

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 10 OCTOBER 1944

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Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. S. J. Brassington, Fortitude Valley) took the chair at 11 a.m.

QUESTIONS.

WITHDRAWAL OF POLICE PROSECUTIONS.

Mr. WANSTALL (Toowong) asked the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs—

“In view of the report appearing in the ‘Courier-Mail’ of 5 October, 1944, containing statements attributed to Constable Cronin, defendant in a Supreme Court action, to the effect that in his opinion undue influence could be brought to bear to have a charge of which a man is guilty withdrawn by the action of certain influential persons in the public having contact with heads of the Police Department, will he recommend to Cabinet that a judicial inquiry be held in public in relation to these statements and the implications thereof?”

Hon. T. A. FOLEY (Normanby) replied—

“As the time for appeal in the case of Woods v. Cronin has not expired, it would be highly improper to offer any comment.”

REQUISITION ON COMMONWEALTH FOR MIGRANTS.

Mr. MORRIS (Enoggera) asked the Premier—

“Further to my question on 4 October, 1944, and his answer thereto.—As the Constitution provides for concurrent powers to be exercised by both Commonwealth and State Governments in certain sections, including Section 51 as mentioned by him—

1. Would the Queensland State Government be permitted, if it desired to do so, to conduct its own publicity drive for migrants in Great Britain now?
2. Would the Queensland State Government be permitted, if it desired to do so, to sign up suitable migrants so that they could be brought to Queensland after the war?”

Hon. F. A. COOPER (Bremer) replied—

“1 and 2. The common-sense approach to migration from Britain is a complete co-operation between Commonwealth and States. Under section 51 of the Commonwealth Constitution the Parliament of the Commonwealth has exercised its constitutional right to make laws with respect to emigration, and these laws stipulate and control the terms and conditions under which persons may be permitted entry into the Commonwealth. The pronouncements of the Prime Minister leave no doubt as to his appreciation of the need for additional population in this country. The Queensland Government is prepared to co-operate fully with the Commonwealth Government in this matter.”

RAILWAY FREIGHT ON SCOURED WOOL.

Mr. SPARKES (Aubigny) asked the Minister for Transport—

“As the hon. member for Warrego on Wednesday last advocated the scouring of wool at country centres, will he take early action towards encouraging this industry by the removal of the present penal rail freight on scouring wool?”

Hon. E. J. WALSH (Mirani) replied—

“The railways cannot convey scouring wool as economically as greasy wool. A 200-lb. bale of scouring wool occupies the same wagon space as a bale of greasy wool weighing 318 lb. Rail freight is an almost negligible consideration in the cost of wool production, representing little more than a halfpenny per pound for conveyance a distance of 400 miles.”

AIR-RAID TRENCHES AT SCHOOLS.

Mr. MARRIOTT (Bulimba) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

“1. In view of the inability of school committees to find the necessary labour to fill in the air-raid trenches in school grounds, will he arrange to have this work carried out and treated as a matter of urgency?”

“2. In order to facilitate the work of restoring school grounds to a fit condition, will he arrange with the Department of Public Works to secure the use of a bulldozer from the Allied Works Council, or from the engineering units of the Allied Services?”

Hon. J. LARCOMBE (Rockhampton) replied—

“1 and 2. The Government has a scheme whereby school committees are granted a subsidy on the basis of £ for £ on moneys raised to improve school grounds. In various parts of the State, school committees have promptly and gladly taken advantage of this subsidy. If any school committee makes application for the use of a bulldozer, the Department of Public Works will be asked to ascertain if one is available.”

PAPERS.

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

Report of Commissioner of Prices under the Profiteering Prevention Acts for the year 1943-1944.

Report of the Director of Labour and Chief Inspector of Factories and Shops for the year 1943-1944.

Report of the Commissioner of Police for the year 1943-1944.

Report of the Department of Agriculture and Stock for the year 1943-1944.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Report of the Brisbane Milk Board for the year 1943-1944.

Report of the Auditor-General on the Books and Accounts of the Brisbane Milk Board for the year 1943-1944.

Regulation, dated 28 September 1944, under the Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1941.

SUPPLY.

COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT—
RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Mann, Brisbane, in the chair.)

Debate resumed from 5 October (see p. 732) on Mr. Hanlon's motion—

“That there be granted to His Majesty for the service of the year 1944-1945 a sum not exceeding £300 to defray the salary of the Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor.”

