewer in the industry in Queensland, and thousands fewer in the industry in Australia, we are producing more coal than ever before. The output, individually and collectively, has increased considerably and the expense incurred by the colliery companies in ensuring that the customer gets the coal he wants has amounted to many tens of thousands of pounds.

Mr. Osao Mizuno, the leader of the Japanese steel mission which visited Australia some little time ago, said that Australia was supplying at the present time 25 per cent. of Japan's coking coal requirements. As the production of pig-iron was expected to increase, he went on to say, so would the consumption of our coking coal, and our exports of coal to Japan would rise from 4,500,000 tons to 6,000,000 tons by 1970.

The R. W. Miller interests claim to have contracted to supply Japan with 3,000,000 tons of coal. Sir Edward Warren, head of the coal and allied industries, has announced that his company has contracted to supply 5,000,000 tons of coal to Japan. The Bellambi Coal Corporation has contracted to supply 3,800,000 tons. The American-based Utah Company at Blackwater, in Central Queensland, has claimed to have tentatively won a £54,000,000 contract to supply 13,500,000 tons of coal to Japan.

I noticed that Mr. Warwick Jones, a journalist and commentator of some repute in the South, writing in "The Australian", has enthusiastically foreshadowed coal production in Australia of 45,000,000 tons, which is a 60 per cent. increase on our present production, by the end of this decade.

The financial editor of the Sydney "Sun-Herald", on 20 June, 1965, sounded a warning to which I think we should give some attention. I quote from the Sydney "Sun-Herald" of 20 June, 1965—

"Signs of instability in the Japanese economy could hardly have come at a worse time for Australia.

"Not only are there already plenty of signs of financial problems in Japan, but any threatened down-turn in world trading could hit Japan really hard.

"And if Japan is hit, so is Australia.

"Last week's news of another £50 million Japanese order for Australian bauxite and a further £17½ million coal contract underlined the growing importance of Japan to Australia.

"And the Minister for Mines, Mr. T. L. Lewis, on Friday invited overseas capital to set up a 'new steel complex' in New South Wales.

"But the level of Japan's use of iron ore, coal, bauxite and wool—Australia's major exports to Japan—is largely determined by Japan's exports of manufactured goods.

"So to a large extent, the volume of Japanese buying of raw materials in Australia will depend on her ability to sell the finished product in world markets.

"Any suggestion of a contraction in world trade probably means more to Japan than to any other developed country.

"The omens are not good.

"Action by Britain and the U.S. to protect their currencies must have some impact on world trade levels.

"In addition, there is no doubt something is wrong with the international monetary system.

"Last week the former secretary of the U.S. Treasury, Mr. Dillon, warned that without some reform of the system, 'the world will soon be pinched for liquidity to finance trade and commerce.'

"But Japan already has her troubles.

"The country's 11 largest trading companies have recently issued discouraging interim reports, reflecting the 'general slump in business.'

"These are the companies that have played a large part in the development of trade with Australia, having been importers into Japan of foreign raw materials to sell to industry and exporters of Japanese manufactures.

"Only three of these top 11 companies registered better results in the March half-year, as Kanematsu's profit fell 24 per cent., Mitsui earned no profit at all and C. Itoh's dropped by 15 per cent.

"This happened when business was up. What could happen if it fell?

"But that is not all.

"The Tokyo stock market has fallen 37 per cent. in two years to its lowest point since June, 1960.

"This has been despite solid Governmental assistance for both economic and fear of 'losing face' reasons.

"In fact, the Japanese Government has already spent about £750 million in a vain attempt to hold the market up and to keep securities companies out of bankruptcy.

"For Australia, growing sales to Japan are good news for the balance of payments, but growing dependence on Japan for our prosperity could prove nerve-racking."

It could be very nerve-racking indeed. The growing dependence on Japan for the prosperity of the Australian coal-mining industry, and particularly the Queensland coal-mining industry, could prove very nerve-racking indeed.

Mr. Jones draws attention to what I consider an added factor in the instability of the present situation when he writes—

"What perhaps is surprising is that Japan has by-passed China's huge reserves of coal."

China has large deposits of good coking coal which are being worked at present in Northern China, and I am informed that this coal is available to Japan at competitive prices.

Mr. Jones puts this down to China's being a fickle trader, but honestly I do not believe this. I believe that the explanation really lies in the realm of international politics.

Has not Australia traded with China, and has not that trade benefited Australia, particularly our primary producers? Has not China met her financial and trading obligations in full? She has, and therefore she cannot be classed as a fickle trader. What I fear is an improvement in the relationship between Japan and China. If they begin trading again, what will happen to the coal-mining industry in Australia, and in Queensland in particular? Our trade with Japan, valuable as it may be, is depleting the limited reserves of coking coal in both New South Wales and Queensland. We are losing our coal, and at the same time increasing our dependence on Japan. What are we going to do? It appears to me that we are going to be the loser, and the position is aggravated by our neglect in developing alternative markets in Australia.

Whilst we are developing our coal industry for the production of coal for sale overseas—coking coal, which Australia can least afford to lose—the demand for steaming coal is decreasing, and the discovery of natural gas and its use is a serious threat to the gas coal mining industry. The Minister for Mines in New South Wales, Hon. T. L. Lewis, has expressed his concern over the growing increase in exports of coking coal from New South Wales.

In respect of trade with Japan, I end on a note of warning. We are crying out for another steel works in Australia, and Mr. Lewis has said that something should be done about it. More steel is needed in Australia. We need more technicians and more employment generally, and we need to develop the North. Many years ago Mr. Collins, who was then the member for Tablelands in this Parliament, advocated the establishment of a steel works at Bowen. The cry has always been, "We have not sufficient iron ore or good coking coal." It has now been proved that we have coking coal and iron ore of excellent quality. It has been shown that we can produce the best and what was once the cheapest steel in the

world. Now the raw materials are being sent to Japan, thus depleting our resources and making us economically dependent on Japan. We will be the losers unless this trend is corrected.

(Time expired.)

Mr. SULLIVAN (Condamine) (4.54 p.m.): Following the recess of approximately four months since Parliament last met, I am pleased to have the opportunity now in the Address-in-Reply debate to bring to the notice of the Government some things that have come to my attention in the intervening period. All will agree that it has been a very difficult time, and I, with others, welcome this opportunity to bring these things to the notice of the Premier and members of the Cabinet.

At the opening of Parliament last Tuesday, a week ago today, I feel that we were all very impressed with the Opening Speech of His Excellency the Administrator of the Government, Sir Alan Mansfield. He outlined the legislation to be enacted during this session, which is one to which I think all hon. members can look forward with interest. This is the last session of the 37th Parliament, and in it will be enacted legislation that will have an effect on the livelihood of the people of the State generally.

I take this opportunity of congratulating the mover of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, the hon. member for Mirani, Mr. Tom Newbery. I congratulate him, first, on being chosen as the representative of Mirani following the untimely death of a man who has been described as one of Queensland's greatest statesmen, the late Ernest Evans. Although Mr. Evans's death was a sad loss and a great blow to the Government and people of Queensland, I think we can be very pleased with his replacement. The Country Party is very proud of the type of candidates it can bring forward to represent the people in this Parliament. I again congratulate Mr. Newbery on his election as a parliamentarian, and I congratulate him particularly on the manner in which he moved the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Mr. Thackeray: You will notice that you have only one Liberal member listening to you.

Mr. SULLIVAN: Well, I hope he will learn something from what I have to say. I can only say that those who are not listening have my sympathy.

The seconder of the motion, the hon. member for Ithaca, Mr. Windsor—"Dear Old Bob", as we have come to know him—who is retiring at the end of this Parliament, has made many good contributions to debates in this Chamber. I know some of his constituents in the Ithaca electorate personally, and I think that the hon. member—he would agree with this—probably does much more in his electorate than is reflected by his speeches here. I know that the people of Ithaca will miss him. I saw in this morning's Press that

a gentleman has been endorsed by the Liberal Party to contest Ithaca at the next election, and we look forward to welcoming him here in the next Parliament.

Mr. Tucker: You can't be serious!

Mr. SULLIVAN: Following that remark, I hope to be very serious in the next 35 minutes.

Since we last met in this Chamber during the previous session of Parliament, many very serious difficulties have confronted us and it has not been an altogether easy period for the Government. Queensland—for that matter, all the eastern States of Australia—have been ravaged by possibly the most severe drought in living memory. In my lifetime, I can remember the 1926 drought and the droughts of 1936 and 1946, and 1951 was a fairly dry year, too. But in my memory of my property and the district in which I live, I can say that there has never been a drought as severe as the one this year. I am not looking for any particular sympathy for the people of my area, but we must face facts. Virtually the whole of the State has been stricken by drought. Some of the sugar-growing areas have escaped, but others, such as those in the southern part of the State around Childers and Bundaberg, have felt the drought just as severely as have pastoral and dairying areas. Bearing this in mind, it is evident that the Government has had a worrying time because the economy of the State has been so hard hit.

The Country Party can be very pleased that, when a drought of such gravity struck, of the three major political parties, it was the one to take cognisance of it and set up machinery in an endeavour to assist the people affected by it. We have gone to people who can advise us on ways in which we can assist in drought relief schemes.

Speaking of such schemes, as a matter of interest, with the hon. member for Warwick, the hon. member for Carnarvon and the hon. member for Gympie, I am a member of the Country Party Drought Committee which is investigating methods of drought relief. At the present time I suppose we can use the term "drought relief", but as one associated with primary industry as long as I can remember I do not like the term "drought relief". Perhaps we should talk more of drought preparation or drought mitigation. After all, if we are going to educate people who are affected by droughts to look for relief every time a drought strikes, we will, as the old saying goes, get nowhere pretty fast. But if we can induce people associated with primary industry to prepare for droughts, I believe that in this era of mechanisation and scientific advantages to primary industry over those enjoyed generations ago we can beat droughts.

The hon. member for South Brisbane, by way of interjection when the hon. member for Burnett was speaking, said, "Don't you think some responsibility lies with the man in primary industry, the man on the land?" I agree with him entirely. I believe, and

always shall, that the first responsibility rests fairly and squarely on the shoulders of the man on the land. But I believe, too, that through our financial policies, and things of that nature, we can assist the man on the land to overcome the hardships of drought.

I want to go on record as having said that droughts play a part in agriculture and are a blessing in disguise. It is fairly hard to realise that, of course, when you are in the grip of drought as we have been for the past 12 months. Do not let me go on record as saying that the drought is broken. It is in certain areas in the south-eastern corner, and on the Darling Downs, where we have had very good relief. But it will be found that the grain-grower there, who has not really been affected by this drought, is already saying, because of the prolific growth that has taken place, "What a wonderful thing droughts are in rejuvenating the soil!" Apparently that is nature's way of rejuvenating soil.

When I say that droughts are a blessing in disguise, I say it advisedly, although when one is in the midst of a drought it is difficult to appreciate it. On the black-soil plains, where the majority of our wheat is grown, even in a dry year without it being a drought year, the tendency is for the ground to crack wide open. I think the hon. member for Maryborough spoke about that fairly recently when he was on the property of his son-in-law. He was amazed at the cracks in the ground, feet deep and five or six inches wide. That happened last year when it was only a fairly dry year. This year, of course, it has been accentuated to a great extent. The cracking and opening of the ground allows the air to get in and rejuvenate the soil. After a drought we always find that the growth is much more prolific. That is why I say that droughts can be a blessing in disguise. They are nature's way of rejuvenating the soil.

