

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 23 OCTOBER 1970

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

PAPERS

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

Reports—

Commissioner of Main Roads, for the year 1969-70.

Queensland Radium Institute, for the year 1969-70.

Director of Aboriginal and Island Affairs, for the year 1969-70.

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Report of the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations for the year 1969-70.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE**EXPENDITURE, MAIN ROADS DEPARTMENT**

Mr. V. E. Jones for **Mr. Aikens**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

From July 1, 1967, to the latest date for which figures are readily available, how much Main Roads Department money, including cost of resumptions and for all other purposes, was spent in (a) the city of Brisbane and (b) North Queensland, north of a line drawn from just south of Mackay to the Northern Territory border?

Answer:—

“The expenditure on permanent works (including the cost of resumptions, etc.) and maintenance of roads from July 1, 1967, to June 30, 1970, was:—Brisbane City, \$24.1 million; North Queensland, \$46.9 million.”

CONSTRUCTION OF WEIRS, HAUGHTON RIVER

Mr. Bird, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Conservation,—

(1) Is he aware that a statement made by the Chairman of the Haughton River Water Investigation Committee, Mr. R. J. McLennon, expressing concern at the delay by the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission in furnishing a report on its investigations into the construction of weirs on the Haughton River, was broadcast in the A.B.C. breakfast session on October 22?

(2) Will he accede to a request from that Committee to have the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply visit the area at the earliest possible opportunity to discuss with it the findings of the investigations and the Commission's recommendations?

Answers:—

(1) "No."

(2) "The Commission has not yet completed its investigations or made any recommendations. However, the Commissioner will visit the area and discuss findings to date and overall problems with the Committee on November 2."

DEVELOPMENT OF GREENVALE NICKEL DEPOSIT

Mr. Bird, pursuant to notice, asked The Treasurer,—

(1) Under what conditions is the Metals Exploration-Freeport Sulphur joint venture prepared to undertake the development of the Greenvale nickel deposit?

(2) What are the royalty and rail freight payments that they are prepared to make to the Queensland Government?

(3) How do these figures compare with the amount of \$29 million that he has stated the Company is offering the State?

(4) How does the offer from Metals Exploration compare with what is being obtained from the Utah-Mitsubishi coal operation at Goonyella?

(5) Can the Government justify any increase in charges being imposed on the Greenvale nickel project, which will establish a new secondary industry in North Queensland employing 600 men and will be basically Australian-owned as opposed to that at Goonyella, which is almost totally foreign-owned?

(6) As there have been many market forecasts that there will be a world surplus of nickel by the mid-1970's due to over-production from new mines in the Philippines, New Caledonia and Canada, does he recognise that Greenvale must sell its production against international competition and that it is therefore imperative that the Company must set a timetable to be in production by 1974 if it is to remain in a competitive position?

(7) Will the present delays jeopardise this position and to what extent?

Answer:—

(1 to 7) "The Companies and the Government have reached agreement on many aspects of the contemplated undertaking. The major matter still unresolved is the level of contribution which the State would receive by way of royalties and rail transport profitability. The anticipated cost of the project, including railway and rolling-stock is \$190,000,000. Of this amount the Companies propose to borrow \$150,000,000, leaving \$40,000,000 to be contributed by the Companies as equity capital. The Companies have submitted estimates of the results of their first five years of operations.

From these, estimates have been made of the likely profits in subsequent years, making allowances for the fact that the interest payable by the Companies reduces as the heavy initial debt is reduced. The Companies are aware of the figures used in the Treasury Department calculations and have issued no challenge to their accuracy. The Companies have proved 55,000,000 tons of ore bearing 0.8 per cent. nickel content or better. The refinery which they propose to erect near Townsville would have an ore capacity of 2,700,000 tons per annum—thus over 20 years' supply is assured. Treasury calculations estimate that about 120 tons of wet ore will produce one ton of marketable product. The value per ton of marketable product used for calculations is over \$2,000 per ton on today's ruling price. The proposed railway between the mine and the refinery would cover approximately 140 miles. On a 'before tax' basis, profit of the venture over the proposed 20-year term of mining operation but with no contribution to the State over and above the actual costs incurred in operating the railway, has been calculated to be—

	\$ millions
Over first five years at \$10.3 millions per annum	51.5
Over second five years at \$17.5 millions per annum	87.5
Over third five years at \$25.4 millions per annum	127.0
Over fourth five years at \$32.0 millions per annum	160.0
	<hr/> \$m426.0

Out of these profits the State has sought contributions consisting of a royalty of 10 cents per ton for the first 10 years and 15 cents per ton for the second 10 years, and a surplus on rail operations which would give the State a total return from the two sources of \$2.4 million per annum during the first 10 years and \$2.6 million per annum over the second 10 years, which would be an overall return of \$50 million. It will therefore be seen that in the first five years the Companies would nett \$39.5 million, in the second five years \$75.5 million, in the third five years \$114.0 million and in the fourth five years \$147 million—a total of \$376 million. After allowing for income tax the profits from the venture are estimated to be \$26 million for the first five years, \$46 million for the second five years, \$67 million for the third five years and \$85.5 million for the fourth five years—a total of \$224.5 million. At the end of the 20 years, the Townsville treatment plant would be fully amortized but the plant would remain operative and could continue using imported ores if no other local ores were discovered. The Companies claim that the venture cannot be proceeded with at the rate of Government contribution

and have offered a total royalty and freight profitability of approximately \$900,000 per annum for the first 10 years and \$1,900,000 per annum for the second 10 years, or a total of \$28,000,000 over the 20-year period. The return offered by the Companies from Greenvale is less favourable to the State than the calculated return on coal from the Goonyella project. However, other factors that must also be taken into consideration even further accentuate the difference: (i) The annual tonnage of nickel ore is fixed whereas the tonnage of coal over the Goonyella line is certain to increase dramatically within a short number of years, allowing greater economy of operation and a greater State return. (ii) Apart from the carriage of minerals, the area being opened up by the Goonyella line could show a greater increase in production with corresponding benefits to the Railway Department than may be possible from the Greenvale area. It is recognised that Greenvale will sell its production against international competition and that delay could have some effect on the venture, but let me make it quite clear that the Government does not accept responsibility for any delay. I have made myself available for almost instant interview with the Company Directors. All that I seek on behalf of the Government is what I regard as an equitable return. The remedy for any delay is therefore in the hands of the Company."

FIRE AT IPSWICH STATE HIGH SCHOOL

Mrs. Jordan, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Labour and Tourism,—

Has the Chief Inspector or any inspector of the Fire Services Department carried out an inquiry into the recent fire at the Ipswich State High School and has a report been made to him? If so, did the report show any evidence of negligence or lack of adequate fire protection or contain any criticism of the methods or facilities for quelling the fire?

Answer:—

"Yes. The report is presently being examined."

DRY-CLEANING FOR CHALLINOR CENTRE, IPSWICH

Mrs. Jordan, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

Does his Department obtain prices for the cost of dry-cleaning at Challinor Centre, Ipswich, by calling tenders? If not, what is the method?

Answer:—

"Dry-cleaning of residents' garments is arranged as a training programme through the Challinor Centre canteen. Other dry-cleaning requirements are limited and are

performed by the Ipswich Dry Cleaners, which firm has been doing the work for a number of years."

FLAVOURING SUBSTANCES IN ICE-CREAM

Mrs. Jordan, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

In respect to his statement to this House on September 2 in reply to certain statements which I made in a speech during the Address-in-Reply debate regarding the substances (a) diethyl glycol, (b) piperonal, (c) aldehyde C17, (d) ethylacetate, (e) butyraldehyde, (f) amylacetate and (g) benzylacetate, which are used to flavour some ice-cream—

(1) Which of these substances are unknown to the Government Analyst?

(2) As he stated that the majority of these substances are not dangerous, which ones are dangerous?

(3) Is butyraldehyde, which is used in some nut-flavoured ice-cream, extremely dangerous if used in other than very small quantities?

(4) Is any check made on such matters as part of the Department's work or is checking made only on request?

(5) Are any of these substances used to flavour any other product or food or is no check made by his Department on such use?

Answers:—

(1) "The one unknown to the Analyst is 'Aldehyde C17'. It may be that this is known by a correct chemical name. No reference, however, to Aldehyde C17 can be found in the standard texts."

(2) "Apart from Aldehyde C17 which the Analyst is unable to identify under this name and diethyl glycol which is prohibited in foods, the remaining substances are of low toxicity and in the proportions used present no health hazard."

(3) "Butyraldehyde is not extremely dangerous. In fact, the toxicity rating (LD₅₀ orally in rats = 5.8 grams per kilogram of body weight) is quite low. At the rate used as a flavour (about 5 parts per million) it is quite safe. It occurs in natural foods as do many other substances which if ingested in massive quantities would be toxic."

(4) "The identification and estimation of flavouring substances in the low proportions present in foods is an extremely difficult and lengthy process and cannot be undertaken in the normal work of the laboratory. It would be quite impracticable to establish an organisation which would routinely investigate the thousands of food additives that come on the market. However, if special analyses are indicated these are carried out."

(5) "These substances, apart from diethyl glycol and possibly Aldehyde C17, are widely used. Confectionery and soft drinks contain them and they may be present in any food labelled 'artificially flavoured'."

SPEED LIMIT, KENNEDY HIGHWAY SECTION

Mr. Wallis-Smith, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

(1) What is the present speed limit on the Kennedy Highway between Edmund Kennedy Bridge over the Barron River and the Mareeba—Atherton road?

(2) As this section includes a by-pass junction to Mareeba, an intersection with Kenneally Road and a sharp curve at the final road junction, will he impose a 35-mile per hour speed limit on this section?

Answers:—

(1) "60 miles per hour."

(2) "Speed studies are being carried out at present in this area. When same are completed and results analysed, any action necessary to impose speed restrictions will then be taken."

RADFORD REPORT ON EDUCATION

Mr. Davies, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

In view of his Answer to the Question by the Honourable Member for Toowoomba East on July 28 that the proposals made by the Radford Committee are still under consideration and the statement made by the Deputy Director-General, Mr. G. J. Black, as reported in *The Courier-Mail* of October 22, in which he described the Government's acceptance of the Radford Committee's recommendations as the second most important development in Queensland's education, will he make a definite statement on his Department's attitude towards the Report?

Answer:—

"My Department's attitude towards the Radford Report is clearly shown in the fact that I recommended to Cabinet that its recommendations be accepted. Cabinet decided to implement the recommendations and instructed that immediate action be taken to draft the necessary amendments to existing legislation for presentation to Parliament as early as possible. As I indicated to the Honourable Member for Toowoomba East in reply to a Question on October 14, 1970, the Board of Secondary School Studies will be constituted when the necessary legislative provision has been made."

RAIL FREIGHT CONCESSION ON FIRE BRICKS, BRISBANE—MOUNT ISA

Mr. R. Jones, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

(1) Is he aware of a recent freight concession granted to Mount Isa Mines Ltd. for the rail transport of fire bricks from Brisbane to Mount Isa at a rate of \$34 per ton?

(2) In view of the background of rising costs and a deficit budget, how does he justify a reduction of \$13 per ton from the rate of \$49 per ton applicable to this commodity only three months ago?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "The Commissioner for Railways has the authority to quote freight rates to secure traffic for the railways in competition with other transport operators. If this were not done a considerable amount of railway revenue would be lost."

FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND TOURIST AUTHORITY

Mr. R. Jones, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Labour and Tourism,—

(1) Is he aware that a positive proposal to amalgamate all tourist promotional and developmental bodies and establish a Far North Queensland tourist authority has been made by local authorities and interested bodies in Cairns and district?

(2) Has this proposal received his endorsement and/or that of the Australian Tourist Commission?

(3) Will a direct allocation of funds be made or any fund established to assist in the organising, planning and smooth running of the authority? If so, what is the initial amount that will be allocated and what will be the basis of financing as the fund develops, in order to render assistance to foster this worthy enterprise and the State's tourist industry?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "The matter has not yet been examined."

(3) "See Answer to (2)."

INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC

Mr. R. Jones, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

Further to his Answer to my Question on July 23 concerning the available figures pertaining to the Asian influenza epidemic, has the survey been completed and, if so, with what results?

Answer:—

"Figures from the Commonwealth Statistician are still not available. I am advised that no firm conclusions can be drawn regarding the efficacy of influenza vaccine from information received from hospitals. Complete protection is not afforded but the information suggests, that provided the recommended course of injections with a vaccine prepared from the particular strain of virus causing the current epidemic is completed, the disease may be modified."

PREFERENCE TO UNIONISTS, RAILWAY DEPARTMENT

Mr. Bousen, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

Is it departmental practice to grant preference to unionists for employment in all sections of the Railway Department? If so, is it mandatory for the Department to advise new employees, in writing, of their obligations in this regard?

Answer:—

"It is the policy of the Railway Department to comply with the conditions of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Acts and the Railway Awards."

LOCAL AUTHORITY POLLS

Mr. Tucker, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Local Government,—

Is it still possible for a percentage of persons in a local government area who disagree with a decision of their council, to demand that a poll be taken on the decision? If so, what percentage of voters is required, is there any time limit by which such demand must be lodged and to whom or where must it be directed?

Answer:—

"The matter is governed by the provision of section 53 of the *Local Government Act 1936-1970*."

SCIENCE LABORATORY, TULLY STATE HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. F. P. Moore, pursuant to notice asked The Minister for Works,—

What is the date of commencement of the new science laboratory at the Tully State High School?

Answer:—

"Tenders have been invited for the erection of a new science laboratory at Tully State High School and close on November 10, 1970. Provided a suitable tender is received, it can be expected that the work will be commenced early in 1971."

FREE ADMINISTRATION OF PENSIONERS' ESTATES BY PUBLIC CURATOR

Mr. Wright, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Justice,—

In view of the ever-increasing financial despair being faced by age and invalid pensioners, especially on the loss of the husband or wife, will he give special consideration to having all such estates handled free of charge by the Public Curator Office?

Answer:—

"The fees and charges which the Public Curator is entitled to make in administering deceased estates are set out in Regulations 31 and 32 under the provisions of *"The Public Curator Acts, 1915 to 1957"*. Regulation 31 (i) provides for a rebate of one-half of the commission and/or charges normally made when the gross value of the estate of a deceased person does not exceed \$10,000 and the widow, widower or an infant child resident in the Commonwealth of Australia is a beneficiary. Most estates of age or invalid pensioners would not exceed \$10,000 in gross value and, accordingly, reduced charges as outlined above would apply to almost all age or invalid pensioners' estates, provided the beneficiary was the widow or widower of the deceased. Charges made by the Public Curator are only part of the costs of administering an estate. If, for example, there is a house property, a fee is payable to have such property valued and fees are also payable to the Titles Office to have the title to the land put in order. The reduced charges applicable to the class of estates mentioned do not cover the actual cost of administering such estates and the office has to make good the loss out of other revenue. The work involved in administering estates of deceased pensioners could be carried out free of any charge by the Public Curator only if the resultant additional loss were made good out of Consolidated Revenue. Although age and invalid pensioners constitute one of the deserving sections of the community, the financial circumstances of the State at present do not allow further concessions at the moment in respect of costs of administering estates than those already granted. However, the subject will continue to be kept under notice."

CLOUD-SEEDING SECTION, C.S.I.R.O.

Mr. Blake, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

As his Answer to my Question on October 21 stated that his most recent personal representations to the Prime Minister, asking that consideration be given to the possibility of the Commonwealth, through its Division of Radiophysics, undertaking further cloud-seeding research in Queensland was on January 12, will he, in

view of the continuing drought, make further and immediate representations in this regard?