Mr. DECKER (Sandgate) (11.10 a.m.): A statement made to the electors during March of this year by the Premier reads—

“The amount available from State funds, consolidated revenue, Loan Fund, Trust Fund and Post-war Reserves should be £53,4£0,000 for the first 5 years from July 1945 to June 1950. This will allow an average annual expenditure of £10,690,000.”

Now, some 6 months later, the Treasurer presents a Financial Statement anticipating that the sum of £61,500,000 will be available for post-war reconstruction. The Financial Statement reads—

“As the first essential in the advanced planning of Post-war Works, it has been necessary to make an estimate of the amount of funds likely to be available for public works in the early post-war period, and to allocate these funds tentatively to desirable projects and services so that a limit can be set to the financial responsibility of the State.

“From the assessment made it is anticipated that an amount of £61,500,000 will be available from State Revenue, Loan

and Reserve Funds and Debenture Raisings by Local Authorities, and a tentative allocation has been made to the following works:—

	£
Public buildings, including the new University schools to enable the leaving age to be raised and decentralised facilities for the aged and infirm ..	6,000,000
Housing (continuance of normal programme only)	3,200,000
Roads, streets, bridges, and drainage (including the St. Lucia Bridge over the Brisbane River)	10,000,000
Harbour, port and river works	2,300,000
Forestry development ..	3,400,000
Irrigation and water conservation ..	2,500,000
Water supply and sewerage works, including Somerset Dam ..	6,000,000
Railway works	3,900,000
Electricity works ..	3,100,000
Rural assistance and development	2,900,000
Mining development ..	500,000
Maintenance of roads, railways, and other public assets, deferred owing to war conditions	6,000,000
Sundry works and development	1,000,000
	£50,800,000 "

That amount has been definitely allocated and there are reservations to meet unforeseen projects. It will be noted that the funds to be made available from these sources have increased by £8,051,000 in the short period of six months. Can we place any reliance on such wild assumptions, this Labour political propaganda, when we should have carefully considered action? Building air castles seems to be a pastime of this Government during the war years and this perhaps prompted His Excellency the Governor to remark, "There are too many words and not enough action."

We on this side of the Chamber have often used those words to express our disappointment and disgust that the Government have not taken positive steps to give preference of employment to returned soldiers. We have also expressed ourselves strongly concerning the dilatoriness of the Government in bringing forward a concrete plan for post-war reconstruction. For several years we have complained about the secrecy that exists between the State and Federal Governments in connection with post-war projects. The haphazard mass-produced figures appearing under 13 headings only confirm the

opinion that no concrete plan has yet been prepared. If that were not so, then without doubt the Government would have taken every opportunity not only of acquainting the public with what they propose to do but also of explaining occasional big projects.

I spoke on more than one occasion, for instance, concerning the development of our sea wealth. I argued that there were splendid opportunities for development and for the employment of labour, but, as always with the Government, there is not even mention of this aspect of development in their post-war programme. The Government are asleep and cannot be awakened to anything but land development. Here they are missing a big opportunity to do much for the progress of the State. Apparently they are looking to private enterprise to test this field of development, but I venture to say that if private enterprise did make this test and achieved a fair measure of success, the Government would then step in, take control of the scheme, and claim all the credit for its development. Probably they would introduce legislation to restrict the activities of private enterprise, and would even go so far as to direct private enterprise as to how it should conduct its business.

Mr. Moore: Are you in favour of State enterprises?

Mr. DECKER: I am not in favour of State enterprises, but I do think the Government should help new industries, and should give a fillip to private enterprise. The Government will be lacking in statesmanship if they fail to develop our sea wealth but confine their attentions to land settlement and development.

Mining too offers a big field of future development in Queensland, yet it is relegated to a very minor place in the Budget, while public buildings and the like are to absorb an allocation of over £6,000,000, of which only 8½ per cent., or a mere £500,000 out of a total programme of £61,500,000, is to be devoted to mining. From time to time we have boasted of the wonderful mineral potentialities of this State, but we find that the Government are not awake to them whereas it should be our eager desire to launch a big testing project at the appropriate time, to discover the actual wealth of the State. Anyone who advocated such a scheme would be displaying a statesmanlike outlook, which would be to the utmost benefit of the State.