As I said, it is no doubt the responsibility of the man on the land to prepare for droughts. Many people do make that preparation. Unfortunately, however, we have experienced a series of dry years. Let me mention a matter that came up at one of our Country Party Drought Committee meetings, something which has been taken up by the Country Parties in all eastern States at Commonwealth level at the instigation of the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. McEwen, our own Premier and the Leader of the Country Party in New South Wales. At that meeting I was very interested in a conversation with one of the members from the Hunter River Valley, an area which we have always thought to be pretty well drought-free. In that intensively dairying area, fodder conservation had been practised to a large extent. That member pointed out to the committee that during the dry winter last year the farmers were obliged to use most of their reserves of fodder to feed their cattle. The dry winter was followed by a dry spring and a dry summer,

which did not give them an opportunity to restore their fodder stocks, so now they go into their second dry winter without any reserves. In what was considered to be a drought-free dairying area they are entering their second dry winter without any preparedness for drought. When such arduous weather conditions prevail, the farmer cannot be blamed for making insufficient preparation for drought.

The same sort of thing applies in many parts of Queensland. In my lifetime and the lifetime of people much older than I am—people who can remember back to the 1902 drought—we have not previously experienced such a widespread drought. In previous droughts, although one area might be drought-stricken, relief was available in other areas not very far distant. That is not so this year. The only way to save our stock was to hand-feed them.

That brings me to the point that I think the Government should induce the farmers to make better provision by way of fodder conservation to see them through dry times such as we have recently experienced. Although the recipients of assistance from the Government under the drought relief scheme are appreciative—it is the most generous assistance that has been made available in my memory—I think that Cabinet should have acted sooner. That is not only my belief. It has been confirmed by such people as managers of dairy factories, directors of dairy boards, members of graziers' associations and dairymen's organisations. It is thought that had Cabinet acted a couple of months sooner to make this finance available it would have been of much greater benefit to those who received it. I have been told by butter factory managers that once some people who were in really dire straits were able to avail themselves of this finance and commenced feeding their dairy herds, their production lifted a little. Their belief is that if the money had been made available a couple of months sooner, before production dropped to an all-time low, the dairy herds could have been kept in production—not full production—and the recipients of the drought relief would have had a greater income.

I am only mentioning that point. I think Cabinet could have acted a little sooner. I do not want Cabinet to think that the dairymen are not keenly appreciative. In certain areas protest meetings were called, as in the Lockyer. Dairymen in my area wish to dissociate themselves from the criticism that has been levelled. It has been said that the £500 was not enough but these dairymen forget that, if the dry conditions had continued, the Government would have been faced with the necessity of providing another £500. I give the Government full marks, particularly with reference to the conditions of the loans. They are to be interest-free for two years and paid off over a further five years. I believe that to be very generous

and, in the main, most dairymen, graziers, or stock-owners have a full appreciation of what the Government did.

Mr. Hanson: Don't you think the £50,000 was enough?

Mr. SULLIVAN: I do not think anybody thinks it was enough in the circumstances, but at least it indicated that the Government was prepared to make some contribution and it should be congratulated for doing so. I express appreciation on behalf of the people who received some of the gift fodder as a result of the donations made, whether they were large or small. The Government donated £50,000 and other people subscribed an additional £30,000 to the appeal. Whether they put in 2s., £500 or £1,000, everyone is very appreciative of their action.

Mr. Melloy: Do you think the public should have been asked to contribute, or do you think the Government should have carried the whole burden?

Mr. SULLIVAN: Let us look at it this way: apparently the members of the public who subscribed the extra £30,000 felt, "Well, here is our opportunity to express in some humane way our realisation of the hardships that the people on the land are going through." The Premier provided the £50,000 and invited the public to subscribe. I think the Premier has been commended in many places, and I commend him now.

An Opposition Member: In that £30,000 there would have been many people who shirked their responsibility.

Mr. SULLIVAN: That may be so. I was very pleased to read that some members of the hon. member's party subscribed to it. I should have liked to be in a position to subscribe to it but I was in just as bad a state as others who were drought-stricken and was not in a position to do so.

Mr. Thackeray: You should have sold your property at Indooroopilly.

Mr. SULLIVAN: I am a member of Parliament, but that does not mean I am not affected equally with my neighbours. Let us not be petty about these things. It was a grand idea to give the public of Queensland an opportunity to subscribe and I am sure that those who did, did so very graciously. I point out that drought relief schemes have been introduced by previous Governments—Labour Governments and Country-Liberal Governments—and no doubt they will be introduced again in the future.

I believe that better use could be made of the money if it was made available in good times rather than when a drought is on top of us. It is common knowledge that during a drought the price of lucerne hay—I shall deal with lucerne hay as that is the main source of fodder available—soars to £40, £50, and even £60 or £70 a ton. I

believe that a large percentage of farmers realise that it is a good idea to make provision in good years if they cannot grow lucerne hay. In some of our areas where there is no irrigation and they cannot grow it, there are many occasions on which it can be purchased for £8 to £10 a ton. I believe that each year every small stock owner should purchase approximately 20 tons a year and every big stock owner 50 tons to 100 tons of lucerne hay for storage. We know that we get one pretty dry year in every five, so that at the end of five years the small stock owner would have 100 tons of lucerne hay stored to get him through a dry period. If we all did that relative to the number of stock we run, it would be very good insurance against drought.

If the money made available by the Government in drought times was used in good times to store fodder against the possibility of drought, it would go four to five times as far. I recommend that to the Premier and his Cabinet colleagues. We must induce stock owners to store fodder in good times. This time we reached the stage where the only fodder available was wheat. Had the drought continued until December, which often happens, goodness knows where the fodder would have come from. Imagine the national loss of stock had we not recently had rain.

There has always been a 50 per cent. rebate on the rail cartage of fodder which is to be stored for use in time of drought. That is a very good rebate and people appreciate it. Most fodder in the closer-in areas—the south-eastern corner, the whole of the Darling Downs, extending as far west as Taroom, Wandoan, and Miles, and through to Tara—is transported by road. When dealing with baled hay—I am not concerned with grain—the less it is handled the better. Fodder storage schemes should, I believe, be on the basis of "on the farm." Over the years I have heard various schemes put forward which would operate through co-operatives or governments or somebody else buying all the hay and grain available and storing it at specified points. I believe that such methods would merely add to the cost of the fodder, and for that reason I advocate on-the-farm storage. By that I mean the taking of fodder from the producer into one's own shed, where it stays till one wants it.

I am pleased to say that during the current drought the Government waived road tax on the movement of fodder used for drought feeding. I have advocated this for the last three or four years, and have previously been told that it just could not be done. Apparently the Minister for Transport, with his Cabinet colleagues, found a way round it by the Treasury's subsidising the Department of Transport for the concessions granted to those who are drought-stricken. Today it is customary to transport fodder by road instead of rail, and I believe that some concession should be given.

I listened to the hon. member for Gregory making a plea to the Minister for Transport, and I listened also to the hon. member for Mackenzie this morning when he directed to the Minister for Transport notice of a question concerning the movement of drought-stricken stock. I shall listen with interest to the Minister's reply tomorrow morning. I believe that the same concessions should apply to the transport of drought-stricken stock. After all, but for the drought they would not have to be moved. When people are stricken by drought conditions, they want transport as cheap as they can possibly get it.

Mr. R. Jones: They want rail concessions during times of drought but they won't use the railway in times of prosperity.

Mr. SULLIVAN: The hon. member has missed my main point. I am putting up a case for the reduction of road transport fees in a time of drought to assist these people. The hon. member for Gregory indicated whilst making his plea that the Railway Department cannot shift the stock for nine weeks, and in that time the stock will die. It is appreciated that drought conditions and the movement of stock may have overtaxed the facilities of the Railway Department. However, if the railways cannot handle the stock, road transport hauliers are not operating in opposition and therefore there should not be any road tax. Today stock are being sold or moved for agistment purposes. The other day I spoke to one man who was trying to keep alive 350 head of cattle on roads 1½ chains wide in the area outside Kingaroy. He told me what it would cost to transport them to three or four places where there was a little feed available. The Government could well assist him and others like him by not imposing road tax on the movement of drought-stricken stock. After all, the lifting of road tax at 1½d. a ton-mile would reduce the freight rate in the case of a 12-ton semi-trailer from 8s. to 6s. 6d. a mile, which would mean a considerable saving.

Mr. Thackeray: There is no relief for the unemployed.

Mr. SULLIVAN: The hon. member can speak about that if he wishes. I am speaking about relief for people who may not be unemployed but who nevertheless are not making any money. They are not making any money, and they are losing it every time a beast dies. Is the hon. member in favour of assisting the man on the land, or is he not?

Mr. Thackeray: The man on the land should be able to assist himself.

Mr. SULLIVAN: If the hon. member was in favour of assisting him, he would make an interjection that might assist me in some way.

People who are unemployed receive Social Service benefits. I have every sympathy and respect for people who are unemployed, but

at least Social Services take care of them when they are unemployed. The man on the land who is unemployed cannot leave his property in drought time because he has to try to keep his stock alive, but he is debarred from receiving Social Service benefits. I think that is a matter that should be looked into by the Federal Government. Where it can be established that the man on the land cannot leave his property because he has stock to look after and he has no income, I believe that, like a person who is unemployed, he should be entitled to receive Social Service benefits.

Mr. R. Jones: Like the unemployed, he should be subject to a means test.

Mr. SULLIVAN: If one looks at the bank accounts of some of these people after the drought, I am sure they will qualify to the same extent as some unemployed people.

Mr. R. Jones: That would be very interesting to see.

Mr. SULLIVAN: If money were made available to induce primary producers to provide storage space and store fodder during times of plenty, I think this would play a big part in stabilising the lucerne industry. In parts of Queensland where water is available for irrigation, men on the land make their livelihood by growing lucerne, and I believe that the industry could be stabilised if more schemes of this type were established. I have talked this over with men who are engaged in growing lucerne. They have told me that if they could get a guaranteed price of about £8 or £10 a ton all the year round for all the lucerne they can grow, they would be very happy. I spoke to one young man in my area recently—in his case it would be dry farming—who is on what is regarded as some of our best wheat country—the haystack scrub—and he told me that if he could get £10 a ton for his lucerne all the year round it would be just as remunerative as wheat-growing. I am trying to arouse the interest of owners of stock in the area in utilising their own country for the growing of grain and fodder crops for their stock and also entering into contracts with men who grow lucerne.

Of course, it is no use our talking about storing fodder unless the storage facilities are available. As we know, hay sheds and grain sheds are fairly costly to construct, and some of the people on the land who have been hit very hard by the drought will need assistance in this direction. I should say that the ones who will need assistance most will be those who can least afford to make provision for storage. If the Government can devise a scheme of finance over a long period with fairly easy interest payments, I believe it will prove to be a really good investment. I understand that in Canada the Government lends money to farmers for the provision of fodder storage over a 20-year period at 3 per cent. interest. Some may say that is a very low interest rate. I suppose it is by today's standards, but apparently the Government there realises that whilst it may

be giving something away for 3 per cent., in assisting people in primary industry it is benefiting the country's economy and it is a fairly good investment. I feel that, perhaps through the medium of the Commonwealth Development Bank and the Agricultural Bank, an approach at Premier level should be made to the Commonwealth Government to make funds available for this purpose.

As I mentioned earlier, we in the Country Party are vitally interested in this matter. I am not saying that Opposition members are not interested in the affairs of the man on the land. I think they are, but it is natural that Country Party members, who have set up this committee, should have done everything possible. I have a document here of recommendations that we make, in our case to our own Leader and Premier, Mr. Nicklin. Other members may do the same thing, in the State and in the Commonwealth, but I believe that anything we do to induce people to prepare for droughts must be started here and now. It has been said that people are apt to forget a drought very quickly after one or two good seasons. I believe that is so. If we are to introduce any scheme that will induce farmers and graziers to do more to assist themselves, by preparing for droughts, and thereby assist the economy of our country, now is the time to start, not after we have good seasonal conditions when people are prone to forget the lessons they should have learned.

For that reason I believe that the drought has perhaps been worthwhile, for want of a better expression. It is true that many people on the land today have never experienced a drought. It is 19 years since 1946. There are many people with their own properties who are in the 30 to 35 years-of-age group. They were only boys and girls in 1946 and they have never experienced the ravages of drought. Please God that they will not forget too quickly.

(Time expired.)