Answer:—

"C.S.I.R.O. investigations into cloud-seeding are currently being carried out in Tasmania because of the suitability of the terrain and climate. The object of these investigations is to devise appropriate evaluation techniques and a further aim is to increase the efficiency of the rain-making process. I have been informed by the Prime Minister that the C.S.I.R.O. Division of Radiophysics considers these investigations are necessary steps before further cloud-seeding attempts can be properly evaluated. In a letter dated March 13, 1970, the Prime Minister indicated that the scientists concerned considered that their activities in Tasmania should be concluded before extending their operations into other geographical areas. As the Honourable Member is aware, my Government did experiment with cloud-seeding towards the end of 1969 but the result was inconclusive and generally rather disappointing. Hence I must concur with the need for thorough investigation and adequate evaluation of the efficiency of cloud-seeding as a means of inducing rain during drought."

MOTOR VEHICLE DRIVING TUITION IN VICINITY OF VILLANOVA COLLEGE

Mr. Bromley, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

As I am continually receiving complaints that driving school instructors are still teaching persons to drive in areas adjacent to Villanova College with consequent danger to students and other people, even though they have been advised by a previous Minister through the Police Department not to use these streets for this purpose, will he issue further instructions that the driving schools discontinue this practice?

Answer:—

"It is not possible to prevent streets in the vicinity of this college being used by driving school instructors to teach persons to drive motor vehicles. However, a previous undertaking was given by the President of the Queensland Motor Driving Schools Association that he would request members of his association not to use streets in the vicinity of the college. A further request is now being made to the same association by the Police Department. Members of the Police Force will give the locality attention to ensure that the provisions of the Traffic Act and Regulations are observed."

STUDENT AND GRADUATE DOCTORS

Mr. Bromley, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) How many doctors graduated from (a) Queensland University and (b) James Cook University of North Queensland in each of the years 1967 to 1970?

(2) How many student doctors, in their various years, are attending the Universities at present and what is the number expected to graduate?

(3) How many, together with the year of their course, dropped out in each of the above years?

(4) How many of the graduated doctors will be entering the State hospital services?

Answers:—

"The University has advised—

(1) "The number of medical graduates from the University of Queensland who have graduated in the years 1967-1970 is as follows:—

Year from 1st July-30th June)	No. of Graduates
1966-67	116
1967-68	119
1968-69	153
1969-70	139

The James Cook University of North Queensland does not have a Medical School."

(2) "Enrolments in the Medical School in 1970 are as follows:—

Year of Course	No. of Enrolments
I	213
II	218
III	160
IV	159
V	115
VI	126
Total	991

Students of the James Cook University of North Queensland who complete the first year of a science course are admitted to the second year of the medical course in Brisbane. Twenty-seven science students in Townsville in 1970 have indicated an intention to enter the medical course in Brisbane in 1971. The number of medical students expected to graduate in the next four years is as follows:—1970-71, over 120; 1971-72, over 115; 1972-73, over 155; 1973-74, over 155."

(3) "As enrolment figures are affected by students who repeat the year, who interrupt the medical course proper to take a course in science or medical science, who enter second or later years after an interval, who change courses, who are excluded after failure, who die by accident or disease, who discontinue for a year or

more to earn money, the number who 'drop out' of a course cannot readily be determined. The following information on the percentage of students who passed each year of the medical course in the past three examination periods may be helpful:—

Year of Course	1967-68	1968-69	1969-70
1	76	76	80
2	68	74	80
3	81	81	96
4	97	97	100
5	97	99	100
6	95	96	97

(4) "The Department of Health has advised that the following numbers have entered the State hospital services:—1967 graduates, 110; 1968 graduates, 121; 1969 graduates, 99."

STAFF, POLICE DEPARTMENT BRANCHES

Mr. Bromley, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

(1) What was the strength of the (a) licensing squad, (b) traffic squad, (c) C.I.B. and (d) finger-print section in 1968, 1969 and 1970?

(2) How many members of the (a) licensing squad and (b) traffic squad have been on duty on Sundays since the recent liquor law amendments?

Answers:—

(1)—

" ———"	30-6-1968	30-6-1969	30-6-1970
Licensing Branch	20	21	23
Traffic Branch ..	187	192	194
C.I.B.	326	332	351
Fingerprint Bureau (also included in C.I.B. figures)	24	24	27

(2) "The number of personnel on duty at the Traffic Branch, Brisbane, has varied from 34 to 171. The abnormal number of police was due to the arrival of Her Majesty the Queen. An average of the Sundays on which no major police coverage was necessary is 44. The number of personnel on duty at the Licensing Branch has varied from 4 to 18. An average of the Sundays on which no major police coverage was necessary is 6."

"AIR BAG" SAFETY DEVICES FOR MOTOR VEHICLES

Mr. Hanson, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

With reference to his recent statements appertaining to safety devices for cars and the proposed insistence on certain safety features which will be applicable to motor vehicles of the future, has his Department

given any study towards the installation of "air bag" devices to protect front seat passengers? If so, what are the results of such study?

Answer:—

"Yes. Information on United States proposals for the use of 'air bags' as a passenger restraint device has been supplied by the Department of Transportation, Washington, D.C. The suitability of 'air bags' as a restraint device is dependent on whether they can carry out the purpose intended by the inventors without risk of danger or damage to car occupants. Investigations into the suitability of 'air bags' is on the work programme of the Australian Transport Advisory Council's Advisory Committee on Safety in Vehicle Design. I anticipate that the Question will be listed for consideration by Ministers at the next meeting of the Australian Transport Advisory Council to take place in February, 1971."

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

OPENING OF S.G.I.O. BUILDING

Mr. HOUSTON: I ask the Treasurer: Following his reply to my question on 15 October asking how many State Government Insurance Office managers, divisional inspectors and district inspectors had been invited to the official opening of the new State Government Insurance Office building, how many have accepted, and what arrangements have been made, where necessary, for their transport to Brisbane?

Mr. CHALK: When the question upon notice was asked by the Leader of the Opposition, I referred it to the General Manager of the State Government Insurance Office, who is the person extending the invitations. On the advice tendered to me by him, I replied to the hon. member's question. The hon. member now seeks from me information concerning those who have accepted, and what transport arrangements are being made for them. That information is not in my possession. I have not sought it from the General Manager, but I am prepared to do so if the hon. member really wants it.

Mr. HOUSTON: I ask the Treasurer a supplementary question. As the time available for booking air passages is now short, I ask the Treasurer to obtain that information for me. I am prepared to put this question on notice as I would like to have the information made available.

Mr. CHALK: I am prepared to do that.

RAIL FREIGHT CONCESSION ON FIRE BRICKS, BRISBANE-MT. ISA

Mr. R. JONES: I ask the Minister for Transport: As his reply to my question this morning confirmed the Commissioner's authority to negotiate freight rates, was this

decision arrived at in competition with the road transport quote of \$38 a ton? If so, why was it necessary to drop the existing freight from \$49 a ton to as low as \$34 a ton?

Mr. KNOX: I am not disposed to give details off the cuff in answer to a question such as that.

Mr. R. JONES: Would it be possible to put it on notice, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, if the hon. member wishes to do so.

Mr. R. JONES: I do so.

AUSTRALIAN WOOL COMMISSION

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: I direct a question to the Premier. In view of the need to pass legislation to establish the Australian Wool Commission during the present session of the Federal Parliament and the fact that Dr. Patterson's efforts to achieve this have been thwarted by the Federal Government, will he contact the Prime Minister immediately and use all possible means to have this legislation completed during the current session and thus safeguard an industry that is so vital to Australia?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I do not know that Dr. Patterson has done much about this matter. However, I do know that it is in the very capable hands of the Prime Minister, together with the Australian Wool Board.

WOOL INDUSTRY

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: I direct a supplementary question to the Premier. In view of Mr. McEwen's statement in Canberra on Wednesday, 21 October, that the present low wool prices could be looked on as a national disaster, what steps does the Premier intend to take to safeguard the wool industry in Queensland?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: There is no question that wool prices in Australia today are at an exceedingly low ebb, nor is there any question that the wool industry is in very dire circumstances as a consequence both of the low prices and of the severe drought that is prevalent in so much of our State and other parts of Australia. Every action has been, and is being, taken to assist this industry.

DRIVE-IN PICTURE THEATRE, ROMA

Mr. TOMKINS: I direct the following question to the Minister for Local Government and Electricity: (1) Who was the successful applicant for the drive-in picture theatre at Roma? (2) Could the Minister indicate the completion date of this project and when the showing of films is due to commence under the application agreed to by the Picture Theatres and Films Commission? (3) In the event of the project not being completed on the date agreed to, has

the Minister or the Picture Theatres and Films Commission power to grant an extension of time or cancel the licence? (4) Does the Picture Theatres and Films Commission study the progress of the building of these projects to see that the applicant carries out his contract in the terms of his application? (5) Has the Minister any power to adjudicate on these matters?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must realise that it is impossible for any Minister to grasp all the contents of such a question. I suggest that he place it on notice.

Mr. TOMKINS: I do so.

WOLFRAM DEPOSITS, MOA ISLAND

Mr. B. WOOD: I ask the Minister for Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs: As applications closed some time ago, can he give any indication when a decision will be made on the development of any wolfram deposits on Moa Island?

Mr. N. T. E. HEWITT: In reply to the hon. gentleman's question, I think he is fully aware that we set out to ensure that the best possible deal was obtained for the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. The tenders have closed. They are now with the Mines Department being analysed, and, when finality is reached, the hon. member will be advised of the result.

THURSDAY ISLAND HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. B. WOOD: I direct my next question to the Minister for Education. As he recently saw the conditions at Thursday Island High School, is he making any approach to the Works Department regarding the completion of the proposed second stage of the school and various works in the grounds?

Mr. FLETCHER: I have already been in touch with the Minister for Works and have conveyed to him the information that I gathered while I was at Thursday Island. The matter is at present under consideration.

RIDICULING OF PREMIER ON TELEVISION PROGRAMME

Mr. MURRAY: I ask the Premier: Is he aware of the fact that portion of a programme on a Brisbane television station last night was used deliberately to ridicule and lampoon him in a manner that most people would consider rather disgusting? Whilst realising that a leader in public life, whether he is Premier or Leader of the Opposition, would be accustomed to criticism, and without in any way advocating censorship, I ask the Premier if he is aware of any understanding or agreement between those who control the mass media to exercise some supervision over material such as that shown last night, which can be considered only as being in extremely poor taste.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I appreciate the hon. member's raising this question. I am not aware of the programme to which he has referred. However, I am interested to learn the details of it, and I will certainly have the matter investigated.

PROVISIONAL MOTOR VEHICLE DRIVING LICENCES

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I ask the Minister for Transport whether it is necessary for a holder of a provisional licence to display "P" plates on all vehicles that he owns or only on the vehicle that he usually drives?

Mr. Bennett: Why don't you ask him about safety helmets?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I would ask the hon. member if I knew that he would not charge for his advice.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! A question without notice requires an answer, and the "Hansard" staff must be allowed to hear the answer. Again I request hon. members not to interject during questions, particularly those without notice.

Mr. KNOX: It is not necessary for the holder of a provisional licence to have "P" plates on every vehicle that he owns. However, it is necessary for him to display "P" plates on any vehicle that he drives, whether he owns it or not.

CONTROL OF WOOL SALES

Mr. O'DONNELL: I ask the Premier: Is there a wool-buyers' cartel controlling wool sales? If so, has he, in the interests of the industry, examined its composition?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I am unaware whether there is a cartel operating in the purchase of wool. The hon. member can appreciate that the Australian Wool Board is very interested in the methods by which the Australian wool clip is sold, and no doubt it would have a very good idea of the circumstances surrounding these activities.

Mr. O'DONNELL: I direct a supplementary question to the Premier. Under the circumstances, does he not think that the Australian Wool Board should keep him informed on this subject?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: As a matter of fact, Sir William Gunn has called at my office from time to time and has given me quite a deal of information on these subjects.

UNUSED RECEIPT DUTY STAMPS

Mr. CASEY: I ask the Treasurer: As receipt stamp duty is no longer valid in Queensland, what arrangements will be made for refunds on stamps already purchased in the metropolitan and country areas of the State?

Mr. CHALK: First of all, I should like to enlighten the hon. member on his reference to stamp duty. What has been declared void relates to receipt duty, which should not be confused with stamp duty. I take it that the hon. member's question refers to receipt duty.

The position is that the Federal Government will bring down legislation that will validate the operation of receipt duty up to 30 September, 1970. When the legislation is brought down, if anyone in Queensland has not paid receipt duty that was legally payable between the beginning of the financial year and 30 September, and refuses to pay it, the Commonwealth will collect on behalf of the States. A refund of the value of any receipt duty that has been either collected by the department or affixed to receipts on and from 1 October can be claimed, and, if the claim can be substantiated, the refund will be made.

Mr. CASEY: I direct a supplementary question to the Treasurer, as it appears that he did not understand my original question. I ask him what arrangements will be made for refunds on duty stamps purchased by people in both the metropolitan and country areas of the State? I have already received six letters from people in the Mackay district on this question.

Mr. CHALK: This matter has been considered. It will depend on the basis on which the stamps were purchased. I assure the hon. member that the people he mentions are entitled to write to the Commissioner of Stamp Duties, when their applications will be considered.

DRUG TRAFFIC, SYDNEY

Mr. HANSON: I ask the Minister for Health: Is he aware of a report in "Sunday Truth" that he recently visited several drug-taking spots in Sydney? As he is probably not an addict, was he disgusted or otherwise? How was he received, and what impressions did he form on his trip?

Mr. TOOTH: In reply to the hon. member, let me say that the exercise I took part in, which to my dismay became public property—I do not know how, but these things happen—

An Opposition Member: You talk too much.

Mr. TOOTH: No, I was extremely silent on this subject.

An Opposition Member: You told Johnny Row about it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Would hon. members please pay some respect to a Minister when he is answering a question without notice. I shall deal with the next hon. member who interjects.

Mr. TOOTH: It was a very illuminating exercise. I would not say that I was disgusted; rather I was depressed. I was concerned at the possibility that a situation similar to that in Sydney, which is becoming a real problem, would develop in Brisbane. It was with a view to looking at what could possibly happen here that I undertook this particular exercise.

It is essential that we understand the methods by which dangerous drugs are peddled or passed from one person to another—from pusher to addicts, or to experimenters. Of course, there are more experimenters than there are addicts. Probably, in Queensland experimenters would form the majority of drug-takers, because there is little or no evidence, from admissions to psychiatric institutions, of any widespread gross addiction.

Undoubtedly, this requires the most careful surveillance. The indications I received from my investigations overseas were such that I wanted to see what it was like on the Australian scene. I feel that the exercise was a very profitable one.

As to how I was received, I may say that a problem that posed itself was that I was obviously not one of the community that frequents these places, and the law-enforcement officer who was showing me around suggested, as a solution, "You are a very irate father looking for your daughter". Of course, this imposed two obligations upon me. One was to appear to be very irate, and the other was to observe the young women carefully. Hon. members will appreciate that the first of those obligations presented me with very great difficulty, but the second was a very pleasant—I might say a very illuminating—duty. As to how I was received, perhaps it would be fair to say that I was treated with a measure of sympathetic disdain.