The Government's programme includes an allocation of £6,000,000 for public buildings, and £3,200,000 for housing, being a continuance of the normal programme only. That amount will be in addition to the special housing schemes to be launched by the Commonwealth alone or in conjunction with the State.

This Government have committed themselves to the building of 50,000 homes in the first five post-war years. It is well that we should analyse both this State's and the

Commonwealth's attitude in regard to housing. Governments are vying one with the other in extravagant public statements on housing policy. Each Government seems to be suffering from building hysteria, possibly contracted from some war-disabled country whose housing policy must occupy a high priority in its post-war development. In Australia the Commonwealth Government appointed a War Housing Commission but each Government have adopted premature plans for their individual needs without awaiting the findings of that Commission, which after nine months of intensive investigation has only recently published its report. Our State Premier, evidently lacking a full knowledge of the State requirements, contends that the State will erect 50,000 homes in the first five years of his Government's post-war programme, fitted with all that goes to make life tolerable for the housewife—electricity, water and sewerage installations, and a refrigeration unit.

Let us examine the report of the War Housing Commission which states that the shortage of homes throughout the Commonwealth is 257,521. This includes 82,031 existing structures unfit for habitation and 154,899 sub-standard homes requiring repairs to fit them for habitation. The shortage per thousand of population—this total does not include existing houses that are unfit for habitation—is—

	Per thousand of population.
	Per cent.
Victoria	31.5
South Australia	26.9
New South Wales	23.9
Queensland	19.6
Western Australia	14.8
Tasmania	9.2

Queensland requirements are 19.6 houses per thousand of population to bring us up to normal requirements; or, taking into account buildings unfit for habitation, our overall requirements are 27.9 per thousand of population. Taking our population in round figures at 1,000,000, 27,900 houses are required to bring us back to normal standards. We must remember that our present war-time needs are of course greatly in excess of this figure. This is brought about by the fact that in addition to our ordinary population we are endeavouring to house large numbers of Allied Works Council employees from other States, large Army staffs, evacuees from islands in the war zone, a large number of Allied personnel, and some refugees. War-time marriages have increased our own and Allied needs. Brisbane as a capital city has suffered most. This extraordinary demand has strained our capacity to accommodate the present population adequately and some deplorable conditions exist. The position is aggravated by the fact that there are owners of houses in this city who have properties in excess of their normal requirements and who will not make their unoccupied houses available to tenants. Week-end seaside homes in practically every close seaside resort are included in this class. However, this con-

gestion will gradually disappear when victory is complete and we must consider the post-war position in the light of this knowledge.

I have already pointed out that the War Housing Commission has stated that our needs are 27,900 homes overall, yet the Government plan to build 50,000 homes in the first five post-war years. They are apparently planning without due knowledge of our requirements. Unfortunately, the Commonwealth scheme has not been made public. The War Service Homes Commission will definitely provide for the erection of a large number of homes in the post-war years for our soldiers, but even it has made no immediate provision for the needs of men in our services. Today there are in Brisbane many returned men who have made application to the War Service Homes Commission for the building of homes and their applications have been refused, simply because it has not commenced to consider the building of homes for soldiers. The scheme is lacking and apparently the Commonwealth Government's war-service homes will operate only when the massed number of applications will make it difficult for it to handle any such scheme but in a bungling way.

It is hard to understand why the Commonwealth Government embarked on the building scheme without providing that the war-service homes should operate hand in hand with it. Under the Commonwealth plans 200 low standard shacks are being built at Rocklea. This is a scandal on the point of view of exorbitant cost, extortionate rent, and unworthy priorities to key personnel. When one views these shacks one could be excused for thinking that they were merely an advertisement for tiles or fibrolite, because they certainly have that appearance. I ask hon. members to look at these places and see what they think of them. After this war, taking into account the high rental of 30s. that is charged by the Government, I foresee that they will be unoccupied and become a glorious hoboes' retreat. Under the plan of the Commonwealth Government they will be glorified with bitumen roads from kerb to kerb, concrete water channels, and concrete footpath strips, which is scandalous in the face of the present day man-power shortage. We have in the City of Brisbane A.R.P. shelters that need demolishing and although the council is pressed for men to carry out the work and to supply the city's needs in roads, water channelling and footpaths, we find in a third-rate area like the building area at Rocklea, the Commonwealth Government are going to put in first-class bitumen roads from kerb to kerb. When men are needed for urgent work that is a slur not only on the Commonwealth Government but also on this Government for not taking a hand to stop it.