Mr. BROMLEY (Norman) (5.33 p.m.): The time allotted to us to speak on the Address in Reply is, unfortunately, one of the very few opportunities we have to air almost any grievance. I say in all sincerity that there should be many more occasions in Parliament when we, as members, can rise and speak of matters affecting the welfare of the State in general. Unfortunately we have only two opportunities a year to do so, namely, in the Address-in-Reply debate and the Budget debate.

Mr. Nicklin: The Estimates allow pretty wide scope, too.

Mr. BROMLEY: To a certain extent, but one has to speak to the Estimates. One cannot drift on to things that perhaps affect one's electorate particularly or the State in general. We do have other opportunities, but I believe we should have still more.

I wish to pay my due respects to the mover and seconder of the Address-in-Reply motion and to congratulate them on their

efforts. I am sincere when I say that we shall be sorry to lose both those members next year.

Although relatively few members have spoken today, we have had some fairly constructive speeches. The last one, by the hon. member for Condamine, was rather dry; nevertheless, it was very interesting. Although I think he should have been more critical of the Government's attitude towards helping the man on the land through drought relief, I believe he was sincere. I do not praise the hon. member very often but I believe that credit is due to him on this occasion.

Like my Leader, I am disappointed that Sir Henry Abel Smith is leaving us. To use an Australianism, I would say that he is a good bloke. He is a good mixer, one who can speak with people in all walks of life. He has done a tremendous job for Queensland, and he will do the same job for this great State of ours by publicising it when he gets back to England.

Many subjects can be dealt with in the Address-in-Reply debate. Indeed, many were covered in the Administrator's Opening Speech. Today I wish to deal with some of the very important matters that affect both the State's economy and the people as a whole. I have put a lot of thought into what I am going to say. It is what I might call a thesis on industrial relations between management and labour. This important subject was touched on by the Administrator when he referred to various industrial disputes. A lot of study has gone into the preparation of my speech and I believe that some good could emanate from it if all members of the Government would listen to what I have to say. I do not do it very often but I intend to read part of my speech on this occasion because I think this is a very important matter.

Mr. Davies: You are quoting from copious notes?

Mr. BROMLEY: Yes. As the hon. member for Maryborough says, I am quoting from copious notes.

Most people today are, or should be, concerned with industrial relations between management and labour. I say this because the voting public consists of those in all walks of life, such as owners, managers, foremen, employees in all types of industry and professions, and labour leaders in unions who, as citizens, cast their votes and directly or indirectly influence legislation of all kinds, and in doing so determine the administration of such legislation. There must be understanding and wisdom between all those associated with the handling of this most important aspect of our lives as this can, and does, affect our political sphere and the economics of our democratic nation.

Labour issues, of course, are viewed differently from opposing sides. Some may condemn unions and, in a weak attempt to bolster up their arguments, state that they curtail the freedom of the individual, are responsible for wasteful inefficiency and

impede the rate of industrial progress. This, I state most emphatically, is a wrong attitude and does harm to industrial relations and is an insult to working people. Others—I am among them—commend the unions for introducing more and more democracy and justice for the workers in their dealings with the employer, and commend them for increasing employee security against arbitrary decisions by management and their endeavours to secure better conditions and social welfare activities and general all-round benefits.

There are, of course, pressure groups on both sides. This we cannot deny. Business associations, on the one hand, strive to make higher profits by endeavouring to force the workers to a greater productivity and thereby obtain what they consider to be greater value for their capital outlay and achieve a better profit pattern; whilst unions, on the other hand, encourage a fair day's work for a fair day's pay and, in turn, strive to eliminate slavery with the ultimate purpose of securing for their members a more equitable share of the ever-increasing margins of profit enjoyed by the employers. This, of course, is their right and they should not be completely denied.

Unfortunately, perhaps, industrial relations are inseparable from human relations and there are many involvements. Most persons, I believe, whatever their position in society, are honest and sincere and yet their behaviour at times is extraordinary and often irrational where money or conditions are concerned. The worker has only his skill and labour to offer and surely it is his inherent right to be able to withdraw this labour if his working conditions are in danger of deteriorating or his demands or appeals for a greater share of profits produced by his own skill are completely ignored and Governments, even in a democracy, continue to include harsh penal clauses in their legislation. It appears to me that more and more employers are now believing that bargaining processes, which we can describe as round-table conferences, are producing better results for all concerned and furthermore, that by agreeing eventually, if not gracefully, to a better wage structure, they will and do enjoy better industrial harmony and, in a short time, greater profits, because they realise that the worker spends his earnings on things he needs for his and his family's comfort, thereby putting more money into circulation.

This does not mean to say that I do not agree with arbitration and the system as we know it, but I do suggest strongly that whilst the system of arbitration may not be outmoded, a complete inquiry and revision should be undertaken immediately. Perhaps I should say I believe in arbitration, but much more so in conciliation. The Queensland Act is known as "The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act of 1961". There are, of course, regulations and rules of court under this Act. I personally have achieved more through conciliation with employers and their representatives for

sections of industry which I have represented than by the other method of arbitration. The present-day court arbitration is, in fact, too slow a procedure.

Here, I wish to make a comparison with a section of the Act in Queensland concerning the Industrial Commission with the law in America; not that the law of that country is altogether perfect in many respects, but there are portions which are an improvement on those existing on the scene in Australia. I quote verbatim from the Act in Queensland—

"Provided that any bonus payment provided for by an Award or industrial agreement in force immediately prior to the commencement of this Act (1961) shall continue in force until the circumstances in which it was awarded shall have so altered as to require the reduction or abrogation thereof and the Commission shall have jurisdiction from time to time to reduce such bonus payments or to abrogate them accordingly."

No indication or direction for the Commission to increase bonus payments is contained in the Act. I believe it is shocking legislation that gives the court or the commission power to reduce the bonus or to eliminate it altogether. It is one-sided legislation. It is most unfair and I often wonder how unreal a Government can get when that sort of legislation is on its Statute Book. Furthermore, the Act indicates that subject to the power of the commission to reduce bonus payments, the question of bonus payments is to be a matter of and for negotiation between employer and employees, or—and which is the same—the industrial unions representing their members. Although a commissioner is to be made available for mediation or conciliation, only at the request of both parties, no advice is indicated as to the manner of negotiations. Summed up, it obviously means that if the employer did not agree to an increase in bonuses the meeting would be abortive and the aggrieved parties—this naturally being the unions representing the employees—would have no further right to seek a just increase.

What a democratic Government we have—I don't think! Just imagine the worker having no other redress to seek justifiable means of sharing the profits brought about by his own labour, and yet on the other hand the Government has legislated to give itself the right to force men to work and, through this legislation, also the power to deprive the worker of his hard-won birthright to withdraw his own labour.

In America, the essentiality of the system is the fact that the law—and this is important—makes it mandatory for the employer—in other words, it is a legal duty—to bargain with the union, and for the union to bargain with the employer. This bargaining, of course, has to be in good faith. That means that all attend the bargaining table with no fixed intention of not retreating from any pre-determined plan of action. However, even in America the worker by law still

retains the right to strike or withdraw his own labour. This, to my mind, is essentially a freedom in any so-called democratic country. Again comparing this situation with the Queensland Government amendments of the law in 1961, it shows that neither of these things is provided for. The employer is not even bound to meet the union, let alone negotiate in good faith.

Recalling the Mt. Isa dispute, the mines officials were willing to meet the unions, but stated that at no time would they be prepared to increase the bonus payment. The only section in the Act which gives the right to strike is Section 98—which incidentally could be wiped out by an order of the commission or a declaration of a state of emergency by the Government—but in effect this means nothing—that is, Section 98 means nothing—because of the very fact that it is nullified by the conditions contained in the section. A good question in this case would be: what chance has the worker got?

One method of improving management-labour relations could be introduced by case studies at certain firms by focusing attention on these relations, studying in detail at the same time effects on labour during technological change, wage and price relations, and the harmony or otherwise of the communications between both parties. I would further recommend first-hand experience of those engaged in those case studies by a spell in the workings of both industrial management and, of course, participation in the actual manual side of the industry concerned. Those reports and conclusions would be reliable and of considerable value to all concerned.

The role of trade unions is an important one, and trade unions represent an intermediary or instrument for meeting most of the economic, political, social, and psychological problems of large-scale industry, machine technology, and of the automobile industry assembly-line production. As well they are a means of achieving the desires and the goals of the majority of the people, the workers of the nation. They protect the workers' rights and are a powerful voice in the protection of workers from arbitrary and unfair treatment in employment. Furthermore, official union positions, which are open to all members, carry a sense of responsibility and prestige for all conscientious members. Loyal members of unions who take an active interest in the welfare of their fellow men must inevitably feel a sense of self-respect and pride when better conditions are won by their efforts. A feeling of pride and dignity must fill the mind of a good unionist when he knows that he does not have to rely on the employers' largess in voluntarily granting an objective which anyway is not normally handed to him on a silver platter.

The strength and bargaining power of a trade union is a great influence on the decisions of management and whilst neither side gives in easily, I feel the trend today is for more employers to recognise the need

of workers for financial and social security, and the development of codes and standards of a higher degree may be forthcoming in the attitude of management towards labour. I sincerely hope so because, if this is so, the world will be by far a better place in which to live.

With the advance and encroachment of technological machinery into our every-day lives, the length of the working day and the hours of the working week must be given some considerable thought, as this must affect workers and productivity. People in all walks of life must eventually benefit, and consequently serious consideration must be given to discussions by and amongst all sections of industry so that these benefits will become an established reality.

From my studies during many years, I believe that the following points must be made with regard to hours of work. The longer the hours of work, the greater tends to be the amount of sickness, absenteeism, work injury, fatigue, and consequent defective output. Perhaps one of the most important factors with regard to continuity of working hours is monotonous repetitive work which inevitably quickens fatigue more than do varying other types of occupation. Long hours, too, are likely to cause ill-health and reduce the length of a working man's life. Furthermore—and this is not desired by the worker or the employer—increased absenteeism (or "taking a sickie", as it is commonly described), accompanying longer hours of work also arises from insufficient time off to attend to personal matters. On the other hand, during times when job opportunities are limited, insecurity of employment also has adverse psychological effects that manifest themselves immediately or later in life. Extended unemployment may impair morale, skills, working habits, and even family and social life.

Where better conditions, including increased wages, are concerned, there is a percentage of people who subscribe to the theory that increases in wages are of no real benefit because prices of commodities rise out of proportion. This is so where monopolies exist, and particularly so where restrictive trade practices flourish, and it is up to the Government of the day to keep a firm control, to prevent price-fixing by private industry, and to institute price control on essential foodstuffs and necessary commodities used in every-day life. Without this watch-dog of control, the worker becomes steeped in debt and hire-purchase commitments. Actually, as a definite matter of fact, applications for wage increases usually are the result of price increases, and chasing these increases in the prices of consumer products becomes a vicious circle which very often leads to nowhere.

It has been proved many times that a general wage increase does not, as some manufacturers claim, increase the cost of production, since—and this is very true—the worker, whether male or female, becomes more efficient when better paid, better fed,

better clothed, and, because of an increase in wages, often better housed. (That is, of course, if he can get a house under the administration of this Government!) As has been stated, the prices of many goods are fixed at extremely high figures by monopolies, and profits are thereby not affected by increases in wages. One sees this by the huge discounts that are often offered on certain articles, particularly in the field of electrical goods, and the manufacturers and retailers must rub their hands with glee at the gullibility of some of the buying public. However, excessive profit-making is not completely bound up with industrial relations but is a feature of negotiations when the consideration of "ability to pay" by the employer is under discussion.

Security in the immediate future, and in the years to come during retirement, is always uppermost in the minds of the ordinary people, and since the establishment of the Labour movement this has been the goal of those who work for the betterment of their fellows. Organised labour has strongly supported legislative measures to protect workers and their families from victimisation, unemployment, sickness, accidents, old age, and poverty caused by the death of the breadwinner. With the average life expectation increasing, governments, management and labour must enter into general agreement for the security of families and, because of the increasing intrusion of automation into our lives and the inevitable shortening of the working week, together with the increased need for skilled labour due to technological advance, special thought will have to be given to those who are least able to bear the burden of early retirement. They are the unskilled who are generally classed within the low income bracket and who consequently have not been able to prepare for early retrenchment.