OIL SPILL, "OCEANIC GRANDEUR"

Mr. HUGHES: I ask the Premier: In relation to the "Oceanic Grandeur", which struck a rock in Torres Strait on 3 March of this year in an area 3 miles from the Queensland coast, and which cost the State \$123,308.65 in dealing with the oil spillage therefrom, did the Premier's Department or the Department of Harbours and Marine submit a claim for reimbursement of this cost? Has the claim been satisfied, or can the Premier inform the House of any progress that has been made in having the owners or insurers meet this liability?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: Yes, a claim certainly has been submitted for this amount. On the last occasion on which I received information on this matter, the claim was still being pursued.

FORM OF QUESTION

Mr. BALDWIN (Logan) having given notice of a question—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The question appears to deal with Government policy. I will have a look at it.

WANT OF CONFIDENCE MOTION

HONOURABLE J. BJELKE-PETERSEN, PREMIER

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition) (11.57 a.m.): I move—

"That as the Premier, Mr. Bjelke-Petersen, as leader of the coalition Government of this State, obviously no longer has the support of the majority of members of the coalition parties, the basis on which he received his Commission by His Excellency the Governor; also, that as the Premier has lost the confidence of this House, Parliament declares that he should, in such circumstances, resign his Commission as Premier of this State."

Naturally this is a very serious and important matter, and, like you, Sir, I believe that the events that have taken place, particularly since the last election, indicate that the Premier should resign as Premier of the State and, of course, report to the Governor and resign his Commission so that the Governor can take the appropriate action.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Before the Leader of the Opposition gets too deeply into this issue, I should like to draw his attention to his saying, "Like you, Sir". I ask him please not to try to embarrass the Chair.

Mr. HOUSTON: I shall correct that and say, "The hon. member for Murrumbidgee".

In similar circumstances, I believe that in any other Parliament of the Commonwealth the Leader of the Government or any Minister who was embarrassed to the extent that the Premier has been embarrassed by his own colleagues would tender his resignation to his party, and then let the party decide the matter after such a challenge had been made. But the Premier has not seen fit to do that.

I should like to read briefly what the publication, "The British Cabinet", by J. P. Mackintosh, has to say about the duties of a Premier. At page 384, amongst other things, it states—

"A Premier soon imparts his own tone to his Government and if he fails to bind his ministers together, to tackle contemporary problems, or to ensure action, then there is no-one who can, so to speak, steer the bus from the back seat."

I do not think anyone will deny that the Premier has failed to bind together either his Cabinet Ministers or his colleagues on the Government side of the Chamber.

Of course, this expected coup was as much a revolt against the outside influence of the executive of the Country Party, headed by the now well-known Mr. Sparkes, as it was against the Premier. It should be remembered that, since Mr. Sparkes became president of the Country Party, more and more decisions are being forced on the parliamentary party by the outside State executive.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HOUSTON: One sees the result of that in the actions of the Country Party in this House relative to redistribution. Has the parliamentary party made a decision, or is it waiting till it gets the word from the outside executive? I do not wish to debate redistribution, but I think it is obvious that electoral redistribution is a matter of great importance to this State. It is in this House that legislation to provide for electoral redistribution will be brought down, and it is within the knowledge of everyone that the Country Party executive—not the parliamentary party, but the Country Party executive—has told the Country Party that there are to be 82 seats.

Again, who is making all the statements relative to Cooloola? Not the Minister for Mines, but the president of the Country Party. There cannot be any doubt that rank-and-file members of the Country Party know full well that more and more pressure is being applied to them every day by the present State executive of the Country Party.

I am sure that the hon. member for Condamine, Mr. Sullivan, is well aware of the fact that he is quite deeply involved in this whole matter. Mr. Sparkes is keen to make a name for himself out in that area, and the hon. member for Condamine should not be surprised if he finds that someone is after his head and hide.

Mr. Sullivan: You scare me!

Mr. HOUSTON: I am not trying to scare the hon. gentleman. I am stating facts. Let us not lose sight of the fact that it was the hon. member for Condamine who received the endorsement for the new seat of Condamine over Mr. Sparkes's father, Sir James Sparkes, as he now is, who was then a member of this Assembly. I suppose it is only natural to suggest—

Mr. Sullivan: That was a democratic decision.

Mr. HOUSTON: I am not doubting that it was a democratic decision. But in recent months, particularly since the last State election, there has been a move by this outside body, the State executive of the Country Party, to stand over various members of the Country Party. I have been told that this rebellion, this expected and hoped-for takeover of the Premier and the Country Party caucus, possibly began as a result of an arrogant display by some members of the Country

Party executive at a purely social function held at Lennons Hotel on 16 October to farewell an esteemed member of the Country Party, Colonel Hatton, who for many years was a guiding light in the party. I do not know what the facts are, but it is obvious that after some people have a few drinks of champagne, particularly if it is imported champagne, they do not require very much urging. In my opinion, it is probably correct to say that that display brought to the boil discontent that had been simmering for quite some time.

Remember, too, that only about two weeks previously, the Country Party executive summoned members of the Country Party to toe the line. We were told, of course, that it was a get-together to close ranks. If there was a get-together to close ranks, it certainly indicated that there was a breakdown within those ranks.

Mr. Ramsden: You would be doing a lot of guessing.

Mr. HOUSTON: No guessing at all. These facts have been given to me by Country Party members of this House. Don't worry about that.

We must admit that the attempt by the hon. member for Murrumba, the hon. member for Redcliffe, the hon. member for Flinders and the hon. member for South Coast on Tuesday night took other members by surprise. I will admit that the action of the rebels was a well-kept secret until, apparently, one person in the know had too much to drink and spilled the plot to one of the Premier's supporters. This, of course, forced the rebels to go to the Premier one day too soon.

It was said yesterday that the four members who approached the Premier did so in friendship and peace. I have no doubt about this at all, but I am sure it must have been a shock when the Premier reacted as he did. After all, they apparently went to him on a very "simple" errand—the errand of asking him to resign. Because he reacted as he did, surely they are not going to complain, as apparently they have done through the various media.

Although blue is traditionally a Liberal colour, it is reliably reported that "blue" air could clearly be seen coming from under the door of the Premier's room. I would not care to embarrass you, Mr. Speaker, or other members of this House by repeating some of the remarks that have been credited to one member of that delegation. I think it is enough to say that the four heroes who acted on behalf of the rebel group left the lion's den to fight another day. That day, of course, was 21 October, in the morning.

As we know, 22 grim men went to the party meeting—Mr. Ahern from Landsborough, Mr. Armstrong from Mulgrave, the Premier himself, Mr. Camm from Whitsunday, Mr. Cory from Warwick, Mr. Fletcher

from Cunningham, Mr. Hinze from the South Coast, Mr. Hodges from Gympie, Mr. Houghton from Redcliffe, Mr. Jones from Callide, Mr. Lonergan from Flinders, Mr. Low from Coorooora, Mr. McKechnie from Carnarvon, Mr. Muller from Fassifern, Mr. Newbery from Mirani, Mr. Nicholson from Murrumba, Mr. Rae from Gregory, Mr. Richter from Somerset, Mr. Row from Hinchinbrook, Mr. Sullivan from Condamine, Mr. Tomkins from Roma and Mr. Wharton from Burnett. As we know, three members were not present. Mr. Bird from Burdekin was not there and neither was Mr. Hungerford or Mr. Hewitt. If the Minister denies any of these things, he has the right to do so. I hope he does.

These 22 men voted, some for and some against the Premier. The vote was 11 all—two cricket teams, one might say. But they were hardly playing cricket from the Premier's point of view. When we analysed the voting—again I thank the Government member who gave me the information—we have on one side what we could perhaps call “the Premier's team”—Mr. Armstrong, Mr. Cory, Mr. Hodges, Mr. Low, Mr. McKechnie, Mr. Muller, Mr. Newbery, Mr. Rae, Mr. Tomkins and Mr. Wharton. It is a team that one could say was composed of new boys, lacking experience but certainly led by a wily old skipper who knew how to take advantage once the word was dropped to him that his head was on the block. On the other side we find Mr. Ahern, Mr. Camm, Mr. Fletcher, Mr. Hinze, Mr. Houghton, Mr. Jones, Mr. Lonergan, Mr. Nicholson, Mr. Richter, Mr. Row and Mr. Sullivan.

Mr. V. E. JONES: I rise to a point of order. So that the Leader of the Opposition may have his facts right, I inform him that I was not at the meeting.

Mr. HOUSTON: I will not deny anyone the right to make a statement and I accept what the hon. member says.

The team against the Premier had enthusiasm. There is no doubt about that. It also had organisation. But it broke down because it lacked leadership. At that stage the real leader was not prepared to come out into the open, but I think that eventually he became well known.

If I can believe those who tell me these things, it appears that, at that point, the Premier realised that the voting was 11-all, and undecisive, so he used two more votes for himself, and I suppose one cannot blame him for this if he has those votes. They were the proxies of Mr. Hewitt and Mr. Hungerford, and they are interesting proxies. I am told that Mr. Hewitt's proxy was obviously signed by a female hand and that Mr. Hungerford's proxy was a proxy on a proxy. I do not know exactly how that works out.

Mr. HUNGERFORD: I rise to a point of order. It was nothing of the sort. When I knew what was going on in the House, I cancelled my existing proxy and appointed the Premier as my proxy.

Mr. HOUSTON: I thank the hon. member for confirming my belief. However, he did not say who had the first proxy, or who informed him and when he was informed. I am sure he would like to speak later on and tell us so that the record can be kept straight. I suggest that after the hon. member for Carnarvon spoke to him he sent another proxy to the Premier superseding the earlier one.

Mr. McKECHNIE: I rise to a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition has said that I spoke to the hon. member for Balonne prior to the Country Party meeting this week. I assure the House that the first time this week I spoke to the hon. member was at breakfast this morning.

Mr. HOUSTON: I regret that I wrongly gave credit of loyalty to the hon. member for Carnarvon. I thought he was the one who did the right thing by his Premier.

Naturally the rebels were disappointed with the result, and I am told that they immediately started out after the blood of those who they believed had changed their votes. It became well known shortly after Tuesday night that the rebel group believed they had 16 votes. To finish up with only 11 meant that five members voted the other way.

Be that as it may, the voting was interesting. The only Cabinet Ministers who supported the Premier were the three whom he personally had chosen to fill Cabinet rank, namely, Mr. Rae, Mr. Hodges and Mr. Hewitt. Of course, as we know, he had Mr. Hewitt's proxy.

The question now is: how does this open revolt within the Country Party affect the Cabinet? It is obvious that, of the six Liberal Cabinet Ministers, the Leader of the Liberal Party has at least 5 votes in his favour. Cabinet power, therefore, is not in the hands of the Premier on vital issues, but in the hands of the Chalk-Camm coalition—a coalition within the ranks of the coalition parties. I say quite candidly that I believe that the Cabinet of any State Government, or of the Federal Government, must be firmly in the hands of the Premier or the Prime Minister, respectively. I agree that every Cabinet Minister has the right to express his opinion, but at no stage should the Premier of the State be put in a position where he knows that, if a matter of grave importance were to come before Cabinet, he could not rely on Cabinet support.

My first point is that the Premier has lost control of Cabinet, which means that he has virtually lost control of the Government.

Now that the actual situation is recorded, let me deal with the reason why the rebel group wanted to get rid of the Premier. Obviously the rebels considered that he was an embarrassment to them. The Press reported that one of the main issues raised by Country Party members—what I have said so far is public knowledge, or has been said around this House and outside it—as a matter of vital importance, related to Cabinet Ministers' shareholdings.

It is interesting to note that the Cabinet Ministers who supported the Premier were those who received a share offer from Comalco in April of this year. The Minister for Local Government (Mr. Rae) received 1,500 shares, the Minister for Conservation (Mr. Hewitt) received 1,200 shares, and the Minister for Works (Mr. Hodges) received 1,200 shares. This makes me wonder what is the tie-up between the Premier and these three Cabinet Ministers. Are the other four Ministers suffering from sour grapes which made them want to move against the Premier? Do they believe that the Premier was responsible for their not being included in the share offer? Only they can answer the query.

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is very pleasing to hear. I hope more Government members take part in this debate than they did when the share issue was before the House, when only two Ministers saw fit to speak.

It is strange that, when the shares were being handed out, only those Ministers whom the Premier could rely on were included in the offer. If they had been the senior members of the coalition perhaps that could have been taken as a reason why they, and they alone, received the shares. But three junior Cabinet Ministers were involved—important men to the company, no doubt. There was no seniority or any other apparent reason why, out of eight Country Party Cabinet members, three should be given special treatment. I naturally ask: if those three were offered shares, was the Premier also offered them?

Do the rebel Ministers know the answer to that question? Are they not making the answer public by using it in an attempt to dispose of the Premier? Do they also know the names of any companies that may be acting on behalf of the Premier or on behalf of any other Minister? No doubt the Premier has an interest in many companies, and we also know that he is quite skilled in handling shares and the operations of companies. He has had many years' experience in this field. One of the reasons given by the rebels for their move against the Premier related to his shareholdings and his interests in companies.

The Premier has not denied—and I do not see any reason why he should—that he has an interest in several companies. In the Kingaroy area, for instance, he has an

interest in Hansen & Bjelke-Petersen and in Langton, Hansen and Bjelke-Petersen, two clay-mining companies; south of Kingaroy, he has an interest in Bjelke-Petersen Enterprises Pty. Ltd. and R. Black, which is interested in mineral research; and south-east of Cloncurry, and at Aramac, Richmond and Hughenden, he has an interest in Exoil N.L. and Transoil N.L., which have the right to search for minerals over an area of 20,000 square miles. Exoil N.L. has a 70 per cent. interest in prospecting for oil around Hughenden, and 52½ per cent. and 46 1/5 per cent. respectively in two other ventures at Princess Charlotte Bay.

Maybe the Premier has other share interests. The point I make is that all of these matters were known by members of the Cabinet and members of the Country Party prior to this move. They were known before the election.

Mr. Ramsden: And we won the election.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is right.

They were certainly known by the rebels at the time the Premier was re-elected leader of his party. Let me make it clear that I am trying to find out the reasons.

Mr. LONERGAN: I rise to a point of order. I wish to correct the Leader of the Opposition in this respect. Among other things, he said that we knew of the Premier's shareholdings before we elected him as Deputy Premier. I want to state quite definitely that I had no knowledge of the Premier's shareholdings prior to his being elected Deputy Premier or Premier.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has made his point of order.

Mr. HOUSTON: This opens up a completely new field. I completely accept what the hon. member for Flinders has said, because other spokesmen for the Government parties, both before the election and afterwards, said that all the Premier's shareholdings were public property and were known by the public.

I believe that this is a matter which requires further explanation by those in the rebel camp. It could be that the hon. member for Flinders was the only one who did not know, but, knowing him as I do, I do not think this would be so. If he did not know something, many others would not know.

The latest development is the charge—perhaps "suggestion" would be a better word at this stage—that one of the Premier's companies is trying to make an arrangement with an American company to exploit one of his holdings. That may be so, but again this would be known to the rebels, and, irrespective of whether I agree or not—I do not agree with Cabinet Ministers holding shares—the point is that they have shares. We debated that issue, and I accept

the outcome. However, that was months ago. It was months ago that that issue came before the House.

To those in the Government parties, particularly the Country Party, who have been critical of the Premier for his dealings, particularly in the mining field, the motion gives an opportunity to say what they want to say. When members of the Government parties take it upon themselves virtually to stand over the Premier, I believe they should use this opportunity to declare publicly exactly where they stand.

Let us now look at the Cooloola issue.

Mr. Camm: You are on a Cook's tour?

Mr. HOUSTON: Yes.