The Hon. the Premier, not only in this Chamber but also in the press, has stated that the Brisbane City Council approved of the Commonwealth plan for these houses at Rocklea. That is not correct; it is a misstatement. I hope to convince the Premier that it was not so. I have a copy of a letter that was forwarded on 2 February 1944 to

the Survey and Property Officer, Allied Works Council, Works and Services Branch, Department of the Interior, National Mutual Building, 293 Queen Street, which reads—

“Re War Workers’ Housing.

“Dear Sir—In response to a request from your department through Mr. Serow the City Architect has examined the drawings, Q.W. 15298, 99, 300, 301, 340, 314, of the proposed cottages for War Workers to be erected in Brisbane by the War Workers’ Housing Trust, and he reports as follows:

Plan, Room Sizes, &c.

“The present ordinances require that the minimum area of every habitable room, including the kitchen, shall be 80 square feet.

“The plans submitted conform to this requirement in each room except the kitchen which shows an area of only 41 square feet. The kitchen in these cases appears to be planned as an alcove, off the Dining-Living Room and as such is allowable under ordinances provided the opening between the alcove and the room is increased to 6 feet in width.

“Under Council’s sewerage regulations the minimum floor area for a W.C. is 4’ 6” x 3’ 6” or 5’ 0” x 3’ 0”. The W.C. shown on the drawings is only 3’ 9” x 2’ 6”, and therefore does not conform to the regulations.

“Furthermore, under the building ordinances (109), it is required that the partition between the kitchen and the W.C. shall be double lined. The drawings indicate only single lining. In non-sewered areas the E.C. must be placed at least 20’ 0” from the dwelling.

“In connection with the room sizes it should be pointed out that accepted housing standards which will be incorporated in the Council’s new Building Ordinances at present in the course of preparation will require that at least one bedroom in every dwelling unit shall be not less than 140 square feet and that the total sleeping accommodation shall provide at least 50 square feet for every person over the age of 6 years occupying the premises.

“The accommodation shown on the plans will come short of these requirements.

Ventilation.

“While conforming generally to ordinances it should be pointed out that the ventilation to Laundry, Bathroom and Stove Recess is considered to be inadequate. It is suggested that adjustable louvres might be used in these positions and the window size to these rooms increased.

Structure.

“1. While not contrary to ordinances nor inconsistent with general practice it is suggested that wooden stumps are inadvisable with tiled roofs. Either concrete or brick piers would be much more satisfactory.

“2. The Health Act requires a minimum clearance of 2’ 0” between ground and floor

timbers. Some latitude is allowed on this for sloping sites where an absolute minimum of 1’ 6” is usually required. The rear annex does not conform to this regulation.

“3. Under ordinance 238 the minimum size for studs and plates is 3” x 2”. The drawings show 3” x 1½” which are inadequate—especially where fibrous cement sheets are to be butt jointed on the 1½” stud.

“4. Ordinance 243 requires a design load for floors of 70 lbs. per square foot. If 4” x 1½” joists are used they should be spaced at approximately 1’ 6” centres. The drawings show 4” x 1½” joists spaced at 2’ 0” centres. This is inadequate.

“5. While not covered by ordinance, it is considered that the roof framing is inadequate. It is suggested that purlins should be added and strutting carried from partition walls. The ceiling joists are not of sufficient size to assist in carrying any of the roof load.

“6. Lead flashing to the flues from the bath heater and the stove and copper is inadvisable especially in this climate.

“7. Ordinance 18 requires that roof gutters, downpipes and storm-water drains must be provided to prevent nuisance to adjoining properties. The drawings show no provision of these items and while this may be satisfactory on some sites it is sure to be inadequate on most sites.

Lighting and Equipment.

“It is noted that only one light point is provided in the Dining-Living Room. This is considered to be inadequate.

“It is presumed that gas is being used for stove, bath heater and copper. If fuel equipment is used special attention should be given to Ordinance 20 of Chapter 23.

Generally.

“While it is realised that these dwellings are designed primarily to relieve a housing shortage amongst persons engaged in war work it must be obvious that they will become permanent homes in Brisbane. It is a pity therefore that provision has not been made for a verandah—other than the small porch.