Finally, harmonious industrial relations depend on the success of the parties concerned in meeting with one another and setting out their problems clearly and concisely, with no evidence of prejudicial bias on either side. It is not denied that management and labour have their own viewpoints and problems and that each has the right to consider its own interests, and much will depend on the skill with which each representative presents his case as to the eventual success or otherwise in the final summing up. Mutual understanding leads to greater respect, and greater respect between management and labour is a worth-while achievement in the final analysis.

I believe that if some cognisance is taken of the remarks that I have made, in the long run both the workers and management will benefit. It was after reading an article headed "Weakness seen in our arbitration system" in the Press that I decided to speak on the subject of industrial relations. It has also been stated in the Press that the Government has a babes-in-the-wood attitude to industrial matters and differences

between workers and management. That was a claim made by the Queensland Employers' Federation, not by me. The Queensland Chamber of Manufactures said that the Queensland Government has shown an astonishing and dangerous lack of leadership in its handling of the industrial situation. In the "Telegraph" of Saturday, 21 August this year, Mr. John Eddy, who is a very knowledgeable man in the field of economics, under the heading "All did good job for year", said—

"Australian workers turned in a good performance in the year to June 30, judging from the national income and production accounts presented with this week's Federal Budget."

He goes on to say that the gross national production has increased tremendously—in fact, by 9 per cent. In spite of this, members of the Liberal Party tell us that the workers of Queensland always want to loaf and go on strike.

Mr. Davies: A few of the companies were managed by rogues, judging by their record over the past few years.

Mr. BROMLEY: Yes. It is a very sorry state of affairs.

Industrial relations are very important, and the Government must do something to preserve the welfare of the workers. If it does not, all sections of the community, from the teenagers to the pensioners, will revolt. I give that word of warning to the Government because I believe that if the workers are given a fair spin, they will give a fair spin in exchange. Everyone knows that, and no-one knows it better than the hon. member for Ithaca, Mr. Windsor, who is an employer. Every good employer knows that if he treats his workers fairly and gives them an extra £1 a week, he will benefit indirectly. The workers will spend the money and his business and the business of many other employers will benefit directly, and in the long run the coffers of the Federal Government will benefit, too, from increased taxation.

Mr. Windsor: An employer would be a fool if he did anything to prejudice his workers in any way.

Mr. BROMLEY: Unfortunately, in the past there have not been very many good employers; but I believe that today employers—the hon. member for Ithaca is one of them—are cognizant of the fact that there must be more co-operation between the employer and his employees and that each of them must have a better understanding of the other's point of view.

[Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.15 p.m.]

Mr. BROMLEY: There are many points in the Administrator's Opening Speech on which we could speak. One of the matters he mentioned was tourism, which brings me to a suggestion that I wish to make to the

Government. It is in relation to wharfing facilities for tourists, which to my mind is very important.

I have here various newspaper cuttings, the first of which is from the "Telegraph" of 12 August, 1965. Under the heading "Drab View Awaits 1100 Ship Tourists", it says—

"A shipload of 1100 tourists will arrive in Brisbane on Saturday to a cheerless row of tin sheds and mobile cranes."

The article speaks of the uninspiring Cairncross dry dock and the fact that Hamilton wharf is a picture of functional efficiency and that there are only galvanised iron buildings there to greet the tourist. It goes on to say that outside the wharf gates the tourist disembarking from the ship will be approximately one mile from the nearest public transport and has nothing to greet his eye except a dirty road and cheerless buildings.

Under the heading "Shed Berths 'Uninspiring'", the "Telegraph" of 14 August, 1965, reports that one tourist said—

"In Auckland there is a two-storey concrete terminal. You can park your car on top of the terminal or even sit in the car and wave to your friends as they come in or go."

That is just as the Liberal Party and the Country Party are waving goodbye to some of their friends from the House.

I refer now to "The Sunday Mail" of 15 August, in which the heading is "Tourists get a Smoky Welcome".

Mr. Duggan: This is more for the Budget, of course.

Mr. BROMLEY: As the Leader of the Opposition says, these are the sort of things one can discuss on the Budget. I wanted to raise this matter on the Appropriation Bill but I did not get an opportunity. In view of the importance of tourism and the fact that we are trying to foster it, or so the Government says, we should be prepared to spend money on the facilities that tourists are entitled to. Obviously the Government is not doing enough because it appears to be afraid to spend money on these things.

I suggest to the Government that consideration be given to building a special wharf for tourists. It may be said that there is no suitable locality for the erection of such a wharf. I am suggesting a wharf for tourists only. Anybody who knows East Brisbane will know of Mowbray Park. Whilst I am not advocating, or even suggesting, any alienation of park lands, I believe that the expanse of park land known as Mowbray Park, which has a very wide frontage to the Brisbane River, would be ideal for this purpose. The Treasurer, who is in the Chamber, might interject that the depth of the river there is not sufficient for ships to navigate but the Administrator spoke of extensive dredging that is being undertaken throughout the State. Dredging operations

are going on in various harbours and in places where large oil ships enter the State. Dredging is going on in the electorate the Premier represents, at Caloundra. The Government is undertaking an extensive dredging scheme there.

Mr. Nicklin: Mooloolabah.

Mr. BROMLEY: Caloundra. What are some of the university people doing?

Mr. Nicklin: They are doing a test for the local authority.

Mr. BROMLEY: This is at Caloundra.

Mr. Nicklin: Caloundra.

Mr. BROMLEY: I am glad that we agree. It is not very often we do agree. A man spoke to me the other day about the Premier's retirement. I said, "Perhaps the Premier will retire; nevertheless he is not a bad sort of chap. When he does retire there will be a scramble for his position. Who is going to get it, I don't know." Reverting to the speech of the Leader of the Opposition, I would suggest that as the Premier is getting on in years, although he does not show it, he would make an excellent Governor.

I do not want to digress from my suggestion about the construction of a wharf at Mowbray Park. One does not need a great deal of imagination to realise what a wonderful view would be provided for tourists. All the facilities are already there for tourists to visit the environs of the city. Although I do not know how long we will have them, the trams now pass the park. Ample buses serve the area. There are cab ranks in the vicinity and Park Road would lead right to the wharf. At each end of Mowbray Park ferries operate a service across the river. In their transportation survey Wilbur Smith and Associates visualise a bridge across the river at that point. It would be an ideal place to build a wharf. If tourists did not want to go far from their ship they could stretch their legs in that beautiful park.

Mr. Ramsden: An ideal place for a tunnel.

Mr. BROMLEY: The hon. member for Merthyr would have to come in with his tunnel. He seizes every opportunity to do so. He may as well bury himself in his tunnel because there is no chance of his getting it.

Mr. Lloyd: There is very strong opposition for his seat this time, too.

Mr. BROMLEY: I doubt that the hon. member for Merthyr will be endorsed this time. They will do the Peter Connolly act again, as organised by Clive Hughes. He will probably be the instigator of it, but I will have more to say about that later on.

Nobody can deny Queensland's tourist attractions. Possibly this State has the greatest tourist potential in the Commonwealth. Apart from the ideal weather, which is possibly the best in the world, we have many natural beauty spots. I hope that serious consideration will be given to building a wharf where I suggest. There is a tremendous length of

river frontage in that area. At least there is merit in my suggestion and I leave it for the consideration of the House.

I now turn to what I consider is a matter of great concern to every member of Parliament and every parent or other citizen associated with Parents and Citizens' Associations. Unfortunately, I have not sufficient time to deal fully with the matter but I wish to say something about the important subject of subsidies. I am referring now to subsidies paid by the Government to schools. Throughout the State there are some very large schools and some very small ones and it is the small schools with small attendances, and consequently a limited number of parents to form a Parents and Citizens' Association, with which I am most concerned. I do not wish to be parochial about this but I have three schools in my electorate with very small enrolments. The Buranda Boys' School has about 150 children enrolled and the Buranda Girls and Infants' School has a slightly larger enrolment. I also have the Narbethong school for the visually handicapped, with an enrolment of 78. Quite a few of the children attending the Narbethong school are boarders so hon. members can well understand the very hard job we have to raise finance in the small schools when we have only a limited number of parents on the Parents and Citizens' Association. When all is said and done the Parents and Citizens' Association is only a collecting body for the Government. It does not have enough say in the running of the school. The associations, so far as the Government is concerned, exist only to raise finance to save the Government money in providing things that are necessary for the schools.

Mr. Hughes: That is a shocking misconception of community service.

Mr. BROMLEY: As a matter of fact, the hon. member who has interjected should be at a school meeting tonight. He is the Government appointee to the school to which I have just referred and he has not yet attended a meeting there. I have not missed one. We have to raise at least £2,000 a year for this school. It used to be known as the State School for the Blind but it is now the school for the visually handicapped. I repeat that we have to raise £2,000 a year to give the children at the school what should be theirs by right. We have to pay large sums of money for various things which the Government should provide. I know that the Government cannot provide all that is necessary for all schools. However, we have a school with only 70 to 78 pupils, with a small Parents and Citizens' Association. The Minister for Education appointed two Government representatives, both from another electorate—one of them a political opportunist—without even consulting me, although I represent the electorate.

(Time expired.)

Mr. CORY (Warwick) (7.28 p.m.): I have great pleasure in taking the opportunity to join in this debate and also to extend my congratulations to the hon. members for

Mirani and Ithaca, who respectively moved and seconded the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. Each of the hon. members, at completely different ends of their political careers, addressed himself to the debate in a manner that we should be very proud of when thanking His Excellency the Administrator for the way in which he opened Parliament.

I will always remember the hand of friendship which the hon. member for Ithaca extended to me when I first came to this House not very long ago. I greatly appreciated that friendship and, having met the hon. member for Mirani, I believe we are very lucky that Tom Newbery has seen fit to put himself at the disposal of his electors as a member of this Parliament. We will benefit from the experience he has gained throughout his life, and I feel that we will be much richer for his friendship. We can look forward to a very worth-while sojourn in this House by the hon. member for Mirani. We will learn a lot from him and should be appreciative of his wisdom.

We have all gained experience in the last 12 months from the situation which has existed in Queensland. We have not encountered such a situation previously. Water storage is valuable to both the primary producer and secondary industry. We have seen, and are still seeing in the greater portion of our State, the spectacle of diminished water supplies. This is affecting the inland industries and primary industries of this State. The surface water is not able to carry the stock in some areas of the State, and the stock have to be shifted. Many small industries are handicapped because the surface waters on which they rely are no longer available or are becoming very short.

The figures relating to the initial use that was made of the large storage facilities that have been provided in the State could be interpreted as disappointing. But we must remember that those figures were produced about 12 months ago when the major schemes were comparatively new, and there had not been sufficient time for the industries and personnel in those districts to adjust themselves industry-wise and capital-wise so as to make full use of the water that was available. They were making a living from those industries long before the dams were constructed, and they could not adjust themselves overnight. In the last 12 months our thinking has matured on the use and value of the few storage facilities that we have in the State which have water in them at present. They have proved an invaluable asset in the areas which benefit from them. We must also agree that they are certainly inadequate for what we envisage as the ultimate usage, that is a permanent water supply for the State of Queensland, and we have a great deal more to do in that regard. I think it will also be agreed that the storage now available and in use has been of very great service, and I think the drought has indicated what can be done by

water conservation and has inspired greater enthusiasm to provide further water storage in places that have not so far benefited.

It is over 12 months since I urged the building of stage 2 of the Leslie Dam. I did that in all sincerity because I felt it wise and prudent to proceed with this construction. Regardless of what was said then, my advocacy of this additional work has been vindicated by the lessons learnt in the last 12 months. It must be remembered that at that stage it was not easy to get maximum guarantees for the amount of water that would be used for irrigation purposes. The drought of the last 12 months has, however, proved that this water will be used when its use becomes economic. I again emphatically urge proceeding with stage 2 of the dam, especially in the light of the information and knowledge gained in the last 12 months.