Let us look at Cooloola to see what part it plays in the rebels' discussions on tackling the Premier. On 26 August, 1970, the joint Government parties decided against mining the sands at Cooloola. It is true that the Deputy Leader of the Country Party wanted to permit mining there, but he apparently decided to accept the joint parties' vote, as little has been heard of him since. However, it is public knowledge that the Minister for Works and Housing and the Premier have had plenty to say since then. The worst feature is the two-timing that is going on, and I ask, which is what I imagine the rebels have asked, "Why the delay in making a Cabinet decision?" It is now weeks since the joint parties made a decision, and I see no reason at all why it could not have been carried into full effect in the Cabinet room. Perhaps the Premier is praying for a miracle that will allow him to overrule his joint caucus and give the mining lease to the company. That would be done in defiance of the Country Party executive.

The threat by the mining companies of legal action for damages amounting to \$40,000,000 is all bluff, unless (did some of the rebels know this?) some of the Ministers who aided the move against the Premier knew that a member of Cabinet had given some secret undertaking to the company. Of course, if that had happened, a completely new light would be thrown on the actions taken at that time.

I have no doubt that the Premier and Government members will try to side-track the real issues on this motion, which are the position of the Premiership and the Premier's fitness to stay in office, by referring to changes of other leaders. I say right at the outset that I am not concerned about what happened to others; I and my party are concerned only with what is happening to Queensland today. With the present political leadership, and the factions associated with it both in Cabinet and the Government, this State is not progressing at the rate at which we believe it should progress under a united and forceful Government.

As hon. members know, this is not the first challenge to the Premier's leadership. In June, 1969, there were moves against the

Premier in retaliation, so the story goes, for his organising against his deputy leader, Mr. Camm. In February, 1970, there were again moves to get the numbers against the Premier. Of course, that was after the annihilation of the Country Party candidate at the Albert by-election. The main anti-Premier issues then were the same as they are today.

One of those issues is, of course, fear of drilling on the Great Barrier Reef. As hon. members know, the Premier made a statement—I believe it was made in his capacity as Premier—that he would not necessarily accept the findings of the Barrier Reef committee of inquiry. That was enlarged further to mean that if the committee of inquiry said "no drilling", the Premier and the State Government would still make up their minds whether or not they would allow drilling on the reef. It is known that the Premier wants to allow drilling on the reef. In fairness, I concede that he may believe that it is perfectly safe to drill; but that is his opinion, as distinct from mine. That was known to be his attitude to drilling on the reef, and it is one of the reasons that has been put forward.

The Government has been charged with failing to tackle the Crown of Thorns starfish problem. Surely that must be a matter for Cabinet as a whole, not for any individual.

One charge that has been made against the Premier in certain sections of the Country Party is that he failed to solve the butter-margarine question, which is, I suppose, very important to supporters of that party. Again, the fact is that there was so much internal strife and so many problems within the coalition Government that it was not possible to bring a Bill before the House. I say that if a Bill had come before the House, some common-sense solution could have been found, a solution that could have assisted the butter producer but not interfered in any way with the honest manufacturer of margarine.

Of course, the Premier bears the full brunt of the charge of giving away the State's natural resources. I do not know whether that was one factor which led to the challenge to the Deputy Premier that was made in the Liberal Party some little time ago, but it has certainly been bandied about here as being one of the reasons. I cannot accept that the responsibility for that is completely on the Premier's shoulders.

Another point that is very pertinent and important is the Government's failure to find a solution to the ever-recurring problems of drought.

Mr. Chalk: It is raining now.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is correct. Again the Deputy Premier shows that he will seize any opportunity to try to justify the Government's actions. It is raining at present, and I am sure that everyone is pleased that it is. But, as all hon. members know, drought has been, and is, a grave problem in this

State. I do not think anyone would deny that. Surely, knowing that drought is here and that it recurs, the Government could have done much more to assist those in drought-stricken areas. It could also have done much more to ensure that water conservation and other means were used to make sure that the effects of drought were taken care of effectively.

We should not lose sight of the fact that Country-Liberal Governments have been in power in Queensland for 13 years. I do not blame the people in the West for being disgusted with the performance of the Country Party, and I have no doubt that when the rebels within the party were putting forward arguments to get people on their side against the Premier, one of the most forceful and truthful arguments they could have used was his failure to lead the Government in solving the problems of drought. We completely agree with those who took the step against the Premier. It is common knowledge that in other States—New South Wales particularly—many steps have been taken to help overcome the great problems that follow drought.

The Premier promised to open trade offices in Japan and other parts of the Far East. He did this because he believed, as I did and still do, that we have to find markets for our products. May I say at this stage that the depressed wool prices are certainly regretted by the Opposition, but answers must be found and the only people who can find answers to these things are members of the Government of the day. When answers are not found, then the Government has to take the responsibility.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I have been listening very attentively to the Leader of the Opposition. He appears to be developing his argument along the lines of a no-confidence motion in the Government rather than in one person. I should like him to make it clear whether he intends continuing to do that.

Mr. HOUSTON: If the Premier returns his Commission to the Governor, naturally his selection of Cabinet ceases to function. The Cabinet members of the Country Party are selected by the Premier himself. That is his right; it is the Country Party's rule. If this motion was carried, I could not imagine the Premier going to His Excellency the Governor and handing him his Commission without first sacking those responsible for the circumstances that brought this motion before the House today.

Mr. Hughes: Does he tip out Mr. Chalk and the other Liberal Ministers, too?

Mr. HOUSTON: The Liberals could not govern on their own; that's for sure. That is why I say that the two are tied together.

The Premier's standing has apparently slipped further in the eyes of his supporters and, I believe, in the eyes of the people of this State. On his recent return from the

South, he expressed satisfaction with the Commonwealth's treatment of Queensland in the face of all the evidence and against the views of the Treasurer. In fact, it is becoming evident that in fighting for our State, Queensland simply tags along with what the other State Premiers decide.

It is also true that the Premier is blamed for the Government's failure to tackle the freight rates problem. Do not let us forget that it was the Premier himself who said in North Queensland during the election campaign that he and he alone in Cabinet was against creating the problems existing in connection with rail freights and concessions. At that time the matter came close to a real Donnybrook between the Premier and the Deputy Premier on information leaking out from Cabinet. I well remember the Deputy Premier rushing back to Brisbane to make a statement that it was wrong of the Premier to make information available on how various people voted in Cabinet.

Many country people are accusing the Premier of being weak in his leadership and allowing the Liberal Party to pull the strings. Of course, while the Liberal Party holds the Treasurership, naturally it will pull the financial strings. While the Liberal Party does that, decisions on the availability of money for projects to assist country people will rest with the Treasurer.

I well recall being in Quilpie, which is in the electorate represented by the Minister for Local Government, on the night after the Albert by-election was held. The function to which I was invited was attended predominantly by supporters of the Country Party. When the first polling figures were released and it was known that the Labour Party was in front, all those Country Party supporters said to me that although they were disappointed that Labour was in front—

Mr. Camm: All of them?

Mr. HOUSTON: I would expect my own supporters to be happy about it but, as I said, the great majority of the people present were supporters of the Country Party. They said that if I looked at the figures that the hon. member for Gregory had received out in that area I would find that he had a substantial vote. Those people told me that if the Country Party member could not get up—

Mr. Camm: Ridiculous.

Mr. HOUSTON: It is just as ridiculous for the Minister to try to cut off the Premier's head. The point is that those people did not want the Liberal Party on any account and preferred the A.L.P. to the Liberal Party in government. That indicated clearly to me that eventually this coalition would fail.

I turn now to a consideration of the primary producer, who wants as his leader someone whom he regards as strong. As I

said at the outset, the Premier has the support of the present Country Party executive; therefore, there are internal problems and wrangling.

I recall that in June, 1969, Mr. Roberts, a well-known member of the Country Party, said, "One is constantly reminded that water conservation and the problems associated with drought have never been really tackled." Many members of the Country Party still remember the infamous expression used by the Premier during the election campaign, "not at this point of time", and his repudiation of his election promise on Sunday drinking in Brisbane. This still rankles some members of the Country Party.

Others blame the Premier for not having completed the Gladstone Power Station arrangement to the satisfaction of the State. Without going into details, I point out that the present proposed size of the power-house will be sufficient only to cover the normally expected increase in demand from existing industries. The extensive development that is envisaged for Gladstone will depend on a massive power-house of the size that was originally indicated. As I have said before, such a power-house is urgently needed.

As I say, some people blame the Premier for not having been firm enough in Canberra to ensure that the arrangement was completed.

One of the most important factors that those who oppose the Premier are worried about is his public image. I do not argue for or against that, because I would not know about it. However, I am sure that, like me, the Premier has friends who praise him as well enemies who speak against him. I am sure the Premier now realises that while he has some so-called friends in his coalition Government, he certainly does not need any enemies, because they can well look after him.

Mr. Ramsden: Yours will stick the knife into you.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is wishful thinking on the hon. member's part.

We all know that the Premier had very strained relations with the A.B.C. in June of this year. We also know that he is not behind the door in attacking the Press in general. Even his answer to a question today gave a clear indication that he would take action against anyone who offended him—particularly someone associated with the news media. However, that is entirely something for the Premier's party to solve.

The Opposition bases its motion on many factors. First and foremost is the fact that the Premier has lost the confidence of his own party. We also believe that, through that, he has lost the confidence and support of his own Cabinet. We would not mind that, except—and it is a major exception—that it will drastically interfere with the progress of the State. Many important

matters of legislation are not being handled as they should be, and they are not being handled as quickly as they should be. Meeting after meeting of the Government parties is taken up in arguing about these things rather than with trying to get on with the submission of legislation.

The recent attack on the Premier was not isolated. I am sure he realises that. It was carefully planned and calculated. Although he suggests—and I have no doubt that this is true—that many at the party meeting at which he retained his leadership swore allegiance to him and that they would not oppose him, not long afterwards I heard, as I am sure he and many other members of this House heard, that plans were being made for the next time. They will then not let their tactics be known beforehand, and they have suggested that they will exclude a couple of members from the knowledge of what is going on. Even now they are planning the next move.

This State cannot afford to have a Government in power in which the Premier knows he has continually to be watching his flanks. It is quite bad enough to have a coalition partner that is trying to take over the reins of power, although perhaps that is normal.

We also believe that this motion is necessary because the Premier made certain election promises which, even now, half-way through the year, have not been carried out. He said, amongst other things, that Queensland must continue to have positive and progressive government. The word "positive" means "explicitly laid down, definite and admitting no question".

I repeat that we have no positive approach to government today. Can there be a positive situation without complete confidence? I believe that there certainly cannot be. We are on the verge of making a final decision about the establishment of a super power-house in Central Queensland, but we are still waiting to see the final plans.

Under this Government's administration, according to the Premier at the last State election, local authorities have never had it better. Yet, at local authority conferences, complaint after complaint is made about the Government's treatment of local authorities. If the Premier wants to find out what they think, he should ask many of his former supporters in local authority areas.

There is plenty of evidence to justify the Opposition's move and to substantiate the motion I have moved that the coalition Government, through the Premier, has lost the confidence of this State and of this House.

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) (12.51 p.m.): I gladly second the motion moved so ably by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Chalk: Are you going to agree with him today?

Mr. TUCKER: If the Treasurer sees me later on, I shall tell him.

The people involved in any coup d'état—and I shall call this one the "Kingaroy coup d'état"—are fully aware of the serious risks they run. If they succeed they are heroes and gain positions of power from which to dictate, whereas if they are unsuccessful they are quite often headed for the firing squad or, should I say, oblivion of some sort or another. History contains many examples and precedents of this. I believe that all hon. members, and possibly the people generally, are acutely aware of the dangers involved, particularly when you, Mr. Speaker, are involved.

The point I made today is that for these obvious reasons, no-one would enter into such intrigue lightly. Responsible and thinking men take such drastic steps only when there appears to be no alternative open to them. It follows that this applies to responsible—and I stress the word "responsible"—Country Party men like the hon. members for Flinders, Murrumba, South Coast and Redcliffe, the four conspirators, if for want of a better word, I can call them that—and I do not say it in any derogatory way—who met secretly in a room in this House which I am told the Premier now calls the "treason room", in contrast to what he refers to as the "treason room" at the Trades Hall. If any hon. member asks me later on, I shall tell him where the Premier claims the "treason room" in this House is and who occupies it.

Those four responsible men surely considered all aspects of the position before challenging the Premier. That is a very valid consideration in this argument today. They obviously considered that they had absolutely no alternative, because they would have sought the alternative if there was one.

Mr. Ramsden: Are you quoting from Gough's speech?

Mr. TUCKER: The hon. member for Merthyr wears the splint around his throat because he is afraid somebody will cut off his head.

Mr. Ramsden: As a matter of fact I have to because there are so many gangsters on your side of the House.

Mr. TUCKER: The hon. members to whom I have referred surely considered that the Premier was at the height of his reign, with an election approximately 18 months away. Surely they, and the other hon. members who were with them, considered that aspect, because it is a very vital facet in this matter. They would also have considered that a Senate election was right at our front door. They would also have considered the Country Party's invidious position relative to redistribution. If not they would be the dumbest people in this House, which they certainly are not. They would

also appreciate the implications and ramifications of deposing a Premier, and the effect it would have on the electorate generally. That is not something that is done lightly. All the people of Queensland are concerned, and those responsible men would have known that their action involved all the people.

These men would also have considered the effect that their action would have on their own party members throughout the State. They are seasoned politicians (they have been in this House for possibly well over 10 years) and they, together with these who conspired with them, must have examined all aspects of the matter.

Surely those whom I could describe as left-wing members of the Country Party would have considered every aspect of the matter. I have noticed that in this House "left-wing" seems to be synonymous with treason. It seems to me, on the argument of hon. members opposite, that at this stage "left-wing" is possibly a good description to apply to some members of the Government parties.

Although the things that I have mentioned no doubt presented frightening possibilities, those members concerned finally decided that they had no alternative but to move against the Premier. I have great respect for the members shown in the photograph in the "Telegraph" of that day. I know that they are responsible men who, after a great deal of deliberation, felt there was no other path open to them. By their decision they said in effect, "Despite all the contingencies, the position is so grave that precipitate action is warranted." And precipitate action they took on Tuesday evening.

Just as the Labour Party has information flowing back to it from its members at the grass-roots level, so information flowed back to the Country Party from its members throughout Queensland. The four members of the Country Party to whom I have referred tapped those wires, so to speak, and heard that party members were saying throughout Queensland, "The electorate has no longer any confidence in the Premier of this State. Move now before we all go down together." They moved last Tuesday night and again on Wednesday morning.

I repeat: if the situation were not as I describe it, why would these men have taken the action they did, and at the time they did? Would they have done that if there had been any other alternative? Why would these thinking, responsible and seasoned politicians take this action? I say they took it because the situation was impossible. That they took it, with all the risks involved, reinforces my argument that there was no alternative. The people of Queensland, speaking through their electorate representatives, said, "Do something before the next election or this man will take us into the political wilderness." Not only the four men whom I have mentioned, but many others on the back-benches and in Cabinet, heard the same voice and began to

follow it. Of course, we all know that when the heat is on there are those who at the last minute shift, swerve, and fail.

In point of fact, almost half the Country Party members in this House have no confidence in the Premier. They said so in a secret ballot. The people are laughing about that secret ballot. The Premier asked for a show of hands.

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

Mr. TUCKER: Before the recess for lunch I referred to the meeting of the Country Party at which an attempt was made to depose the Premier. I pointed out that, if Press reports are correct, the Premier called for a show of hands and that, again if Press reports are correct, the hon. member for Landsborough, Mr. Ahern, called for a secret ballot. I think it is worth turning the light on that point for a moment, before I move on.