“Furthermore, it is considered that, in view of the fact that these will be permanent homes and will be constructed in groups of anything up to 100 dwellings, more attention could have been given to the architectural design to avoid a commonplace settlement of simple fibrous cement houses.

“In forwarding this report I wish to express appreciation of any co-operation which may be possible between your Department and this Council in any further constructions which may be contemplated. Officers of the Council will be always happy to collaborate with you in the selection of sites, the disposition of the buildings and the design of the dwellings.”

“Yours faithfully,

“(Sgd.) J. C. Slaughter,

“Town Clerk.”

Mr. Cooper: What is the date of that?

Mr. DECKER: It is dated 2 February, 1944.

Mr. Cooper: I think they were almost completed by that date.

Mr. DECKER: No, they are working on them now. That shows the interest the Premier has in these structures that are being built so near Brisbane. They are on the programme now. It is only a short time ago that the first occupation took place.

Mr. Cooper: I went out and saw them myself.

Mr. DECKER: The hon. gentleman must know that these plans were brought to the council before these buildings were begun. I want the Premier to be absolutely sure in this matter because the Government should not keep on attacking the council unfairly. I remind the Premier that these plans were scrapped because the council saw the faults in them and did not approve of them. Further, the plans of the houses now existing were never submitted to the Brisbane City Council. There are many faults in them now that would not have existed had they been submitted to the council. The Premier wants to be on sure ground when attacking the council.

Mr. Cooper: I am on sure ground.

Mr. DECKER: To say the least, it is a flagrant breach of etiquette. The council went into the first plans and what a mess there would have been if these places had been erected without complying with the requirements of our ordinances so that they would have some semblance of order! The council is to be congratulated on taking the steps it did of going very carefully into these plans and giving sound advice to the architects. There is no doubt that that advice was telling inasmuch as new plans were drawn but the discourtesy of the Commonwealth Government towards the council cannot be excused.

At least they might have had the decency to submit those plans to the council but probably they were afraid of criticism. Instead of saying that the council is responsible because it passed those plans, the Premier should join with me in congratulating the council on the stand it took.

As we all know, the Commonwealth Government advanced £9,000,000 for the purpose of constructing houses to meet present needs throughout the Commonwealth. Of that sum, only £800,000 was apportioned to Queensland. Although our population is 15 per cent. of that of the Commonwealth our apportionment for home building is only 7 per cent. of the amount available. I have suggested in this Chamber that this lower apportionment to Queensland was due to the fact that this Government are favourably placed with big cash balances.

Mr. Walsh: That is something to be said in favour of the Government.

Mr. DECKER: I have the idea that if the Government are not very careful they

will find that the balances they have in hand will operate adversely against them. What is the use of accumulating balances here if they are going to be offset by lower apportionments from the Commonwealth Government? If that is to be the policy, we shall gain no advantage from any State or Commonwealth post-war work, and I cannot say that the other States have not some good reason for taking into account our cash balances when loan funds are being apportioned. Whilst we have been building up these reserves we might have done the fair thing and invested more in the war loans. I congratulate the Government upon last year's effort in connection with war loans. Their effort three years ago was very weak, but after repeated attacks against them in this Chamber they have increased it, and now that another war loan is in process of flotation, they should have given the lead to the State by making the first contribution.

The State Advances Corporation has done good work in building homes in the State. This corporation was created under an Act of Parliament passed in 1916, and according to the Secretary for Public Works, 22,314 houses have been built under the workers' dwellings and workers' home schemes. What pleases me most is the fact that over the years this corporation has appreciated the need for giving to home builders a wide choice in design. Anyone seeking to build under the corporation's schemes has a tremendous advantage in that the corporation has a wide variety of plans and the home-builder can get what he wants. Again, the terms are reasonable and the only fault I have to find with the scheme is that at the moment it is taking a back seat to the Commonwealth scheme. The Budget shows that this year £125,000 has been added to the amount already in hand for carrying out a big programme of home-building. The Secretary for Public Works is requesting the public to submit applications and plans for workers' dwellings or workers' homes, but again this is only kite-flying in my opinion. Will the Minister tell us how many applications for homes have been made? How many applications do they hold and how many are they able to carry out during the year? I venture to say that they have more applications now than they can cope with during the year especially when one bears in mind the shortages of material and man-power. If that is so, as I suspect it is, I am bound to ask: why hoodwink the people and lead them to believe that all they need do to get a home is to make an application to the Department? It must be apparent to the Minister and to the department and to anyone who analyses the position that in view of the shortages of material and man-power very few houses can be built.