It must be remembered that the life blood of a country is its production, and I think the basis of production in rural industries is their water supply. It is also over 12 months ago that I indicated the great need for a permanent water supply throughout the highly fertile and irrigable land upstream from the Leslie Dam along the Condamine River and its tributaries. Permanent water is needed for the land that extends down to where water from the Leslie Dam will be available. Not a very great distance is involved, and the area is a very important one, including four or five creeks that are tributaries of the Condamine River. All are joined by large areas of alluvial flats and quite a considerable area is available and very suitable for irrigation if only water could be made available. At present, when water is most needed it is not available. Here again this need has been brought home within the last 12 months, as well as in other years. The problem is right on our plate at present.

It has also been shown in the last 12 months that not only people on the land but those engaged in industries are ready and able to make full use of any water that they are able to get. I should like to mention, too, that the Minister for Conservation, Hon. H. Richter, and the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply, Mr. Haigh, have shown genuine interest and co-operation in this matter, and I am very pleased to say that they desire to help wherever they can. A scheme such as the one under consideration will be invaluable in stimulating activity in new industries, and here I say that industries must be based either at the source of production or the source of supply. We must strive to make our area a source of supply of commodities that can readily be made use of by expanding industries. This will be a great stimulant to existing industries because it will give them enthusiasm to increase production and to increase the variety and quality of the goods that they produce. It will also enable us to show our

gratitude to the people who have battled and worked hard in these industries over many years.

It is important that all our industries should be active, virile and expanding, because this will encourage new industries in the area and raise production generally. Let us encourage the people and do everything we possibly can to assist them to overcome their problems. I might mention particularly the freight handicap of our inland industries. We must not forget this, and we must strive to find a way of overcoming their difficulties or at least alleviating them.

Land and water are the basis of production, and I should like to refer now to the valuation of land. We should not allow our thinking to be influenced too much by the word "potential". We must understand the meaning of the word and never disregard it, but we must not value on potential and we must not tax on potential. It costs a great deal of money and a lot of hard work over many years to realise the potential of land and achieve satisfactory productivity. I think we should acknowledge this by not valuing or taxing on potential. Anyone who has made full use of the potential of his land has done a very good job and should have a few years' respite from the attention of the tax gatherer. In my opinion, the Crown should have only one taxing authority for this purpose. I know there has been argument over the length and breadth of Queensland as to which taxing authority should be used, but this does not seem to me to be the correct approach. People are inclined to favour a particular valuing authority because its valuations are lower than the valuations of another authority, not because they think it is the best valuing authority for the area or because it has arrived at its valuations correctly. I suggest that it should not be a taxing authority.

Mr. Tucker: Which one do you suggest?

Mr. CORY: I am not suggesting either one or the other, but I feel it should be one who is not associated with another department or the taxing authority. It should be staffed by expert men whom we have in the State, operating within our departments as the professional valuing authority for the Crown. I question that the Crown should be able to arrive at two totally different values.

Mr. Bennett: Would you say it should be the Valuer-General?

Mr. CORY: It might well be the Valuer-General but, as I say, the criticism I have heard in this regard is based mostly on whether or not it is the higher or the lower value, not on whether it is the right valuing authority. I feel that we should be a little bit open on the subject and available for discussion with the experts. I think we should seek some advice as to how best this could be

done. I do not think we should be arbitrary that either one or the other would be the right one but it should be only one because the State's land, in the eyes of the Crown, should have only one value.

Another point I should like to stress is that no land should be so small in turnover as to become an uneconomic unit. By "uneconomic unit", I mean one that cannot cope with and service the debt which it is reasonable to expect would be incurred in the normal course of development. A certain debt, no doubt, will be incurred in the purchase, but for the development and expansion of an industry further money has to be borrowed. We must strive for production in an industry. Whether it be a farm, a business or a factory, it must be big enough to be able to service the debt which it incurred in the expansion and normal development of the business. Therefore, in terms of land, I think we must define a very fair area to give the person sufficient area to enable him to handle the situation, service the debt, and be able to make use of the potential about which I have already spoken.

Mr. Hanlon: It is easier to do that with leasehold than with freehold, is it not, for rating capacity?

Mr. CORY: Yes. I should say that the Crown has the greatest say in arriving at the area of a leasehold. Let us base the minimum on a person who has sufficient enterprise—be he farmer or otherwise—to make enough money to cope with what he would normally need on our present standard of living to make a go of it and to service the debt.

Mr. Hanlon: Under freehold, the Crown cannot help him in the same way as it could with leasehold.

Mr. CORY: But the Crown is vital in helping him to go ahead.

We must also remember that today we are different in our economy because the purchase of the land and the stock, if we take the two together, is now much smaller than the purchase price of a going concern. It is a much smaller percentage. I think we must always realise that a large proportion of the purchase price of an enterprise as a going concern is taken up in plant and machinery, which was not the case some years ago. This being so, I think we settle for a situation in which few properties—certainly in the smaller areas of the State—earn what is considered a fair interest on investment on city standards. I should say that in the smaller, more settled areas of the State a big percentage of people are living on depreciation rather than the profits derived from their land. Our values must be tied to the earning capacity of the land, not merely based on comparable sales as they are under the present formula.

Many comparable sales could be very close to the mark so that a fair and reasonable value could be put upon land, but so many anomalies can creep in and make this method of assessing land values too inaccurate to be good enough. Consideration is given to the price that a prudent purchaser might pay. Here again we find weaknesses because of the interpretation of a "prudent person". A very successful medical man with a lot of money might be interested in buying land. He might buy land in a certain area at what could be regarded as a very high price. No-one could suggest that he was not a prudent person. He would have already proved himself to be prudent in his professional life. The fact that he pays an excessive amount for a piece of land is no justification for penalising other people who earn their entire living from the land. In my opinion the wrong formula is being used at the present time. Valuations should be based on the earning capacity of the land, taking into account its use—whether it carries so many sheep to the acre, for instance, or whether it is agricultural land.

I instance another disadvantage in using comparable sales. People who have spent most of their lives working very hard in the West may wish to come closer to the coast. Perhaps they desire to settle on the Downs. If they have worked hard to earn money in the West I do not begrudge them the right to buy such land at whatever price they have to pay, but why should the industries within the area in which they purchase be penalised because of the high purchase price? Another person who might be justified in paying a little bit extra for land is the adjoining landholder. He can afford to pay more for an adjoining area because he does not need to purchase any further machinery to work it. At the same time he realises that if he does not purchase the land when it is available, someone else may buy it and it may never again become available in his lifetime.

Mr. Walsh: The valuer would take that into consideration.

Mr. CORY: He is supposed to take a lot of these things into consideration but all too often they are given but little consideration. If the formula were right he would not have to take them into consideration. The average landlord does not want the worry and concern of going to court to arrive at the correct value and it should not be necessary for him to do so. It should be done in the normal course of business with the department and the landlord co-operating.

We must remember that in our State grazing and agricultural lands there has been a great depletion in fertility. We are on the threshold of a reasonably large fertilising programme in Queensland. I know that on my own property, and on those adjoining me, in the last few years the stocking rate has dropped and the productivity of the land has been reduced. In the agricultural section the only reason productivity has been maintained—not improved—is that better machinery has become available and we have

the added advantage of improved species of plant. The cost of overcoming the decline in nutrition is very great. There are no short cuts to preventing the decline in nutrition. We must introduce either plant fertiliser or chemical fertiliser if we are to maintain the productivity of areas which have been settled for many years. We must take some physical action quickly and we might be surprised to know the number of places which have already started to do so. I repeat that the cost involved is great and I believe that the value of the land should be related to this matter.

I have no quarrel at all with the personnel who have to value Queensland. It does not really matter which department does the work. They are all experienced and competent people and I am sure that they earnestly desire to do their very best in valuing the land and that they do the best possible job. However, I am sure that the wrong formula is at their disposal to help them arrive at a decision. Much is left to interpretation, and I repeat that the interpretation of a "prudent person" is too wide. I know people in my own district who have bought land. No-one could say that they are not prudent, but I say they paid too much for it.

I should like to refer briefly to resumptions by the Main Roads Department. The appreciation of the community is readily forthcoming for the work being done by the department throughout Queensland and, without fear of contradiction, I say the department is working in all parts of the State. A very high appreciation is shown by the public for the quality and standard of road which is now recognised as necessary and we have now come to incorporate these standards in our roads system. We realise, too, that traffic is ever increasing and that the standard of the roads must be improved to meet both increased traffic and the increased weight of vehicles on the road. I commend the department and the officers and engineers for the work being done. Probably no-one is opposed to the improvement in standard or the principle of straightening narrow, dangerous sections and sharp corners. Wherever any roadworks take place a straighter alignment is surveyed, a deeper foundation is common practice, and large areas of land have to be resumed. I criticise the lack of liaison in the resumption of land. I have yet to hear of a land-holder or citizen who is against the principle of what the Main Roads Department is doing, but land-holders do like to be put into the picture as to what is taking place and told how they can get fair and just compensation. I am sure that the Main Roads Department would desire that.

I offer that criticism as a suggestion. I feel that is one matter in which the department is not doing as much as it could. People own the land that is being resumed, and they earn a living from it. They deserve, in the planning stages, the courtesy of having

the matter discussed with them. Negotiations should take place and finality reached at the earliest possible stage. There are cases where the matter drags on for a long time. I know that could be the fault of the land-holder. I admit that the procedure is reasonably routine in that notices are served and the matter is fairly well explained. Whereas the owner of the land would encounter this problem probably only once in his lifetime, the department which is resuming the land meets it every day of the week.

I do not think it is asking or expecting too much that the initiative be taken by the department in assisting the land-holder. I suggest the appointment of a liaison officer or public relations officer to meet these people. He need not be an engineer or a university graduate. All he needs to be is a genuine fellow with a basic background of the workings and the pros and cons of the Main Roads Department. He should be the type of fellow who can approach individual landholders on their properties on a man-to-man basis rather than on an official basis, which I think some technical officers are inclined to do at present when dealing with landholders. I feel that the department should give serious consideration to taking the initiative in this matter. Engineers are doing a very good job, and generally the roads being constructed meet very much with our approval. There may be differences of opinion at times but, as laymen, it is not our job to criticise their work because they are experienced men doing their job to the standards laid down by the department to be followed throughout the State.

A man who can do this type of work wisely and well is not necessarily, however, a public relations man. He may be or he may not be. Public relations men are born, and going to school does not help a man to become successful at this work. District engineers, and those above and below them, are doing their jobs well, and I doubt whether they could reasonably be expected to spend a lot of time on this work. The fact that they are expected to do it could well be one reason why these things are inclined to lag from time to time. Some suitable person should be appointed to approach landholders and gain their confidence before construction of any road gets under way. I might mention one case in which the first the man knew that a road was going through his property was when he saw a man with a bagful of pegs go past his cow-yard. That did not impress him very much. If someone had called on him and discussed his problems beforehand, I think a satisfactory basis could have been arrived at.

These people are not against the principle of what is being done and they are willing to co-operate, but I do think someone should sort out their problems with them before the road construction begins. Do not wait too long to do this, and these lags will not be so bad. I say quite genuinely that these people are not antagonistic to what is being done;

they merely want to be put into the picture so that they know what is going on. They are then able to make any necessary arrangements in plenty of time without being faced with problems when the job is well under way and the inconvenience is on their shoulders.

Mr. NEWTON (Belmont) (8.8 p.m.): Today we have listened to a number of contributions from hon. members on the Government benches concerning the problems arising for the State from the current drought. The hon. member for Condamine asked by interjection what was the feeling of the Australian Labour Party towards this problem. I want to indicate tonight on behalf of that party that our feelings are the same as they have always been on unemployment and droughts. We have stated on many occasions that both are very serious to the economy of the State. One does not have to be a member of the Country Party or the Liberal Party to realise what a serious effect they have.