I remind the House that frequently in this Chamber the Premier has said that these are Trades Hall tactics—that members of Trades Hall unions who want to intimidate anyone when a vote is being taken call for a show of hands; that there is no way in the world they want a secret ballot; and that the only way to get justice is to have a secret ballot. Apparently on this occasion the Premier himself saw fit to adopt what he refers to as “Trades Hall tactics” and called for a show of hands. That was obviously an attempt by him to intimidate some of the lesser lights in the party so that the vote might have been about 20 to 5, or something like that. It was only the action of the hon. member for Landsborough in calling for a secret ballot that thwarted the Premier's design on that occasion. On the one hand, the Premier deprecates the use of such tactics; on the other, when his own position is in jeopardy, he adopts the tactics the supposed use of which by others he deprecates.

How can a Premier who has half his Cabinet against him and almost half his back-benchers against him remain in office? How can he retain his position when he sits, as the Press describes it (they are not my words), on a knife-edge, or straddling a sharp fence with a foot to the ground on each side? That is what he will have to do. How can he concentrate on being Premier of the State when he is in that position? Can he ignore the implications of the vote of 13 to 11? Of course he cannot. Every thinking member in this Chamber will agree that he cannot ignore the implications of a vote which indicates that almost half the Country Party Cabinet Ministers and almost half the Country Party back-benchers are opposed to him. Will he have peace of mind from now on? How will he feel when he faces the people of Queensland with that vote behind him? It has been spread over the whole of Queensland by the various news media.

How can the Premier say that in fact he has the backing of Government members? You, Mr. Speaker, and I know that he cannot. He cannot be effective as Premier with that sword hanging over his head. Make no mistake: as the Leader of the Opposition said, the sword is still hanging over his head, because there are those who say, “Give us a month, or a little more time, and we will have another go at him.” He cannot be an effective Premier under those circumstances. His parliamentary colleagues say he cannot. He has been condemned by them in the vote of no confidence against him and by the fact that he used two proxies to bolster his position.

Do not forget—and this is the point I make today—that this move against the Premier has been Country Party inspired, Country Party activated and Country Party engineered. He has been discredited and disowned by his own people in this House. It was only by the narrowest thread that he survived. The Parliamentary Labour Party has known for a long time that he has not been effective. We have said so. The Liberal Party has also intimated, by its studied contempt of the Premier, that it thinks along the same lines.

On many occasions we have pointed out the Premier's inability to make up his mind and to stick to it once he does. His own colleagues have said the same thing. We have pointed out the Premier's penchant for dictatorship whenever he feels like it. At the drop of a hat he becomes a dictator within his own party, and he tries to become one in this Parliament. We have also pointed to his inconsistency. These are things his own party members realise. He is completely inconsistent in his approaches and in his thinking. It is apparent to every responsible, thinking person in this House, and, in statements made by his own colleagues during the last few days, it has been highlighted by each and every one of them.

Now, as the Leader of the Opposition has done, let me point to a few of these inconsistencies, to a few of these dictator-like approaches, to a few of the times when he obviously could not care less about anything. The Leader of the Opposition has mentioned the Great Barrier Reef drilling, margarine, Cooloola, drought relief and redistribution. I could go on and on, but those are enough for a start.

Let me deal with the Great Barrier Reef. The Premier demanded the right to drill in the shadow of the Barrier Reef even though the company concerned, after pressure, had offered to back out. The Premier said, “No, we will go ahead.” It was only pressure from his own back-benchers and the Government generally that stopped him. He is the Premier who will not declare that Cooloola should be a national park even though a majority of his back-benchers favour it, and at this moment he is under

suspicion in regard to Cooloola. He is the Premier who delays redistribution because he cannot get his own way. He says, "I want 82 seats." The Liberal Party says, "We want the number to remain as it is." The Premier says, "If I cannot get my own way, you will get nothing."

At the moment, the coalition has staggered to the point where the months are running out. If we do not get some movement on redistribution in the course of the next few months it will probably be too late. As I say, the Premier wants to be a dictator. He calls it a happy coalition. Surely that is a masterpiece of mis-statement. It is the most unhappy coalition that has ever existed anywhere. It is a very unhappy coalition that controls this great State of ours.

This is the Premier who has attempted to discredit Queensland senators by smears and personal attacks in this House. He attempted, as he said, to use the police in this connection. Instead of using the police on A.L.P. senators, he would have been better advised to use them on his own colleagues; he might have found out a little earlier than he did what was going on amongst them and what their thoughts were.

This is the Premier who promised consumer protection and to do something about freight rates in country areas. On each occasion, he has delivered nothing. His promises are worthless. Country Party members who asked him to come north know this. He is the Premier who said, "I am the lone ranger in Cabinet." When he said that on the Tablelands, those who were interested thought some relief would flow from him. But he was once again only collecting votes and we have had nothing really positive except that he has asked somebody to submit a report. When he received the report from W. D. Scott & Co. he deliberately ignored it, as usual.

The Premier has described gambling as the bedfellow of vice and crime; yet when he needed votes he went down to the Eagle Farm racecourse and had himself photographed patting racehorses. The Premier has condemned liquor and said that it is one of the greatest iniquities in our community; yet when he wanted votes in the Mirani electorate he put on free beer for the local residents at Finch Hatton.

We do not forget these things, and every one of us knows that they are true. Any hon. member who does not accept them as true can rise and claim that I am imputing improper motives to the Premier. As has been highlighted by the Leader of the Opposition, the Premier said that he was opposed to Sunday drinking; yet after the Albert by-election he condoned it very quickly and it was introduced into Brisbane, although we know that it had been in force in other areas for some time.

The Premier attempted to wreck the margarine industry, and he would have succeeded had he not been restrained by his colleagues. Similarly he was restrained on the issues of sand-mining at Cooloola and oil-drilling on the Great Barrier Reef.

The Premier incorrectly labelled certain people as Communists, yet when he found out that they were not Communists he did not have the intestinal fortitude to apologise to them. We gave him the opportunity to do so and told him the names of those people and asked him if he would do something about it. Of course, he did nothing about it.

The Premier has been out of his depth in negotiating with the Commonwealth Government. The Prime Minister runs three rings around him before he even realises that Mr. Gorton is moving. He has not been able to negotiate effectively with the Commonwealth Government to secure relief for the drought-stricken farmers of this State.

The Premier's vacillations have been obvious to all of us, and particularly to those who work nearer to him. Those people are the ones who moved against him the other day. His vacillations have reduced his colleagues to a state of utter depression and frustration, and we can see their devastating effect in this House.

Obviously, the Premier's handling of the share matter helped to bring his former colleagues out into the open. He embarrassed them and has set a precedent in the matter of obtaining shares. The result is that his Cabinet colleagues have said, "If it is good enough for Joh, it is good enough for us."

This morning the hon. member for Flinders rose on a point of order and said, "When I voted for the Deputy Premier I had no idea that he held these shares." I wonder whether he spoke for a great number of Government back-benchers. He felt compelled to place on record that he did not know of the Premier's activities prior to that time. On the matter of shareholdings the Premier has thumbed his nose at the electors. I can well remember the embarrassment suffered by the hon. member for South Coast, not only in his own Country Party conferences, but also in this House, on the matter of the Premier's shareholdings. If I remember correctly, the Treasurer, who is now smiling, adopted the same attitude when we asked him about the share issues. He implied that if the Premier could accept them, he should be able to, too. That is recorded clearly in "Hansard" for anyone to see.

All who have been in the Army remember that Army booklets say that even a bad plan faithfully followed and resolutely executed can sometimes succeed. The Premier consistently plans badly. Time and again we have seen examples of his bad planning. Consistently he has waived in his resolution, and has made error after

error while at the helm of government. Is it any wonder that his followers have frequently been forced to abandon ship in utter confusion and embarrassment? That has happened both in the House and outside it. Thanks to his poor leadership we have heard cries of "Abandon ship", and over the side they go in complete and utter confusion and embarrassment. How many times, as skipper of the boat or the man on the sweep has the Premier broached the boat and scattered his colleagues ignominiously into the surf? These people moved against him because they have been completely embarrassed by his inability to skipper, by his inability to lead, by his inability to plan, and even by his inability to remain resolute in any conditions. All this must have an effect on the good government of Queensland, and it must reflect on the credibility of the Government itself. Those who moved against the Premier will agree with me on that point.

I repeat that the administration of Queensland should not be retarded because of the inability of its chief administrator—and that statement covers tremendous ground. The Premier's preoccupation with oil shares and mining ventures has set tongues wagging all over Queensland. At one time he owned 500,000 shares in Exoil. Of course, he could have disposed of them later. We of the Australian Labour Party and many other people have said, "Mr. Premier, if you intend to hold such a huge number of shares we do not think it right that you should continue to have dealings with this company, which might ask for a lease on the Barrier Reef." The Premier, in effect, said, "Get lost! I will do what I want to."

I, and all the people of Queensland, noticed the Premier's arrogance when he was questioned, not many months ago, by the representatives of the news media that serve Australia. They were amazed at and annoyed by his arrogance on that occasion, when he turned his back and walked out after saying that he would not answer any more questions about things of which the people of Queensland should have a knowledge.

The fact that the Premier engages with impunity in share transactions and mining dealings—nobody can turn or head him from them—has given rise to nasty rumours throughout the State.

The other day I referred to the Greenvale nickel deposits, but I have had many other representations made to me, quite often by people who desire a mining lease and who, for some reason or another, have run into trouble. They come to me and say, "I have heard that Mr. Bjelke-Petersen is interested in this mining lease, and therefore I have not succeeded." Now, I want to be fair. (Government laughter.)

These rumours may have no basis, but they are abroad. At the moment there is a rumour abroad that the Premier has shares, in the

name of a nominee company, in those companies that want to mine Cooloola, and that there are members of the Country Party who, having heard of this, are tremendously disturbed.

The Leader of the Opposition mentioned Mr. Hansen this morning. I wonder whether it is the Leonard Theodore Hansen of Murgon, farmer, who is reported in "The Courier-Mail" this morning as a tax-dodger. Of course, I do not know.

I believe that the Premier should, like Caesar's wife, be above suspicion. If he is not, the Government, and Country Party members who fail to do anything about it, are to blame.

On many occasions Government members have slung the charge across the Chamber—and I include the Premier, who is in the hot seat today—that we in the Opposition are Communists, that we are fellow travellers, or that we are communist-dominated. Let me sling back across the Chamber today, relative to the Premier's mining interests and his shares, and the rumours that are abroad, that if he lies down with dogs he is sure to get fleas, or if he flies with crows he should not cry if he is shot at.

If the Premier deals in oil shares and mining while he is Premier, he should not cry if he attracts the rumours of malpractice that are rife among the electors. These rumours are flying around in every direction because of his activities. If it is good enough for Government members to sling that type of remark at us, it is good enough for me to throw a similar remark into the teeth of the Government today.

If the Premier attracts these rumours because of his activities, he not only affects himself, but he also spreads a smear over his colleagues—his Ministers and the back-bench members of the Government. It was his activities that actuated the move taken by the members of his party. Country Party members are painfully aware of the position, and have been for months and perhaps years. This is why his leadership has been challenged.

This was an attempt to save the day. Country Party members realised that if they did not move when they did, they might never be able to move. I applaud the intestinal fortitude displayed by the four hon. members who initiated this action. I suppose, from their point of view, it is a pity they failed.

The motion is clear and simple. The Opposition believes that the Premier has lost the confidence of this Parliament and that only half of his back-benchers support him. We know that only half the Cabinet members support him. He has therefore lost the confidence of Parliament; he has lost the confidence of the coalition Government; and he has lost the confidence of the people of Queensland. We, as a virile Opposition, would

therefore be failing in our duty if we merely sat down without making a move and let matters take their course.

I believe that the Premier should resign forthwith. He has lost the respect of his own party, including some of its most senior and respected members who initiated the action against him. His own party members question his capability, and they question also his public image. Did senior members of the coalition Government ever make a similar approach to Sir Francis Nicklin? Did they ever go to Mr. Pizzey and say, "We have no confidence in you"? Has this type of action ever been seen before? It is unprecedented. There must have been something to start it off. These members do not believe that the Premier is the right man to lead them at this time, and they are looking for an alternative leader.

The Premier was propped up by two proxy votes, one of them doubtful. He was also propped up by the Country Party executive. The "Telegraph" of Wednesday, 21 October, contained, under the heading "No Fear!", this passage—

"Asked if he would hand in his Commission if any vote of no-confidence succeeded, Mr. Bjelke-Petersen said:

'No fear. I have a responsibility to Country Party executive members, too.'"

"The Courier-Mail" of 23 October reported the president of the Country Party as saying—

"We do not suggest we should unduly influence the selection of the Parliamentary Leader.

"But since the leadership of the Parliamentary Party obviously has a great bearing on the Government's future, we would expect to be consulted.

"In future, we will insist on it."

When Country Party members are about to choose a leader, they must first ascertain the wishes of Mr. Sparkes and the Country Party executive. Yet they have the gall to talk about outside direction! They have the gall to say that A.L.P. members are directed by the Q.C.E. I have quoted the words of an eminent member of the Country Party, and of the Leader of the coalition Government, which clearly show outside influence. No matter what happens within the coalition or the Parliamentary Country Party, the Premier will ignore it and ask what the executive wants done.

The affairs of Queensland have come to a standstill whilst the Premier struggles for survival in his own party. There is speculation; there is manipulation; but there is no legislation. In the interests of Queenslanders, the Premier should resign and make way for a man who can command the respect of the people and of his own members.

The question before the House is not whether the Premier is a "good bloke". It is not whether he is a fine Christian gentleman. It is not whether he is a decent sort

of fellow. Rather is it whether he has the capability, the resolution and the ability to manage men that would make him a good leader. And the members of the Country Party, by their own actions, have given a resounding "No" to that vital question. If the members of the Country Party themselves do not believe that the Premier is a capable leader, that he has the resolution to carry them through, and they are afraid to face the electors in 1972 with him as their leader, it is obvious that he is no good to the Country Party, no good to the coalition, no good to this Parliament, and no good to Queensland.

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer) (2.46 p.m.): I believe that all hon. members and, I am sure, all the people of Queensland who have the opportunity of listening to this debate or of reading reports in the Press of what has taken place today will realise that there is only one purpose behind the motion now being debated. It is to discredit the Premier and, by so doing, damage the image of the Government, in the hope that the Australian Labour Party will score as a result.

Let me say at the outset that I believe that the A.L.P., in moving this motion, does not care two hoots about the future of Queensland or what happens to the Premier of this State. It is merely exhibiting its desire to attain the Treasury benches in this Chamber so that A.L.P. members and their cohorts at the Trades Hall will be able to take over the reins of government and implement a socialist policy that will be to the detriment of this State and its ever-growing development.

In examining the basis on which both the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition have approached the motion, I point out first that they have exhibited by their utterances in this debate, just as they did yesterday in another debate, a clear break in their own basis of unity. The Leader of the Opposition spent most of his time criticising the Premier of Queensland for being what he described as a weakling, a person who could not command the respect of his party. What did the Deputy Leader of the Opposition say? Immediately prior to resuming his seat, he accused the Premier of being a dictator, of being arrogant. How can the Premier be, as the Leader of the Opposition said, a weakling and a man who cannot command respect and also, as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said, a dictator and an arrogant man? That shows that they are completely lacking in unity of argument in support of the motion.