Mr. SULLIVAN: I rise to a point of order. I have been accused by the hon. member for Belmont of saying something by way of interjection. Actually, I was speaking, and the hon. member for Rockhampton North interjected. I did not think that he displayed the feelings of his party at all; he seemed to convey to me that he had no feelings whatever for the man on the land.

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

Mr. NEWTON: I was in no way reflecting on the hon. member for Condamine. I was indicating the feelings of the Australian Labour Party towards this problem.

In my electorate I have quite a number of small-crop farmers who have been affected by the drought. By good management, they have made sure of an adequate water supply by providing dams, wells, or bores, and have come through the drought without great difficulty. Of course, it must be remembered that Brisbane has been more fortunate than other areas because it has had some good downpours of rain.

I agree with previous speakers that the man on the land has a responsibility to ensure that he makes hay while the sun shines. I do not know whether men on the land now are different from those of 20 years ago when I worked on the land. Quite a lot has been said today about the transport of baled fodder and the construction of storage sheds, silos, and things of that nature to enable fodder to be stored to meet situations such as the one we are now facing.

Mr. Sullivan: How much a week did you get when you were working on the land?

Mr. NEWTON: I worked seven days a week, from 4 o'clock in the morning till 7 o'clock at night, and I got 25s. a week. That was the best rate that any worker on the land got in those days.

Men on the land did not have any trouble making haystacks out in the paddocks then. I remember that on one place on which I worked there were 10 or 12 acres of lucerne. We cut it twice a year and were able to make two good haystacks out of it. I agree with one hon. member opposite who spoke this afternoon on the subject of lucerne. I worked on the Darling Downs, and there is no doubt that if you have a flat piece of land 10 or 12 acres in area along a creek, it is possible to grow very good lucerne without irrigation.

Mr. Cory: In a wet season.

Mr. NEWTON: Not only in a wet season; I have seen it grown in a reasonable season. Of course, it poses problems in a dry season.

When I was working on the Darling Downs, we used to cut the headlands before the wheat was headed—in those days the headers were pulled by 10 or 12 horses in a team, with pulley blocks and chains—and often we made haystacks out of the wheat that we cut in that way. I have even helped to stack Sudan grass on the Darling Downs to provide fodder for drought periods. I do not see why these things cannot be done today by the man on the land. Quite apart from what any Government might do, he must do something to assist himself to overcome his problems.

It is my intention to take advantage of this debate, as I have in the past, to speak on a number of matters affecting the Belmont electorate. Representations have been made to the Government on these matters, but its response has not enabled the problems to be solved.

I shall deal first with the serious problem of the increase in rent that has just been passed on by the Government to tenants of Housing Commission rental houses. I have very strong views on this subject, and since 1960, when first I was elected to represent Belmont, I have spoken on it on a number of occasions. Unfortunately, when increases are made as they have been by the present Government, people do not stop to think who does these things and, as the member representing a particular area one gets petitions from people in the area to do something on their behalf in the matter. I do not hesitate to say that immediately this matter was drawn to my attention I contacted the Press. In passing, I must thank the Press for the wonderful job it did to assist me in publishing my views. There may have been one or two errors in the article that appeared in the Press, apart from the letter received by tenants of the Queensland Housing Commission. On this occasion the letter was very different from the one sent out in 1962. At least it set out the formula laid down in the 1956 agreement and showed how the increases were applied. Unfortunately, the tenants of these State rental homes still want a number of questions answered.

A similar position arose in 1962, when the Opposition strongly attacked the Government for continually increasing the rents of Housing Commission homes. On that occasion it was stated that the increases ranged from 2s. to 9s. 3d. a week, but summarising the position one finds that, in the main, the increases were in the top bracket—7s. 3d., 8s. 3d. or 9s. 3d. a week. On that occasion we protested strongly and pointed out to the Government that something would have to be done. Again we are quite openly opposing the increase on the ground that the formula laid down is unjust and unwarranted, and is unfair to tenants of Housing Commission homes.

This Government has become noted for repealing any legislation that has been in favour of the people of Queensland. It has either repealed such legislation altogether or repealed certain sections of an Act. But in this case there has been no repealing of the formula that was laid down. It has not been repealed by the Government because it is to the Government's advantage as it stands.

If one considers the reply given to the hon. member for Salisbury in 1962 by the then Minister for Works and Housing, one can understand why the increase has been made. On that occasion the Minister said that some comparison must be kept between rents charged by the Housing Commission and those charged by landlords outside. The Minister indicated quite clearly then, and it is evident now, that this Government is determined to maintain a close comparison with the rents being charged by outside landlords.

Representations made to me reveal that outside houses are few in number and very hard to get. Since World War II houses have not been built by private people for rental purposes. Today, in the main, the rents being charged for these houses are much higher than the houses are worth. People are paying from £6 10s. to £8 10s. a week.

Mr. Bromley: More than that.

Mr. NEWTON: I agree that there are cases in which more than that is being paid, but I do not exaggerate in this House.

There is no doubt that at the present moment the Queensland Housing Commission is charging £4 to £6 a week rent for State rental homes. One has only to read the report tabled in Parliament each year which gives a comparison of the rents under the various agreements. It creates a very difficult position when there is no rent control in this State. Every three years and in between times when the houses are being reallocated to new tenants rents are increased by 10s. or 12s. 6d. a week. Landlords outside follow the lead. Once they read in the newspaper, as they did in the mid-day issue of the "Telegraph" after the letters had been sent out to the tenants, that the Minister

for Housing had said that rents had been increased from 1s. to 8s. 3d. a week, they followed the lead. They said, "If the Commissioner is putting his rentals up, we are going to put ours up." They have already done that without hesitation. Where are we going to end up? The State basic wage is £15 9s. The way Housing Commission rentals are going one-third, of that amount will be absorbed in rent. Outside landlords are taking half of it in rent, and before long it will be more.

I have here a letter that sums up the attitude of tenants since they received the letter from the Housing Commission informing them of the increased rentals from August. It states—

"We, the undersigned electors of Belmont, request that you complain on our behalf in the Parliament of Queensland about the latest increase in the rental of our Housing Commission homes. This increase takes effect from 2nd August, 1965, and is the second increase in three months, the last increase taking effect on 3rd May, 1965. It should be noted that in the past eight years, the rentals of these homes has risen by nearly 35 per cent.

"Due to general increases, not to any special change in family circumstances, a rent of £3 1s. 6d. in late 1957 now stands at £4 2s. 6d. when the latest increase takes effect in the first week of August.

"It is obvious to tenants in these homes that rates, cost of maintenance, wages or other expenses, have not, by any stretch of the imagination, risen by nearly 35 per cent. in the last eight years. We feel that these increases are particularly unwarranted in view of the unsatisfactory amount of maintenance which has been conducted on these homes, and the very unsatisfactory and unhealthy drainage system which has to be endured by the tenants of these homes.

"The system was introduced as an emergency measure during the drastic housing shortage after the last war, but should now be remedied without further expense to the residents who have suffered it for so long. Even with every care taken, sump water in certain types of allotments seeps into other people's yards and onto footpaths, and some people even pay to have the sumps attended to by persons with the necessary equipment to deal with the problem.

"The painting of these homes inside and out has been sadly neglected in many cases. Some of the homes have not been painted inside since they were built, and where there is a fibro roof, there is sometimes mildew and discoloration of the ceilings and walls due to dampness and other factors.

"Although the houses were painted outside about five years ago this painting was very badly done, and, without exaggeration, in a matter of months the paintwork on many of them was patchy and faded.

"In some homes, plaster is peeling from the ceiling, and one ceiling which began to drop down from faulty construction was constantly reported and did have some work done on it, but has never been properly repaired although it has now been in that state for years.

"The inferior type of electric stove in use in these homes is a source of resentment to the women. They are a very unusual make, slow heating, almost impossible to regulate, in constant need of adjustment and repairs, and undoubtedly contribute to a very high consumption of electricity, which increases the financial burden on the tenant.

"It is felt that it could be in the best interests of the tenants and the Housing Commission themselves to install a more modern and better type of stove in these homes.

"It would be appreciated if you would make personal representations to the Minister responsible for these matters to try and influence him into providing better stoves for the tenants, at no further expense to the tenants, in view of what we consider the continual unwarranted increases in rent. This particular matter concerning electric stoves could be handled either during the formal protest in Parliament about the other matters or separately, according to your own personal discretion and experience in these matters."

Mr. Hughes: If you tossed the people out of those homes you would have 100 waiting to go in.

Mr. NEWTON: This matter has been raised by a number of housewives in the Belmont electorate. They have taken around a petition to get it signed. It is all very well for the hon. member for Kurilpa to interject. If anyone wants to interject while I am speaking I would prefer that the hon. member for Kurilpa does so. When I spoke some time ago about the high cost of meat he told us what to do then—to live on dehydration. He is now saying that if we toss the people out of Housing Commission homes we will get other people to move in. That is quite true. However, if we are getting rent from people for Housing Commission homes let us at least do something in return for the increases which are being applied regularly.

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen: You don't imagine that we are making a profit out of them?

Mr. NEWTON: I do not imagine that at all, but if we are to continue along this line where will we end up? The letter that I read covers many of the problems in these houses and it remains unanswered. I want the Government to give serious consideration to this. We will have to give it consideration, as in the next 12 months we could become the Government of the State.

I come now to the prefabricated houses which were purchased overseas and brought to Queensland.

Mr. Hughes: What a scandal!

Mr. NEWTON: I am not going to talk about the scandal side of it. I just want to indicate to the House the present condition of those prefabricated houses. Last week I asked the Minister a question about maintenance. I am sure that the cost of maintenance of these houses vitally influences the overall maintenance costs because of the experience I have had with Housing Commission rental projects. We are continually replacing leaking fibro and tiled roofs on these houses. The Minister knows quite well that I have made numerous representations for re-roofing these houses. The same applies to the joinery. The back and front porches and steps have had to be replaced. When a tenant moves out of one of these houses a carpenter is there for two or three days with a list of jobs to be done. If you saw them being erected I am sure you would agree, Mr. Acting Speaker, that it was quite evident from the type of construction that they would last no longer than 10 or 15 years. If we cast our minds back to when they were brought to the State we realise that time has passed. I do not say it is a scandal and I am not criticising anybody because they were brought in only as a stopgap measure to overcome a problem which was rife at the time. They could never stand up as long as our Queensland timber homes, although prefabricated schools brought here and erected by our own men in their own way are still standing very well today. On behalf of the people of Queensland I must raise some form of protest in this matter. It is possible that the Housing Estimates will be debated later this year and I shall leave further comment on the subject until then.

The Government has endeavoured to streamline the education system in this State. It started at the primary level, then went to the secondary level, and it is now in the technical sphere. The Government is faced with the fact that it has created a serious position. I shall deal only with my own electorate in order to show what has happened. I asked a question in the House this morning. If I had the answer in front of me it would be of advantage, but I am not very worried about that. What is happening in my electorate is happening in other areas. Because of the change in the secondary syllabus, under which classes leave primary schools earlier than they did under the Scholarship system, the whole of the work force was needed to provide new secondary schools and additional accommodation in the metropolitan area and possibly throughout the rest of the State. The position is quite serious in the metropolitan area.

My electorate has grown by 4,000 to 5,000 people since it was formed in 1960. Rapid development is taking place. By the time

the next election is held I would not be surprised if the enrolment is up 6,000 on the 1960 figures. It is difficult to get new primary schools built and additional classroom accommodation.

Time and time again I have asked for a new school in Wondall Road. I also asked for a new school in Mt. Gravatt South. After talking myself hoarse on a number of occasions I was able to convince the Government that that school was warranted. It has only been in existence a short time, but already three new classrooms are required. It is no use waiting for the debate on the Estimates to raise these matters. Representations have already been made. Other schools in my electorate are in a similar position.

A new classroom is needed at the Mt. Petrie State School. A temporary classroom has been erected under the school, which was built during World War II. The concrete under the school is not level; it follows the fall of the ground and falls about 1 foot in the width of the school. People talk about togetherness. At this school, a pair of kids using a two-child desk are together, the books are together, and everything else is together. These things may be acceptable for a few months, but temporary accommodation gets to the stage of becoming "temporary permanent" accommodation.

A similar position exists at Belmont. Although we were successful in obtaining a new school, the same situation applies there. An administration block is required. Last year, right at the peak of the Christmas holidays, the Education Department called tenders for the shifting of a wing of three classrooms to the Manly West school. No contractors were interested at that time because of the high cost of recalling men from leave to do the work. The tenders submitted were too high and the job was not done. Two temporary classrooms were provided under that school. They are still there today, and this school will need additional classrooms next year.

Teachers and children have so far put up with this type of accommodation, and an earlier start should be made in the works programme to ensure that accommodation is ready for the beginning of the 1966 school year. In the whole matter of providing classroom accommodation, work has started too late in the year.

Whilst on the question of classroom accommodation, much has been said about providing a new university in Brisbane. In deciding the site for it, I think that the south side should be given some consideration. Because of the Government's legislation and the throwing open of the Brisbane meat market to private abattoirs, land will be available in the Creek Road area. There are quite a number of cattle-resting paddocks covering acres and acres of ground in Creek Road between Old Cleveland Road and Logan

Road, and this land would make an excellent site for a university. There would be no trouble in purchasing 200 or 300 acres for university purposes in that area. I think it would be ideally situated from the point of view of transport.

During the passage of Appropriation Bill No. 1, the Leader of the Opposition referred to the report furnished by Wilbur Smith and Associates on Brisbane's traffic problems. I, in common with the Leader of the Opposition, am concerned that nothing has been done about providing for future transport in the metropolitan area. In recent weeks statements have been made about our great electricity undertakings and their ability to provide all the power needed in this State. Nothing has been done, however, about the electrification of railways in the metropolitan area. The Minister for Transport indicated his concern because nothing was mentioned in the report about this problem. He has stated on other occasions that by 1980 there will have to be an electrification scheme in the metropolitan area.

It seems to me that 1980 is far too late to wait to see what is to be done in this matter. There is at present a railway line passing through the centre of the city to the boundaries of the metropolitan area, and a start should be made on providing an electrified ring-rail service right round the metropolitan area. This could easily be done. There was at one time a railway line, which has now been closed, extending from South Brisbane to Belmont. There is still a large area of land through which this railway passed and which could be acquired more easily now than in years to come. It would be easy later to convert it to an underground railway similar to the one in New South Wales. The line branched off at Norman Park and went through Seven Hills. It could be taken through Camp Hill and Mayfield to Carina and Belmont, from Belmont to Upper Mt. Gravatt, and then round the back to join the existing line at Rocklea. In this way the whole of the South Brisbane area could be ringed. Development would soon follow the resumption of land by the Government for an electrified railway system in the metropolitan area.

I have yet to see a transport system better than that provided by the electric trains in New South Wales. To go 20 miles in Queensland by train—from South Brisbane to Cleveland, say—would take just over an hour. In Sydney, in an electric train, it would take under 20 minutes to cover the same distance. If the Government provides a faster and better system of transport such as this, the public will use it.

I ask the Government to give serious consideration to my suggestion when it is considering the provision of new highways and byways and bridges in the metropolitan area, because I believe that, no matter what

happens, one day the Government of Queensland will have to face up to overcoming the transport problems of this city. At present no-one seems to know where he is going. There is no co-ordination between the railway service provided by the State Government and the tram and bus services provided by the Brisbane City Council. I do not hesitate to say that I believe the solution to the problem lies in the Government's taking over the whole transport system in the metropolitan area, as the Government of New South Wales has done in Sydney.

Finally, I wish to deal with the question of the transport of children to schools in country areas. There seems to be a great deal of discontent now with the amounts being paid by the Department of Education to people running these transport services. According to letters I have received, in some instances children are being transported from 10 miles to 40 miles, and it is evident that the problem is acute. The people running the services are seeking to join the bus proprietors' organisation in order to get protection for themselves and a just return for the services that they are providing. They may be able to do this, but a person in a country area who transports children in his own motor truck or motor-car is not getting the remuneration that he should be getting and may find himself very much out of pocket. The Department of Education deals with the matter at the moment, but a system may have to be introduced in co-operation with the Transport Department to make sure that people in country areas get a fair and just return for the services they are providing. Only recently I read that something like 50 or 60 schools have been closed on the Darling Downs alone. Wherever schools are closed the children must be transported to a larger school in the area. I am in complete agreement with the system; I think it is a move in the right direction because where they are transported to a central school in the area their chances must be improved since they have more and better teachers to teach them. Conditions are entirely different from those in the old one-teacher schools.

I feel that the matters I have raised tonight are matters that should be raised in this type of debate. There was a slight argument this afternoon between the hon. member for Norman and the Premier as to how these matters can be raised in debate.

Mr. Nicklin: We did not have an argument at all.

Mr. NEWTON: There was some debate on our rights in raising these matters. Put it that way. The hon. member for Norman spoke the truth in saying that we only get the chance to raise these general matters in the Address-in-Reply and Budget debates. In the Supply debate one can speak only on the Estimates affecting the department under consideration. Outside of that one has to take a risk on Mr. Speaker being a

bit lax in order to raise a grievance. On some occasions I have got away with it myself.

Mr. Nicklin interjected.

Mr. NEWTON: We must get in wherever we can if we have a problem. Once the open debates are concluded we have to get these things before the Government somehow, either by a question or in the manner I have indicated. I agree with the hon. member for Norman that there should be some other way of attacking a problem once these two debates are concluded. Members find themselves here for the months of September, October, November and December confined to debating Bills with no further open debate offering a chance to raise problems, not only those affecting one's own electorate but those that concern people throughout the State.

Mr. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon) (8.48 p.m.): In supporting the Address in Reply to the Administrator's Opening Speech may I congratulate Mr. Newbery, the new member for Mirani, on his maiden speech and wish him well in the House. My good friend Bob Windsor, the hon. member for Ithaca, in seconding the Address-in-Reply motion, has commenced his last session in this House. I trust he will be spared for many years to enjoy his retirement in the State that he has made so much richer by his inventive mind.

May I also take this opportunity to reaffirm my constituents' loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen and to express our regard for Her Majesty's representative in Queensland and our regret that we will soon be losing Sir Henry and Lady May.

Fortunately for Queensland, we have had a period of excellent government and wonderful development that has placed us in a sound position.

Mr. R. Jones: Whereabouts?

Mr. McKECHNIE: Throughout the State.

Mr. R. Jones: Not in the North.

Mr. McKECHNIE: Despite the fact that we have been, and still are, experiencing the worst drought in the State's history.

Tonight I want to speak of the drought, of what we have learned from it, and of how we must stop future droughts from creating the loss, despair and destruction that has been and is still evident in this one.

In Northern New South Wales and Southern Queensland we have been facing the worst drought in white man's history. So far as the inland areas are concerned, it is still continuing and could become even fiercer. I shall quote a few figures to back up that statement. Almost eight months of this year have gone by. I have the official figures of the post office at Goondiwindi. For the almost eight months from 1 January, 1965 to today, 24 August,

the total rainfall has been only 469 points on 31 wet days, an average of 15 points per fall, which is almost ineffectual. In two-thirds of the year only about one-fifth of the normal rainfall has fallen. This is less rain than fell in what has been regarded as Australia's worst drought, namely, the drought of 1902.

However, rather than dwell on our misfortunes let us take a look at the lessons to be learnt and plan to meet future droughts. Let us compare the cost of this drought to the Treasury of Queensland with the cost of droughts in the last 10 years. In 1946 the assistance for drought relief from the Queensland Treasury amounted to £377,760; in the drought of 1951 it amounted to £261,678; in 1957, when there was quite a severe little drought, it was £368,012; in 1960 it was £84,848, or a total of £1,092,298 by way of drought relief cost to the Queensland Treasury over that 10-year period. Let us look at the present drought. Up to the present date, at the very least it has cost the Queensland Treasury £1,500,000, or at least 1½ times as much as four previous droughts. It has certainly cost the State Government a lot of money.

Mr. R. Jones: What did it learn from the four previous droughts? You said it should learn something.

Mr. McKECHNIE: I will come to that.

Quite a few concessions have been provided during the present drought. The hon. member for Condamine has covered most of them already and I will not reiterate them except to say that at first concessional road tax was granted on sorghum stubble, peanut hay, etc., from the central areas to the South, and, as hon. members know, the 3d. a ton road tax has now been waived on all drought fodders. Of course, in the last few months those fodders have been coming mainly from South Australia, Victoria and the southern regions of New South Wales. Although fodders in those areas have been costing only £10 to £12 a ton they have been costing about £40 or £50 a ton landed in Southern Queensland.

As the years go by, droughts will become worse because of the increasing investment in rural industries, which has been dictated by the rapid growth of the Australian economy, and which would be matched by an increasing measure of risk. Whereas the 1946-47 drought was estimated to cost the nation some £300,000,000 in all aspects, including loss of exports, it is forecast that the present drought will be far heavier than that for the nation as a whole.

Why will droughts of the future be more severe? Firstly, we are making more intensive use of the land. In other words, the country has been more highly developed. It is carrying more stock with a greater turnover to the acre. Consequently, the roughage that was there in former years is now non-existent. In many instances the present drought has been essentially a roughage drought, as well as

causing a shortage of concentrates and so forth. The fact that the roughage has not survived has been a big problem.

Mr. Davies: What makes you think you are worth more than the members of the Opposition from the point of view of salary?

Mr. McKECHNIE: If the hon. member wishes to raise this question, I believe that a Government member has much more responsibility than an Opposition member. He has to help frame the laws of the State and shoulder much more responsibility. He has to assist his Minister as well as defend him, consequently a Government member has a much greater responsibility than an Opposition member, who can just blow blithely through.

Returning to the matter I was dealing with, I was saying that the droughts of the future will be more severe. I had made the point that we now have more intense land usage, which will consequently create a greater likelihood of droughts. In the horticultural industry the tendency has been to plant trees closer to defeat cost in the industry, but once trees are moved closer together water has to be provided more often than when they are spread out, and dependent only on rainfall. With improved pasture there will be a greater risk because of the very fact of the higher nutrient; they will be grazed right off. With the greater use of irrigation the temptation is to have a greater turnoff on crop-fattening and irrigated pastures rather than storing the fodder produced on those areas. As a result, people have a much greater return per acre, even with grazing animals, and they are not conserving as much as they could. By using more machinery a greater indebtedness is created, which reduces the fluid assets that a landowner may have to use in drought time. As the population increases the better lands are used for the more productive crops of fruit and vegetables, and grains and cereals. Grazing animals are continually being pushed up into the hilly or rough country, which is another reason why droughts will be more severe in future.

The rising cost of land in itself is a complementary factor. People are paying more for land and have to get more out of it, particularly if they are working on borrowed money, so they are more inclined to take risks and have less to put into conservation.

In the present drought there has been a great loss of stock and assets, and horrible mental suffering by the producers themselves. I believe that an owner of stock has some moral responsibility for the life of the stock that he entrusts to his care. When running stock, I believe there is some obligation other than financial to see that they have reasonable conditions. I should hate to see again the suffering which has been so much in evidence throughout the present year. The loss to the economy generally has

been so serious that it has worried secondary industry financially. As hon. members are all aware, 80 per cent. of our export income is obtained from primary industry. This 80 per cent. is the lifeblood of the secondary industries for use in importing their needs of heavy machinery, or whatever else they require. I feel that the people as a whole, whether urban or rural, are more concerned by this drought than any previous one.

As a primary producer I agree with the hon. member for Belmont that essentially it is a matter of self-help. I feel that any man on the land must essentially look to himself to preserve his future. I shall enlarge on that later. For the moment I should like to outline the way our Governments, both State and Federal, may be able to help us in the future.