Let us examine, first of all, the basis on which they approached the matter. Have we heard anything from the Opposition other than an attempt to blame the Premier of the State for everything that has gone wrong, according to them, in Queensland over recent years? They have blamed him for the drought; they have blamed him for the hold-up, as they

term it, in the affairs of Cooloola; they have blamed him because there have not been some freight reductions; they have blamed him also because there is a possibility of litigation over boring on the Barrier Reef; they have blamed him because there was no margarine Bill.

Let me say here and now that government of this State is the responsibility of every member who sits on this side of this Chamber, and it is the responsibility of every Cabinet Minister. The Premier is entitled to one vote in Cabinet if a vote is taken; he is entitled to one vote in the joint party room. Consequently, all the claims made this morning and this afternoon are not the Premier's sole responsibility; they are the responsibility of the Government, and let me say on behalf of the Government that we accept responsibility for all of these things. That being so, we cannot place one iota of credibility on the arguments put forward.

Let me now examine the arguments of the Leader of the Opposition on a number of points he raised. During the time I have been associated with public affairs, I have often heard an old saying, which is now being applied to one of the breweries—"There is a pipeline to the brewery." What the Leader of the Opposition has endeavoured to use in this Chamber today could well be described as his "pipeline to the sewer", because that is all it is. The whole foundation of the case advanced by the Leader of the Opposition was hearsay evidence. Every utterance and every charge he has made in this Chamber against the Premier has been based, according to his own statement, on something that he has heard, something that he was told, something that he alleges has been provided for him by what he calls "rebels" within the Country Party. That is the type of information upon which the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition are prepared to move and base this motion.

Let us have a look, then, at the motion and its basis. First of all, it is not a challenge to the Government; it is not based on something relating to the Government. It is entirely a challenge to the Premier to resign his Commission. During the debate, both hon. gentlemen have endeavoured, as I said before, to base their arguments on things that allegedly have not been done.

I heard the Leader of the Opposition blame the Premier because, according to him, the Gladstone Power House is not big enough. What in the devil's name this has to do with the Premier is beyond me, but let me tell the Leader of the Opposition how far off the mark he is. He said that the power-house will not be big enough and will not be able to supply the requirements of the area. What twaddle! Originally, the capacity of the power-house was to have been 800 mW, but, on the advice of those who designed it, the capacity was increased to 1,100 mW, of which 600 mW would be reserved for new industry. It has been estimated that approximately 500 mW will be

required for future expansion over the next 10 years. The Leader of the Opposition has indicated the depths to which he is prepared to sink to gather material that is neither factual nor in the best interests of the State. He has done so not for the purposes of getting rid of the Government—and his motion does not propose that—but of blaming the Premier for something that he alleges has been left undone.

The purpose of the motion is ambiguous. It attacks the Premier and seeks his resignation, but it does not challenge the Government. If the Leader of the Opposition was prepared to challenge the Government he had the opportunity of framing his motion in a suitable manner. But he did not. He did not frame it in that way for a particular purpose. He hoped that those who are dissatisfied with the Premier, those who raised this matter in their own party rooms, would vote with the Labour Party and so upset the machinery of Government. He knows that if he had framed his motion in the manner expected, that is, in the form of a no-confidence motion in the Government, he would not have been able to get any support, so he framed his motion in its present form in the hope that it would cause embarrassment and create disloyalty among Government members. His other purpose was to delay the business of this House.

Let me examine what he challenges. It is the right of the leader of the coalition Government to hold a Commission as Premier of Queensland. The leader of the coalition parties has the right to be Premier, and that person is elevated to that high office in accordance with the dictates of the political party or parties with which he is associated. I do not propose to concern myself with how the Australian Labour Party would either elect or select a person to the high office of Premier of this State if it was in charge of this House; that is entirely a matter for that party.

Mr. Lee: He would be selected with knives.

Mr. CHALK: That is exactly my point. It is the responsibility of Government members to decide who will be their leader and to determine whether that leader will hold the high office of Premier for as long as the Government retains a majority vote. That is the basis on which the coalition is formed.

It has been the accepted policy of the Country and Liberal Parties in Queensland that in the formation of the coalition Government the leader of the majority party in that coalition is elected by the voices of all coalition members as the person to hold the high Commission of Premier. The Premier was re-elected by Country Party members as the leader of his party after having successfully led that party in the last State election. After he was elected

as leader of the Country Party he was elected by the coalition Government parties to hold the office of Premier of Queensland.

It is true that, since then, his leadership has been challenged. That is the democratic right of members of the Country Party, just as it is the democratic right of members of any party, whether it be the Labour Party, the Liberal Party, or the Country Party, to question their leadership at any time. That is entirely a domestic matter, confined to the party. The Premier faced a meeting of his own members, who carried a vote of confidence in him. That vote of confidence having been carried, in no way is any issue raised between the coalition parties, because the matter rests there, on the basis that he still has the respect of his own party. Having that respect, and having that leadership, we as members of the coalition support the basis on which, as I pointed out, the leader—the Premier of this State—is elected.

As there is no alteration in the arrangements within the coalition parties, the Premier retains the support and confidence of the members of the coalition. That is why we will vigorously oppose any attempt by the Opposition to have Parliament declare that he should resign his Commission as Premier of this State.

Today, we witnessed an attempt by the Leader of the Opposition and his deputy to try to fan a fire of hatred. An old trick of the A.L.P. down through the years, whenever the opportunity arose, was to fan a fire if it believed there was some chance of political benefit for itself. Over the years the A.L.P. has adopted that practice. I was in this Chamber and saw what happened when the Labour Party fell; I saw what happened between Mr. Gair and Mr. Duggan at that time. That is the sort of thing that the A.L.P. knows all about, and these are the tactics it is using to engender dissension within the coalition. I say to Opposition members that they will need to learn a lot more tricks before they break up this coalition Government with the tactics that were used to break up the A.L.P. Government when it had an opportunity to remain in power for a long time. A.L.P. members are trying to make political profit for themselves out of something from which there is no chance of their profiting.

From time to time, irrespective of the political organisation, whether it be the outside organisation of a political party—the organisation of our own political machine—or the organisation of our own members, there can be, and always will be, some differences of opinion. But, as a Government, we have occupied the Treasury benches for 13 years, and we will continue to occupy them for a long time to come because of the type of machination and the type of propaganda employed by the A.L.P. since this debate began.

In my opinion, there has never been greater evidence of weakness in the presentation of a case than that provided by the Leader of the Opposition and his deputy in this debate.

They could not get away from the same type of slander campaign and the same issues they have raised on many occasions. All they did was to rehash most of the matters they placed before the people at the last State election. They strenuously endeavoured to remove the Premier in his electorate and defeat members of the Government. But the people of Queensland re-endorsed this Government and gave it a majority to carry on in this House.

After listening to the arguments that have been put forward, I am sure that this Government and all hon. members associated with it will not only demonstrate their loyalty to the Premier but will also demonstrate in this Chamber their competence and capacity in controlling the destiny of this Parliament and Queensland.

It is not a question of going to the people but of the Australian Labour Party endeavouring to remove the Premier, simply to cause disruption within the Government. The motion, even if it were carried, does not call for the resignation of the Government. The motion contains nothing to bring about the fall of the Government. All that would happen is that the Premier, because of a vote in this House, would be asked to hand in his Commission. This is not a right of the House; it is the right of the coalition to say who shall be Premier.

I do not think there is any need to spend very much time on this matter. No new argument has been introduced, and so far nothing has been presented for me, as Deputy Premier replying on behalf of the coalition, to answer.

Mr. HANLON (Baroona) (3.8 p.m.): I rise to support the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition and seconded by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The Opposition is fortified by these words in the editorial in this morning's "Courier-Mail"—

"This is not only sensible politics, but almost the Opposition's duty."

Mr. Speaker, I refer to you and address you as "Mr. Speaker" in the context of this parliamentary sittings, as I should, and not as your alter ego, or other self, the hon. member for Murrumbidgee, as you explained the difference to us yesterday. In this regard I am reminded a little of "Philadelphia, Here I Come," a play that I saw at the S.G.I.O. Theatre earlier this year. The part of the hero was played by two actors: one took the part of his public self and the other took the part of his alter ego. From time to time, the alter ego made the most outrageous suggestions to the public self, and this was the basis of the play. The way the play ended reminded me of your present situation. We were left feeling rather sorry

at the despair of both the public self and the alter ego and wondering whether they would ever get out of the rut and their futile position.

I have been a member of this Parliament for almost 14 years. I had an interest in it, and some association with it, before that, and in all that time I cannot recall, in Queensland or elsewhere, a situation similar to the one in this State now.

A Government Member: What about Whitlam?

Mr. HANLON: I am pleased to make reference to a comparison, referred to by the Premier outside the House and mentioned by some Government members in interjections, of the Premier's position with that in which Mr. Whitlam once found himself. As Mr. Sparkes said during a television interview when asked to compare the present Premier with Sir Francis Nicklin and the late Mr. Pizzey, comparisons are odious. I can reply similarly to comparisons between the Premier's position and Mr. Whitlam's position.

In 1968, Mr. Whitlam acted as a leader should act. He made certain statements on matters that he considered were fundamental in his position as Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labour Party. The suggestion was made that he did not have the full support of his own caucus. What did he do? He did not wait till he was waylaid at night by people trying to gun him down. He voluntarily called his colleagues together and said to them, "I am submitting my resignation. I will test my leadership and the policies that I have enunciated by submitting my resignation and recontesting the position."

Mr. Ramsden: Who did that?

Mr. HANLON: Gough Whitlam. He was not the Prime Minister; he was the Leader of the Opposition. He considered, as any leader should, that if there was any suggestion that he did not enjoy the confidence of his party, he should put the issue to the test. He considered that to be fundamental to his position as leader of his party, and as Leader of the Opposition. He would not allow the position that developed to continue for a minute longer than was necessary, and, of his own volition, he sought, and received, a vote of confidence from his party.

Mr. R. E. Moore: What was the voting?

Mr. HANLON: I would say that his majority was considerably in excess of that enjoyed by the Premier this week, and Mr. Whitlam did not have to rely on proxy votes exercised at his own discretion.

When the Premier of the State speaks on policy matters, it is important that what he says can be accepted as Government policy. The people of the State, and those with whom the State has dealings, such as those concerned with projects like the Greenvale nickel development, should be able to accept as

Government policy any statements made by the Premier. The tragedy of the present situation is that there is no Government policy, because the Premier is not able to speak knowing that he has the confidence of those behind him, and many matters of Government policy remain unresolved because of a vacillating Premier and Government. It is for that reason that the Opposition has brought the situation to a head in a motion that revolves around the Premier.

The House has heard a predictable response from the Treasurer and Leader of the Liberal Party. He lamented that the Opposition had moved this motion in the terms of a vote of no confidence in the Premier rather than in the Government. I well understand his concern at the Opposition's couching the motion in its present terms. If the motion had been one of want of confidence in the Government, the Treasurer could have done something that he did not do in the last half hour; he could have spoken with feeling and conviction in defending the Government. Under the terms of the motion forced on the Government for debate, he had to do, in anguish, something in which he felt no real conviction, namely, defend and express confidence in the Premier. I think his speech can be dismissed as a reflection of anguish in his own position.

I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that if the Treasurer thought he could, in one minute's time, remove Mr. Bjelke-Petersen from the Premiership and get the numbers to have himself elected as Premier, he would do it without any hesitation. But, with due respect to you, Mr. Speaker, he will not "do a Nicholson", or "a Murrumba", or "an alter ego", or whatever expression one chooses to use. As I said earlier, and as the Leader of the Opposition made clear, we have no argument with your actions in this matter, and I do not wish to embarrass you. I am merely saying that the Treasurer will not make the same mistake as the hon. member for Murrumba made—he won't "do a Nicholson"—and go in without having the numbers. He will wait till he sees that he has the numbers and then make one swift, antiseptically clean cut, so to speak, of the coalition cord that binds him to mother-Premier of the Country Party and emerge as the new-born Premier of Queensland. He will not do it on any other terms. That is why, as I said, he was so upset that the Opposition did not oblige him by moving a motion of no confidence in the Government. He could then have risen quite happily and defended the actions of the Government of which he is the Deputy Leader. Instead, the Opposition has obliged him to get up in this Chamber and express confidence in Mr. Bjelke-Petersen as Premier of this State, something that he cannot do with any real conviction.

Both the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition have pointed out—and this was recognised, I think, by the editorial

in "The Courier-Mail" this morning to which I referred—that the essence of this matter is the public interest. I know that hon. members can pontificate on the subject of public interest and that people can say, "Well, it does get mixed up considerably with politics", but surely that is the situation in this instance. Following the events of the last two days, the position is that the Premier of this State, the man who will have to meet people who come here representing companies such as Metalsex and Freeport, the man who will deal with Comalco and other companies that have developmental projects in Queensland, and the man who will, if a special Premier's Conference is called tomorrow in Canberra, represent the State on matters that may be, and usually are, of vital interest, will barely be hanging to the Premiership by his two thumbs. Can this State afford to send to Canberra a Premier who is in that position? Can it afford to have people who are coming here to engage in important projects meet a Premier whom they may see disappearing by his thumbs as they walk in the door?

Possibly the position is even worse in the light of the fact that, in the famous 13-11 vote, the hon. gentleman had the use of two proxies. One could say, in effect, that he is hanging not by his thumbs but by two gloves, and if either of the proxies comes and claims a glove, away will go the Premier and Leader of the Country Party in Queensland without a trace. Such a situation simply cannot be allowed to continue.

In his remarks, the Treasurer referred to events in 1957 when the Australian Labour Party Government went out of office. Let me be quite frank about it. The Australian Labour Party did not deserve to be in office at that time unless it was in a position to mend the divisions within its ranks. When it did not mend them, at least it created a situation in which an election was called and the people were given an opportunity to express their decision. That was real democracy. Hon. members on the Government benches talk a great deal about democracy, and the Treasurer referred today to what happened in this Chamber in 1957. As I said, the A.L.P. Government of the day, of its own volition, referred the matter to the people of this State, and that is what it ought to have done. There is no way in the world that any hon. member opposite, particularly the Premier, will want to refer the question of the Premier's position to the people in an election at present.

I do not wish to refer to you again, Mr. Speaker, so I merely say that the people who initiated the approach to the Premier in this matter obviously were motivated by the fact that it was their considered opinion, based on their experience and background, that the Premier could not successfully lead the Government in an election in about 18 months' time and undoubtedly they were

supported by members of the Country Party and of Cabinet. This is despite the use of the public relations experts—the Bingham and what-have-you—in an effort to retrieve his position. So that it is obvious that if, in the opinion of that group of Country Party members, the Premier could not successfully lead the Government to an election in 18 months' time, there would be absolutely no chance of his doing so now and they will not approach the people. The State is therefore left in a position of virtual non-government—an alarming position for any State to be in. It is a State not of government but of "slovenment", so to speak, where there is no policy and no authoritative voice in the Government to speak on behalf of the Government of the State.

The only thing that preserves the Premier is the fact that there is no agreement even within the coalition parties themselves, or in the Country Party, about whom his successor should be. We know that the Minister for Mines, the deputy leader of the Country Party, kept himself apparently divorced from the approach that was made to the Premier suggesting that he should resign. But it seems to be patently obvious that he would have cast his vote against the Premier in the ballot. I understand he will be speaking next in this debate, so, if he did not do so, he can refute my suggestion if he wishes to do so. But surely it is incredible, and straining credibility, to suggest that a senior member of the party such as yourself, Mr. Speaker, and those other members who approached the Premier would have done so without some plan having been invoked for a replacement for the Premier, and for another member of the Cabinet to be deputy leader of the Country Party.