First, we must herd a larger portion of our national income into the conservation of water and the provision of large dams. I do not intend to elaborate greatly on that point in this debate, but it will alleviate the ravages of drought in many ways. The growing of cotton will provide cotton-seed meal, which is the best source of raw protein outside meat. In some ways it is easier to feed, because it is a vegetable protein and not an animal protein.

With big water schemes we are in a position where we can get fresh green lucerne during the actual drought. As hon. members would know, that is worth much more than long-stored dry fodders. It provides the necessary vitamin A and gives a fillip to the animal at a time when it needs it most and helps it digest the other forms of feed.

The second way the Government can help is by providing long-term finance at a reasonable rate of interest as was originally envisaged by the Commonwealth Development Bank of Australia. I think that is most essential and we will have to see that more is done in that regard.

In Queensland the Department of Irrigation and Water Supply has been doing a very good job under the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Act. In 1959 only £5,020 was spent under that Act. Each year the amount has risen. In 1960 it was £76,000, in 1961 it was £165,000, in 1962 it was £245,000, and it kept rising until, in the year ended 30 June last, it was £391,806. I do not know the actual number who took advantage of it, but a large number did take advantage of the technical services of the department and a lesser number took advantage of the finance. The mere fact that it rose from £5,020 in 1959 to £391,806 in 1965 illustrates the need for, and the use made of, this money. If we take the value of the various dams designed and assisted by the Department of Irrigation and Water Supply, we find that it is much greater than the amount advanced from Government sources.

It is necessary that the Commonwealth Government should give greater inducement for the storage of fodder. It has been sug-

gested in some quarters that a double taxation deduction be granted for water conservation and fodder conservation, as is done in the case of secondary firms advertising Australian products overseas. The Commonwealth Government will have to consider providing financial assistance with long-term repayments at lower rates of interest.

I feel that in the case of some land-holders, particularly small ones who are in destitute circumstances, Social Service provisions could well apply. This raises some difficulties, but in some cases I think their total indebtedness would exceed in value their total assets. These people are still carrying on in an attempt to salvage something from the wreckage of the drought. I really feel that these people could be assisted by Social Service provisions.

I feel also that quite a lot could be done for the country trader. There is no doubt that some people with small stores in country areas have been so badly hit by the drought that they need assistance just as much as the primary producers. My sympathy goes out to them because they endeavoured to help others through what was at first a dry spell, and they have now become engulfed in ever-increasing expenditure caused by the drought. I have great sympathy for the small storekeepers in country towns, as they have struggled and fought to help primary producers.

Where the drought has been most severe, unemployment grants could be granted to shires.

Another thing that would help to conserve fodder would be the waiving by the Commonwealth Government of death duties on conserved fodder. It must be a horrible thought for a man who has conserved £5,000 or £10,000 worth of fodder to know in his later years that when he dies duty will have to be paid on the value of the fodder set aside to fight drought. If death duties and probate were waived on conserved fodder, encouragement would be given to men in their later years to conserve more of it.

Mr. Bennett: The Government is going to introduce a Bill during this session to make probate more severe.

Mr. McKECHNIE: I am referring purely to stored fodder.

So far I have been speaking mainly of ways in which the Government could assist, encourage, and induce people to help themselves. Turning to more direct self-help by land-owners, the first lesson learnt from the drought is that water must be conserved. I am proud of my constituents in the Granite Belt for the wonderful upsurge of dam-building that has gone on in the last 12 months. When flying over the area before the recent rains one could see new dams everywhere. Some were built under the farm water supply scheme, some by technical assistance received from the Department of Irrigation and Water Supply, and others on the growers' own initiative and with their own finance. Fortunately, good rain fell in that end of the electorate, and most of the dams

are now full. There are some quite large dams, such as that of Harslett Bros. at Amiens with a capacity of 30,000,000 gallons; that of Mr. O. Catterin at Amiens of 1,500,000 gallons; Sonego Bros., of 7,000,000 gallons; and others of 3,500,000 gallons and 1,000,000 gallons. Further west, in the trap-rock country towards Inglewood, some large dams have been constructed to the extent of 25,700,000 gallons and 10,500,000 gallons for the irrigation of pastures and the watering of stock.

One thing I should like to mention is that the department will give assistance wholeheartedly if it is 100 per cent. sure that the dam will be successful. I cannot say that I blame it, because although the department is not responsible financially, its reputation is at stake. Although dam sites are plentiful in the Granite Belt, the material to build the dams is in rather short supply in some instances. If departmental officers were prepared to take a little more risk when the owner was prepared to take it, I believe that more dams could be built in the area.

Returning for a moment to assistance from the Government, I think that underground water surveys such as those that have been carried out in parts of New South Wales would be worth a great deal to the State. I understand that down on the Macquarie River or the Lachlan River alluvial water has been found at a depth of 1,000 feet and that up to 100,000 gallons an hour is being obtained from one of the bores and there are others of a like nature. There have been some good schemes in Queensland for reticulating water for stock, and I think they could be encouraged further.

Growers should be encouraged to store fodder in good years—when I say “good years”, I mean good financially and seasonally—and I think the Railway Department could assist here by encouraging owners of stock to transport fodder in good years at concessional rates.

Mr. Hewitt: The Commonwealth Government could do it by taxation.

Mr. McKECHNIE: Yes.

There is another method that could be of assistance in some cases, although I am not very enamoured of it. If a man cannot get fodder in a particular year, he should have the right to lodge £1,000, or whatever sum might be suggested, with the Federal Treasury. It could then be deducted from his taxable income in that year and treated as income in the year in which he buys fodder. It would have only limited application—I do not think it would apply to many people—but it could be of some assistance.

The hon. member for Condamine said that lucerne hay is the basis of drought feeding. I do not quite agree with him on that point, because officers of the Department of Primary Industries have proved to us—we have had wonderful assistance from them, particularly from men such as Jim Arbuckle in Toowoomba—that we can make good

use of wheat. Some owners of stock would be frightened to use it; but the departmental officers have taught us to use it, and at present wheat is being used at the rate of 150,000 bushels a week in southern Queensland and northern New South Wales. Wherever silos are erected in the marginal wheat areas, it will be of assistance to have stores of wheat. In the Goondiwindi area we are very fortunate that a 300,000-bushel multi-bin silo is being erected, and we already have a 100,000-bushel bulk shed. On the marginal areas, where stock and crops meet, it should be of great assistance in future droughts if the Wheat Board can be induced to hold feed wheat at the far terminals until late in the season. For example, if the wheat is taken off in November or December and not shifted to the seaboard till the following September or October, a new crop will then be in sight and the worst of the drought probably will be over. If it is not over, the wheat will be there on the job. This would provide drought storage, without any cost to the nation, the State, or the individual, merely by rearranging our wheat stocks.

Another matter that is receiving attention is the forced sale of stock because of drought. Quite a number of people have had to sell breeding cows worth £30, £40, or even £50 a head, for £15 or £20 a head in some cases. However, that is much preferable to allowing them to die. The owner is getting £20 of that money back and it is helping our abattoir economy. The same thing applies to shearing twice in the one financial year because of drought. Many men have been forced to shear for eight or nine months' wool and they have consequently had two clips in the one year, but I am sure there will be a sympathetic response from the Federal Government in that regard.

When discussing the Meat Industry Bill here recently some people were concerned that we might have excess killing space. In this drought we have had a shortage of killing space throughout the State. I admit these are abnormal times but if we have a little bit of killing space up our sleeves in these times we will help our position considerably.

I appreciate the research that the C.S.I.R.O. has done and particularly that done by our own Department of Primary Industries. I mentioned earlier that these men have taught us how to use wheat. I give them full credit for that. It was the department that taught us. As a rule I am inclined to be a little sceptical about the department teaching us, but in this case that is what happened. We have been feeding for eight months.

Mr. Newton interjected.

Mr. McKECHNIE: Grain is much cheaper than lucerne hay, particularly when long haulage is involved, but the food content in the wheat is much greater. Unfortunately, if you feed for a long period the

animal gets a tucked-up, kangaroo look. That is why we have been bringing foddors from South Australia, Victoria and southern New South Wales, at very high cost, to fill these stock up.

Mr. Bennett: Why didn't you go to the Atherton Tablelands for feed?

Mr. McKECHNIE: Because Forbes and the Riverina are much closer. We are trying to keep the stock alive. We are making an earnest endeavour to help our State by the cheapest means possible. There is nothing greater than our desire to keep these animals alive, even if it costs their value.

We appreciate the work of the university. On 24 September we will have the pleasure of seeing the Premier open a veterinary clinic for the University of Queensland at Goondiwindi. I appreciate the university's setting up that veterinary clinic. Not only will it take the final-year veterinary students out and give them practical experience in that area but it will be a great help to the country districts that these boys with inquiring minds are finishing their training there. They will also be taught about internal and external parasite control, particularly such minute pests as lice in cattle, which hitherto have been regarded as of not much consequence but which in this drought have had quite an effect on the strength of cattle by their blood-sucking activities.

In conclusion, I should like to turn to the—

Mr. Davies: Tell us one thing.

Mr. McKECHNIE: What is it?

Mr. Davies: Do you consider that Liberal members are worth as much as Country Party members?

Mr. McKECHNIE: I agree with the hon. member for Maryborough.

To illustrate how it does pay to conserve fodder on the farms, when this drought first started I thought, as a stock-owner, that I was fairly safe. I was wrong. The fodder that I had on hand I valued at £3,000, which is what it cost me. Since I have been buying in fodder I have spent £4,000. The £3,000 of conserved fodder lasted exactly four times as long.

Mr. Duggan: Why is there a general reluctance in normal times for people to do what you did?

Mr. McKECHNIE: Finance is one problem. People are hesitant to spend money on a long-term project that does not return any finance. Admittedly it saves their stock.

Mr. Duggan: If it is going to cost four times as much, it is not an extravagant expenditure.

Mr. McKECHNIE: It is not extravagance. The value of paying out money to make a saving is not as apparent as paying out money to get a direct return. We have had a run of good years. It is much easier to go along in that way. Growing fodder on irrigation is not easy. I have not done much of it but I have watched people irrigate their crops, and it is arduous work. Pike's Creek dam on the Border Rivers has been under consideration by this Government for quite a long time. The dams presently under construction represent 70 per cent. of the total irrigation water of Queensland. Had we had them completed, possibly we would have saved their cost twice over. The Lower Yellowstone project in North Dakota and Montana is so successful that from 1940 to 1948 Federal tax revenues were double the total Government investment in building the dams. In other words, in eight years the Government obtained double the cost. Surely that was a good investment.

If we had more dams of the type envisaged on Pike's Creek we would be in a much better position. We have a wonderful set-up there. We have the necessary irrigation know-how. I am quite confident that we have the support of this Government to proceed with that dam. We are endeavouring to get New South Wales to come in with us but I do not know the position in New South Wales at the present time. I hope to speak at a later stage in the session on that subject. I certainly hope that we can get the co-operation of the New South Wales Government, because extreme southern Queensland and extreme northern New South Wales can miss the northern monsoons and the southern winter rains as they move up. In most years we get a good season from the overlap of the two systems but that region is highly vulnerable, as is illustrated at the moment. It is the worst spot in the State. I hope to see the completion of that dam, which will irrigate the areas that are possibly the most susceptible to drought in the two States. They are carrying a lot of stock. As it is in close proximity it has been the source of supply for much of the beef for southern Queensland, the Brisbane market, the northern New South Wales market and the Sydney market. There is no doubt that throughout this area there is a big flow of cattle south. Three weeks ago I flew to Murgon from where, much to my surprise, about 90 per cent. of the production of beef and pigmeats goes direct to the Sydney market. In the foreseeable future I cannot see any recession in the meat industry. We can sell, inside and outside Australia, all the beef we can produce. If we can get these big schemes moving and get these pastures so that we may produce the cattle there is an unlimited outlet for this type of beef.

Debate, on motion of Mr. Hanlon, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 9.27 p.m.