We can accept, of course, that whilst the members of the Cabinet supported the move, again lacking the courage and again indicating the indecisiveness that is gradually stifling progress in this State, neither the Minister for Main Roads nor the Minister for Lands, who have been touted as the prospective replacements if the move of the Country Party group had come off and the Premier had been defeated in his own caucus, was prepared to take the risk, which they would have had to take if they directly associated themselves with the move, of resigning from Cabinet and themselves leading the delegation, or deputation or whatever it was that you led, Mr. Speaker.

It was left to someone outside the Cabinet. It was left, as I pointed out, to the most senior person outside the Cabinet, but it is obvious that there was support from within the Cabinet. I believe that in this situation there is little necessity for the Opposition to stress the undesirable position—indeed, the dangerous position—that exists in this State at the moment, with the Government in the state it is in and the Premier as invidiously

placed as Mr. Bjelke-Petersen is at the present time. It is undeniable, as the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition have pointed out, that members of the Liberal Party have never favoured Mr. Petersen, that the Cabinet Ministers of the Country Party did not support him for deputy leader when he succeeded to that position but were more or less obliged to accept him as leader and Premier on the sudden death of the late Jack Pizzey, the then Premier.

It is obvious—there is no need to stress it—that the Labour Party has no confidence in the Premier, and we believe very strongly that the people of this State have no confidence in him either. So surely it is a point of honesty for those members of the Country Party who so indicated, and the Liberal Party members, to support this motion. I do not really expect that they will. Some perhaps may be absent when the vote is taken—they will express their disagreement with the Premier to that extent. If they do not vote for the motion, of course, it will merely be a vote of fear that it will create a position whereby the Government may fall and be obliged to go to their masters, the people, in an election, the thought of which is frightening them stiff. As well, they will be confused and at least undecided, if not frightened, about their ability to alight on someone as an acceptable replacement for the Premier.

It is quite apparent that the future of the Premier rests almost entirely in the hands of the Minister for Works. It is apparent also that he is looking at the possibility of making a move at a later and more acceptable time to outflank the Minister for Mines and whip round the field, so to speak.

Mr. Lee: That is exactly what you are doing with Mr. Houston. You are trying to scoot around him.

Mr. HANLON: I am glad the hon. member for Yeronga has raised that matter. I can give that the lie direct immediately. At no time will I be a candidate against the Leader of the Opposition. Is that a good enough answer for the hon. member?

Mr. Lee: We'll see.

Mr. HANLON: If the Minister for Works and the Minister for Mines can say the same thing in relation to the Premier, they might speak with more conviction. I make my position clear, and I could not be any plainer about it. That is my answer to the hon. member for Yeronga. He fished for it and he got it.

Finally, in the interests of the State—I know that the Opposition is accused of talking with tongue in cheek when using that phrase—it is obvious that the Government must resolve the situation and find another leader. If Government members are not prepared to do that but wish to

dodge their responsibility, which, as you, Mr. Speaker, and others have suggested is an immediate one for them, they should insist that the Premier's standing in this State be tested by an election. I offer the Government the alternatives of either supporting the motion or going to the people of this State.

Hon. R. E. CAMM (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (3.27 p.m.): It is regrettable that the Opposition has seen fit to waste the time of the House by moving this motion. We have before us a Business Paper full of proposed legislation, some of which was to have been debated today. Having wasted the full day, the Opposition will launch a tirade, possibly on the day before the House rises, accusing the Government of rushing legislation through the House. I say it is regrettable, because I have not heard one worth-while contribution in support of the motion. In all the years that I have been in Parliament I have never listened to such hypocrisy from the Opposition benches as I have today.

What have members of the Opposition done? They have raised matters that were referred to in the Address-in-Reply debate after last year's election, and matters that were fully discussed in the Address-in-Reply debate this year. They have not raised one new issue in support of their motion.

The motion is not one of want of confidence in the Government; rather is it one of want of confidence in the Premier. As everyone knows, the election of a Government member to the position of Premier of Queensland has nothing whatever to do with members of the Opposition. I repeat that the election of the Premier of this State has nothing whatever to do with the Opposition. Do Opposition members claim that it has?

We have listened to a tirade of character assassination by hon. members opposite. It was typical of the tendencies that today govern the Opposition, tendencies that are dictated by their bosses at the Trades Hall.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. CAMM: Opposition members started it.

I can discern here the work of one of the senior members of the Australian Labour Party executive who went to America to learn the finer points of character assassination practised in that country. It should have been clear to Opposition members after the last two elections that the people of Queensland take no notice of character assassination.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. CAMM: When Opposition members can point to an instance in this House of my engaging in character assassination, I ask them to do so. I disagree with, and criticise, many members of the Opposition for their

political views and the policy of their party, but I do not engage in character assassination, which I have heard so much of today.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. CAMM: The Deputy Leader of the Government referred to a pipeline to the sewer that Opposition members had found. I should say that the pipeline backfired when it was supposed to be used by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, because I have never heard so much filth spewed up in this House as came from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition today.

We all know that the better elements of the A.L.P. resigned in the 1957 debacle of that party. It is natural that over the years, when a party has been in power for a long time, the cream should come to the top. It did in the A.L.P. and the cream was skimmed off and thrown away. It is still a party that is prepared to be dictated to by an outside influence that is still in power in the Trades Hall and is still dictating to Opposition members.

In referring to a few of the statements made by the Leader of the Opposition, I point out that his contribution was full of inaccuracies and hearsay. He said that he had heard this from someone, and someone else had told him something. He even presumed to know who had voted for whom in the vote in our party last Wednesday. It seems that the Leader of the Opposition can claim clairvoyant powers that enable him to gaze into the past and see what happened. If he does, I feel that that puts him into the same category as fools and charlatans. He can take his pick. The fantastic assumptions that he arrived at tend to convince me that he believes he has some supernatural powers. Indeed, as I recollect many of his utterances and claims, I am almost convinced that he does a lot of crystal-ball gazing to arrive at some of his inspirations. It would appear that gazing into his crystal ball and putting his own interpretation on what he sees is the genesis of many of his accusations today.

On three occasions since the last election we have heard criticism of the Premier for his shareholdings. I thought that this matter had been fully ventilated on so many occasions that it would have been left alone in debating a motion like this. If the Leader of the Opposition desires to examine shareholdings, let him examine the shareholdings of members of his own party. Let him go down to the share register and see who received shares in the last Comalco issue. Let him look after his own affairs.

Mr. Houston: Name them.

Mr. CAMM: I said earlier that I do not engage in such tactics. Will the Leader of the Opposition or the hon. member for Port Curtis challenge me on who was on the share register in the last Comalco issue?

Mr. F. P. Moore: You're a liar.

Mr. HANSON: I rise to a point of order. This matter has been fully examined by the House. I have not made any money out of shares in my life.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Mourilyan used an unparliamentary word to the Minister for Mines. I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. F. P. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to explain—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will withdraw the remark or, under Standing Order 123A, retire from the Chamber.

Mr. F. P. MOORE: I withdraw.

Mr. CAMM: As I said earlier, I do not intend to name who received shares in the last allocation. All I would like is an assurance that a particular person will not challenge me and say that he did not receive those shares. I know he has not made any money out of them—because he has not sold them yet.

I was challenged by the hon. member for Baroona to say how I voted on Wednesday. He would like to know, and so would many other people.

Mr. HANSON: I rise to a point of order. I assure the House, and the Minister for Mines if he likes, that I am not a shareholder in Comalco or in any other company.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Will the Minister accept the denial of the hon. member?

Mr. CAMM: Yes.

Mr. Bennett: Seeing you are putting this on others, give us your shareholdings.

Mr. CAMM: I will tell the hon. member what I will do. If he will appoint someone to examine his shareholdings and mine, I will lay mine on the table of the House—so long as he lays his on the table, too.

Mr. Bennett: The Minister's invitation is accepted. I invite the Premier to join him. In fact, I challenge the Premier to join him.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! At present, we are discussing a serious matter. Challenges issued across the Chamber are not in order. I advise hon. members on both sides of the House that, although I would be most reluctant to deal with anyone under Standing Order 123A or Standing Order 124, I shall have no hesitation in doing so if this conduct continues.

Mr. Bennett: I take it that the Premier—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for South Brisbane is likely to be the first if he does not watch out.

Mr. CAMM: I felt I had to reply to some of the allegations made by Opposition members.

Mr. P. Wood: Did you ever oppose the Premier? Tell us that.

Mr. CAMM: I have given an assurance on many occasions that I would not oppose the Premier in a vote in the party room. Everyone here knows that.

An analysis of the situation that led up to the introduction of this motion indicates that four hon. members, speaking on behalf of several hon. members on this side of the House who were concerned with the welfare of the Parliamentary Country Party, arranged an interview with the Premier. The approach was to discuss how the presentation of our policy could be improved. It appears that the discussion developed into a situation which led to the events decided upon at last Wednesday's party meeting.

In any worth-while political party comprising men of independent spirit, there must at times be differences of opinion on how a situation can best be handled. There was no suggestion at all in the discussions on this matter that the policy of the Country Party, or of the Government, was in question. The only issue for discussion was how that policy was being presented, and how the Government's decisions were being accepted by the people of the State. The principal aims of of the Country Party—indeed, of the coalition parties—are the progress, the development, and the stability of the State. I reiterate that there was no suggestion of questioning the fundamental principles of the Government's policy.

The election of a Premier in a democratic Government is the responsibility of the senior party in the Parliament. In a coalition, the Premiership resolves itself into the leadership of the party with the greatest number of parliamentary members. In the case of this Parliament, it is the leadership of the Country Party. We, as a party, decided that Mr. Bjelke-Petersen should be our leader. His nomination was endorsed by the Liberal Party, which resulted in his being elected Premier of the State. The recent vote has again endorsed Mr. Bjelke-Petersen as Leader of the Country Party, and also as Premier of the State.

The fact that the Premier's election was not unanimous does not detract at all from the standing of his position. Few political leaders are ever elected unanimously by their parties. I instance the recent election of the Prime Minister of Australia and, indeed, the re-election of the Leader of the Opposition in the Federal House when his leadership was challenged. Those people did not receive unanimous votes. As I mentioned earlier, when a group of men of independent thinking decide who shall be their leader, they follow the one elected in the formulation of policy. The re-endorsement of the leadership of the Country Party means that

the loyalty of members of the parliamentary party is with the man who is now elected leader.

There was no suggestion by the delegation that waited on the Premier that the meeting considered that the confidence of everyone in the Premier should be tested. Whilst the Premier is leader of the Government he has our support, just as I would expect members of the Opposition to be loyal to their leader. I may have no confidence in the policy of the Opposition, but I would defend the right of Opposition members to elect their leader. I do not think that we on this side should have any say in deciding who will be the Leader of the Opposition. That is entirely a domestic matter for the political party on the other side of the House.

When a Premier is first elected, he is sworn in by the Governor, as are all Ministers nominated by their parties. These appointments are announced to Parliament, and Parliament, as such, has no say in electing the Premier, the Deputy Premier or Ministers of the Crown. Consequently, as Parliament has no say or responsibility in electing the Premier, it is ludicrous for the Leader of the Opposition to suggest that Parliament has the power to dismiss him. We, the members of the coalition governing parties, have elected a leader, and it is our prerogative to declare that he is unacceptable.

The internal workings of any political party are not the business of Parliament. We all have our differences internally, but we do not come into this House and air them.

Mr. Casey: You're kidding!

Mr. CAMM: If the hon. member is suggesting that Parliament should have the task of examining the internal arguments of political parties, I say to him that there would have been very little time for legislation in this House in the past 15 years because we would have been engaged in a non-stop debate on the internal problems of the Labour Party.

I do not always agree with events that occur within my own party; nor do I always agree with the actions of some of my colleagues. However, as the Country Party is a democratic organisation, I shall defend to the bitter end its members' right to disagree with me and my right to disagree with them. I accept the responsibility of abiding by the majority decision of members of the party to which I belong.

I am aware that there has been criticism of the Premier, both inside and outside this Chamber. That is inevitable. There would have been criticism no matter who held that high office. There also has been much criticism of the policy of the Government as a whole. And it is one of the virtues of the democratic form of Government that we enjoy in this State that criticism is allowed and, indeed, welcomed, because it is by criticism from the Opposition that people may

judge what the results would be and how some situations would be handled if ever this State was unfortunate enough to have the A.L.P. as the governing party.

Criticism may be levelled at the Government as a whole; it may be levelled at Ministers individually or collectively, or at the Premier. As I said earlier, it is the right—in fact, it is the duty—of the Opposition to put forward constructive criticism and to take advantage of any difficult situation to embarrass the Government. That could create a situation in which a vote of no confidence in the Government would be justified. If this was a vote of no confidence in the Government, I should be speaking differently from the way in which I am speaking now, because I am trying to confine my remarks to the points embodied in the motion. But not in any circumstances can the Opposition presume to dictate who shall be the elected leader of the Government, or indeed, who shall be the Minister administering a particular department. What transpires in any political party is entirely a domestic affair.

Mr. Tucker: You have said that seven times.

Mr. CAMM: I want to get through the hon. member's thick skull what I am saying. As yet, no indication has been conveyed to this House that the Premier has lost the confidence of his party or of the majority of members of the coalition Government. The Premier came out of the room downstairs as the Leader of the Country Party, which endorsed his election some two years ago and consequently now endorses his position as Premier of this State.

I claim that the motion as presented is presumptuous in the extreme. It undoubtedly will be defeated by members on this side of the House, and in my opinion cannot be taken seriously by Parliament. In my considered opinion, what we have heard today simply constitutes a waste of the valuable time of this House.

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier) (3.52 p.m.): The attack by the Australian Labour Party today was not unexpected. The motion is designed as a personal attack by the A.L.P. on my leadership. It is only one of many personal attacks which have been launched in one form or another by the Opposition over the years since I became Premier.

The only conclusion that I can draw after looking back over all these personal attacks that have been levelled at me is that my leadership of the Government has been successful. The only reason why Opposition members have attacked me in the way they have—and continue to do so—is that they do not like my leadership and are afraid of it.

These attacks, therefore, are the only way open to the A.L.P. to discredit my leadership.

Mr. Tucker: One thing about it is that Stanaway did not type this!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I appeal to all hon. members. I am sure the hon. member for South Brisbane would agree with me that when a person is on trial he has a right to be heard in his own defence. I ask hon. members to please respect the Premier and to allow him to state his case without interruption. I shall have no hesitation in dealing with any member who again interrupts the proceedings.

This morning I insisted that the Leader of the Opposition be allowed to present his case without undue disturbance. I think I did the same for the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I know that at times it is not possible in the heat of argument to keep absolute control, but I do ask hon. members to please respect the Premier as they did the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Bennett: Mr. Speaker, I should like to indicate that I am entirely in agreement with your remarks but that in this case the Premier has a rigged jury.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: Let us go back to 1969 when I, as Premier, had my first opportunity of leading the Government parties in a general election. What happened in that general election? The Country-Liberal Parties fought the election on our achievements during the past decade—and what a fine story of progress and development we had to tell the people of this State.

Despite all its promises, the A.L.P. realised it could not counter the Government's outstanding story of development and its members decided to launch a vicious and personal campaign against me. The Opposition used every device available to them—Press, radio, TV, and even a snide whispering campaign—in their attempts to discredit me. Similarly, this afternoon the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has in a scurrilous and vicious manner endeavoured to impute things to me that he knows are completely untrue. He has done so without any foundation whatever. His attack has been similar to the whispering campaign that he and other members of the Opposition, as well as outside members of the Labour Party, have conducted against me from time to time.

Mr. Sherrington: You have that in your own party.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: This afternoon the Opposition has said that to my face, but usually it says things behind my back.

What was the result of the recent election? It is history that the Country-Liberal Parties were returned with a substantial majority, and surely that highlights the fact that the A.L.P.'s policy and its personal attacks on me were ineffectual in the eyes of the electors.

of Queensland. The result of the election was a vote of confidence by the people of Queensland in my leadership.

Now let me remind the Opposition what happened in my own electorate. For approximately three months the Labour Party candidate went from house to house and tried to raise matters that the Leader of the Opposition sought to highlight in radio and television programmes. He spoke of oil shares and other interests, and conducted a personal campaign against me. However, in spite of concerted attempts by the A.L.P. to unseat me, the large sum of money spent in that campaign, and his many months of work, he did not secure 2,000 votes, whereas I received the highest percentage of any candidate.

Mr. HANSON: I rise to a point of order. I resent the Premier's remarks. I received the highest percentage.

Mr. Bennett: I think my percentage, too, was better than the Premier's.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: It is quite obvious that those two members of the Opposition are trying to make this issue a humorous one. I emphasise the point that I have just made, namely, that I retained the confidence of the people of my electorate, who knew me as a citizen.

I am sure that the Labour Party, having mounted such a strong and prolonged personal attack on me, was dismayed when I was returned with a record majority and the Government was returned with hardly a dent in its numbers. Surely that highlights the fact that my leadership of the Government was successful before the election. We have all seen ample evidence of the fact that my leadership has continued to bring tremendous progress and development throughout the State.

The A.L.P. has been trying to do everything in its power to discredit me, to regain some of the ground that it lost in 1957 and since then.

Today we heard a lot of talk from Opposition benches about the revolt in the Country Party and dissent within the ranks of the Government. However, that talk is just another reckless and irresponsible attack by the Labour Party, which is trying to jump onto the publicity band wagon. This move is typical of Labour's attempts over the years to confuse the public, and it appears to be a past master at that.

But what is the history of the Australian Labour Party? Members of the Opposition should be the last to criticise me or the Government. How can anyone like the Leader of the Opposition speak about lack of confidence in a leader or in a Government, when his own party is so disunited both Federally and in its State branches? It is not really necessary for me to go outside

Queensland to look for challenges to leadership in the Labour Party. Everyone in this Chamber knows of the rumours in this State that the Leader of the Opposition has already been the target of moves within his own party to question his leadership.

If I were to relate the dissension and bitterness within the ranks of the A.L.P. Government, which was outlined by my colleague the Treasurer, who was here with me in those days—and I should very much like hon. members who were not here then to go to the trouble of reading "Hansard" for that period—or even the present dissension in Labour Opposition ranks, I am sure that the faces of many Labour members would be bright pink or, should I say, bright red.

There was violent dissent within the ranks of the A.L.P. during the leadership of Labour Premiers—I repeat the term "violent dissent"—like Mr. Forgan Smith, Mr. Frank Cooper, Mr. Ned Hanlon, and Mr. Vince Gair. If hon. members do not believe me, I refer them to the parliamentary debates in Volume 217 of "Hansard," 1957. They will be staggered to read what took place and what was said at that time. As I recall it, the hon. member for Baroona said—and this can be read in "Hansard"—that his father was not afraid to die but was afraid of other members of his party and what they might do. I ask him to admit that that is correct.

Mr. Hanlon: You won't find it in "Hansard". I did say it, but I also said that we went to the people in 1957.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: In other words, the hon. member is saying that he took it out of "Hansard".

Mr. Hanlon: You haven't got the guts to go to the people.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: The image of the Government, or the Opposition, for that matter, is not entirely tied up with the leader. He is the focal point, but his image is reflected through every member of his organisation or party. The image of the Leader of the Opposition, for example, and that of his party is judged by his members' actions. If they associate with, and are friends of Communists, they can understand why people judge them as they do. Everyone knows that, in the Labour Party, there is a left wing and a right wing. The former includes those who associate with Communists, and that is one of the reasons why the Leader of the Opposition has not a good image.

The parliamentary members of the Country Party decided last Wednesday to pass a vote of confidence in my leadership; the ballot result was accepted by all members of the party. It has also been accepted by our coalition partners. Any issues involved have been resolved.

I might mention, Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of the Opposition—

Mr. Sherrington interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I have warned hon. members on my left that I will deal with them.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I might mention for the benefit of Opposition members that from many centres throughout Queensland, from the Far North to the Far West, I have received numerous telegrams and phone calls from Country Party organisations and from individuals in the party and outside the party, expressing complete confidence in me as Leader of the Parliamentary Country Party and as Premier.

I will conclude by stressing that my colleagues the Deputy Premier and Treasurer and the Minister for Mines and Main Roads have indicated the solidarity that now exists within the Country Party and the coalition.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: In view of their support, I leave the decision to the House.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition) (4.5 p.m.), in reply: We have seen the Premier, the Treasurer, and the Deputy Leader of the Country Party enter this Chamber and, when dealing with fairly important matters, particularly the introduction of Bills, fight the Opposition fiercely on what it believes is right. However, I have never heard such a weak argument as that against our charges today.

The Deputy Premier said that we had one purpose, but he went on to mention two. Firstly, he said that we were trying to discredit the Premier. We did not have to do this. His colleagues discredited him in the eyes of Parliament and of the State immediately they challenged his leadership publicly. Secondly, he said that we were trying to damage the Government's image. I do not know how we could do that, because the Government has no image.

The Government has never been at such a low ebb in the eyes of the public. This rebellion took place in the Country Party in an effort to do something about it. Those are the two motives the Deputy Premier said we had in moving our motion. That is right, but all we were doing was adding to what Government members had already done.

The hon. member said that there was a difference of opinion between the Country Party and the Liberal Party. I do not think I need to go any further in this regard, because we know that there is a wide difference of opinion between those parties

on redistribution. I forecast that there will be another public fight between them on redistribution.

The Treasurer said that the Premier had the complete confidence of Government members. Surely some Cabinet Ministers opposed the Premier, so how can the Treasurer say that the Premier had the complete confidence of Government members?

The Deputy Leader of the Country Party had every opportunity to say, "I did not vote against my leader." However, he did not do so. What he did say was, "I would not oppose my leader." What he implied was, "Once you fellows get rid of him, look to me as your leader." That is what he was hoping for and that is why he voted against the Premier. Because he did not refute my statement when he had the opportunity to do so, it must be accepted as factual.

The hon. member then referred to the pipeline to the sewer. I thought a sewer went from somewhere to the river. However, I can assure Government members that I have a pretty good pipeline to their caucus rooms. There is not much that happens in those rooms that I do not know about.

A challenge to the Premier is virtually a challenge to the Government, because the Premier has the responsibility and perhaps the privilege of selecting his Cabinet Ministers. I suggest that the hon. members for Gregory, Mackenzie and Gympie supported the Premier because they were off side with the hon. member for Whitsunday. That is what had them worried. They knew that the new Premier would be getting rid of those three, and replacing them with the hon. members for Flinders, Redcliffe and South Coast. It is widely known that those are the three whose names were bandied about as the replacement Ministers.

I think it was the Deputy Leader of the Country Party who suggested that we delayed the business of the House by moving this motion today. I say to him that the Government had the opportunity to have the matter dealt with yesterday. However, the Government decided to vote against my motion, which was for the suspension of Standing Orders to allow me to move a motion of grave public importance. That is all that I asked for. The Premier said "No", and I called "Divide" to find out whether I would be allowed to move the motion. If I had been allowed to do that, the matter could have been dealt with there and then.

Let us then recall what happened later yesterday. The Premier or the Deputy Leader of the Country Party—it does not really matter who it was—moved that items 1 to 15 on the Business Paper be deferred till later in the day. That was done because there was no-one at the House ready to proceed with those items. The conduct of the business is in the hands of the Government.

What about Wednesday afternoons? This Parliament has not sat on any Wednesday afternoon. Of course, to do that would be inconvenient to Government members, as that is when they want to have their party fights. Every Wednesday afternoon Country Party and Liberal Party members have their joint Caucus meetings where their Donnybrooks take place. Of course, it would be inconvenient for the Government to sit on Wednesday afternoon. I do not think it is correct for the Deputy Premier or the Deputy Leader of the Country Party to suggest that we have held up the business of the House.

Let us look again at what the Deputy Premier said about sacking the Premier. It is true that the Premier is elected by his party, but it must not be forgotten that the position of the Premier is different from the position of the leader of a party. If the leader of the Liberal Party had been deposed when he was challenged, there would have been no attack made in this House on that action. Of course, as the House knows, the leader of the Liberal Party survived. But, on that challenge, it was not the Premier who was under attack. That is the great difference between those two situations. Today it is the Premier who is under attack.

If the Government believes, as I do, that the matter of the Premiership and the Government is one for the people, let us go to the country, even on the present electoral boundaries. I can say that basically the move within the Country Party started from the belief that the Government was unpopular, for which the Premier was blamed. There are also some members in the Country Party who, for their own personal gain, want a change in the leadership, and perhaps the deputy leadership.

Let us look at what the Deputy Leader of the Country Party had to say. Amongst other things, he spoke about character assassination. I challenge him to repeat here or outside the House one thing that I or the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said that was an attack on any person's character. What we said about them was tied up with politics, and activities associated with the various positions held by them.

The Deputy Leader of the Country Party said that after a Government has been in power for a time the cream comes to the top. I think I would be right in assuming he means that for the first few years a Government is in office the cream is at the bottom and the sour milk is at the top. Let us look, Mr. Speaker, at the names of some of those about whom he is speaking. First there is Sir Francis Nicklin, who came straight from the Opposition to the Premiership of this State; then there is the late Ernie Evans, the late Dr. Noble, the late Sir Alan Munro, and Sir Thomas Hiley.

Mr. Camm: How many years?

Mr. HOUSTON: They became Cabinet Ministers overnight.

Mr. Chalk: So did I.

Mr. HOUSTON: The hon. gentleman did, too, but I did not include him. I did not mention him at all.

Another suggestion made by the Deputy Leader of the Country Party was that to talk about shareholdings amounted to character assassination.

Mr. Camm: That is not what I said.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is what the hon. gentleman implied. It is not illegal to hold shares. What I object to is Cabinet Ministers having shares in companies that have dealings with the Crown, or being assisted by companies to obtain shares. Merely having shares is not a crime.

Let me turn now to what the Premier said. Today the Premier was quite calm and collected; yesterday he was not quite so calm and collected. Perhaps he had a good night's sleep last night. If ever I saw anyone rattled in this House it was the Premier yesterday, when he rose in this Chamber and deliberately moved the suspension of the hon. member for Brisbane until next Tuesday.

Mr. Hanson: Shocking!

Mr. HOUSTON: I thought that was shocking, as my colleague said, and petty. The attitude has always been—and I respect it—that if a person contradicts the Chair, the authority of the Chair must be maintained. I do not quarrel with that. But surely the Premier of the State, when he is called in by Mr. Speaker—and rightly so—should give the person named an opportunity to explain. The position was—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition must know that the right of reply is confined to matters that have been dealt with during the debate. It is not usual to introduce any new matter.

Mr. HOUSTON: I am not introducing new matter.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The suspension of an hon. member yesterday has nothing to do with today's debate.

Mr. HOUSTON: Well, it has this much to do with it: that I was referring to the attitude of the Premier yesterday, the day on which this matter burst, and his attitude today. Be that as it may, the point is that the hon. member for Brisbane is not in the Chamber today, and I know that he would very much like to be here.

The Premier referred to his magnificent win in Barambah and to his Government's win in the 1969 State election. The first election held under the Premier's leadership was the Isis by-election. Isis was supposedly a stronghold of the Country Party, and it was the seat of the late Premier. Did the

Country Party win that seat? Of course it did not. Mr. Jim Blake of the Australian Labour Party, now the member for Isis, won it with quite a substantial majority. Then, at the following general election, when all the big guns of the Country Party went up to Isis to unseat him, he increased his majority. Surely the Premier must have forgotten that; perhaps he did not read the statistics.

The hon. gentleman knows that the seat of Logan was held by the Country Party before the 1969 State election and that at that election Mr. Baldwin came into this Chamber as the hon. member for Logan. He knows, too, that the seat of Cook was held by a D.L.P. member. The Country Party could not find a candidate of its own, so it gave the nod to a man who had formerly been a member of the A.L.P., the D.L.P., and the Liberal Party. What happened? He was beaten and Mr. Bill Wood came in as the member for Cook.

Now, let us look at Hawthorne, which, according to the redistribution, was supposed to be a solid Liberal seat. However, the Liberal member scraped home with a four-vote majority on preferences.

Mr. Hanson: And he then tried to join the A.L.P.

Mr. HOUSTON: He tried to get into the A.L.P. He had his ticket in his hand.

What has happened since the general election? There has been only one by-election—for Albert—and even with the assistance of the hon. member for South Coast, what happened to the Country Party? Its candidate was annihilated.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Are you making a new speech?

Mr. HOUSTON: The hon. member should study the Standing Orders.

Mr. R. E. Moore: I know them.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HOUSTON: The point is that the only time since the 1969 election that the Government has been put on trial by the public, the Government candidate, through the Country Party because it was a Country Party seat, was annihilated, and it was only his preferences that allowed the Liberal Party candidate to scrape home. The Labour vote increased tremendously.

Now, let us look at the Premier's own seat. He claimed that he had the highest majority in the State.

Mr. Sullivan: The highest percentage.

Mr. HOUSTON: The highest percentage; fair enough. I do not want to misrepresent him. If we look at the official results we find that in the Port Curtis electorate, Mr.

Hanson was elected on a vote of 81.31 per cent. with a numerical majority of 5,934. The Premier had a numerical majority of 4,344, or 74.2 per cent.

Mr. Lickiss: What was yours?

Mr. HOUSTON: I am not quite proud of mine yet. I only increased my majority from 37 per cent. in 1957 to 66.4 per cent. at the last election, with a majority over the Liberal candidate of 5,144. I am not despondent about the Bulimba electorate. The only shaky vote I received in my electorate was due to the fact that I did not spend any time in it. Considering all these things that have been said about the Premier getting a tremendous vote because of our attacks on his party, one would have expected my vote to go down. But it did not; it increased by 5 per cent.

It is not my intention to delay the House. I think I have answered everything that has been said by the various speakers. I have shown quite conclusively that the Premier, either by design or otherwise, deliberately and wrongly quoted facts out of the official records of details of voting for this Parliament, and I suggest that this vote be carried.

Question—That the motion (Mr. Houston) be agreed to—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 29

Aiken	Marginson
Bennett	Melloy
Blake	Moore, F. P.
Bromley	Newton
Casey	O'Donnell
Davies	Sherrington
Dean	Thackeray
Hanlon	Tucker
Hanson	Wallis-Smith
Harris	Wood, P.
Houston	Wright
Inch	
Jensen	Tellers:
Jones, R.	Bousen
Jordan	Wood, B.
Lloyd	

NOES, 40

Armstrong	Lee
Bird	Lickiss
Bjelke-Petersen	McKechnie
Camm	Miller
Campbell	Moore, R. E.
Chalk	Muller
Chinchen	Murray
Cory	Newbery
Crawford	Porter
Delamothe	Rae
Fletcher	Ramsden
Heatley	Richter
Herbert	Row
Hewitt, N. T. E.	Sullivan
Hewitt, W. D.	Tomkins
Hinze	Tooth
Hooper	Wharton
Hungerford	
Jones, V. E.	Tellers:
Kaus	Ahern
Knox	Hughes

Resolved in the negative.

The House adjourned at 4.30 p.m.