The Commonwealth plans to build 800 houses this financial year, in conjunction with the State. In addition, the Government have built a number of shacks, or houses as they are called, at Rocklea and the State Advances Corporation proposes to spend £125,000 on the construction of other buildings. No-one can have any objection

to the schemes but the Secretary for Public Works has disclosed that there is an arrangement, a very clear arrangement, with the Commonwealth Government in the matter of priorities. It is remarkable that the State Government have not equal priority with the Commonwealth Government in the Commonwealth's scheme for building, in conjunction with the State, 800 homes in the year. Why not extend equal priority to the State's scheme conducted solely by the State Advances Corporation? After all, the State Advances Corporation will have to administer both schemes and it is remarkable that the Minister in charge of that department should say that its own scheme has not at least equal priority with the scheme to be carried out by the State for and on behalf of the Commonwealth. It is remarkable too that the Minister should say that Mr. Colin Clark was the only person who could say "Yes" or "No" to the approval of a building plan and it is all the more remarkable that the Minister should say that he gravely thought that Mr. Colin Clark might even be exceeding the authority vested in him under the National Security Regulations. Mr. Colin Clark is a State Government officer whose salary is paid mainly by the State Government. He is seconded to the Commonwealth Government to carry out duties that pertain to the Department of War Organisation of Industry but we have a Minister of the Crown in Queensland who says that he does not know exactly what is Mr. Clark's position, what is the extent of his powers and what he is doing.

Mr. Cooper: He is a Commonwealth officer in respect of those matters.

Mr. DECKER: That is not the point. The Secretary for Public Works told this Committee that he did not know whether Mr. Clark had the authority to do what he was doing, whether he was doing it on his own initiative, and whether he was exceeding his authority. He did not know what powers were vested in Mr. Clark and in particular he did not know whether he was acting under National Security Regulations. That attitude of mind shows a lack of interest not only by a Minister of the Crown but probably by the whole Cabinet. It would not take more than a minute or so to interview Mr. Colin Clark to ascertain his exact position in the matter nor would it take any time to get a Commonwealth ruling on the point. It is scandalous that the Government behave so haphazardly in respect of urgent building needs—that a Minister of the Crown should make the admission in this Chamber that he did not know whether the State officer was exceeding his authority or not. The sooner the Government discover the extent of Mr. Colin Clark's powers and what he is doing, and particularly whether he has the power to deal as he does with private applications for buildings, the sooner shall we get somewhere. It is time someone took a greater interest in the State Advances Corporation. Apparently the Commonwealth Government seem to be able to do as they please and no objection is raised by the State.

Mr. Cooper: In matters of their own affairs, of course they can.

Mr. DECKER: These are not matters purely of their own affairs.

Mr. Cooper: They are. Do not be foolish. Show a little comprehension about the war situation.

Mr. DECKER: Does the Premier argue that the building of homes by the State Advances Corporation either for the Commonwealth Government or on its own account is of no moment to the State and concerns only the Commonwealth Government?

Mr. Cooper: I said that the Commonwealth is supreme and you know that.

Mr. DECKER: I say the State should stand on its own rights.

Mr. Cooper: Your language is getting so close to Fifth Column work that it is not worth a rap of the fingers.

Mr. DECKER: The Premier should not try to get out of a difficulty by becoming abusive. He can get very abusive when he is in a corner and he can fight when he is in a corner, but the time to fight is before we are placed in a corner by the Commonwealth; we should not wait until our backs are against the wall. It is high time some action was taken to see that the Government are capable of governing, war or no war. We do not want to hand over all our powers to the Commonwealth Government. This Government have been sadly lacking in caring for the needs of this State during the war period, to say the least of it.

The post-war reconstruction plans of the Government include £3,200,000 for housing, which is said to be "Continuance of normal programme only." That is tentatively allocated from the substantial amount that will be expended during the post-war period. I take it that "Continuance of normal programme only" refers to the normal activities of the State Advances Corporation. I can put no other construction on those words. During the post-war period the Government propose to build 50,000 houses in addition to the normal programme. If we add that number to the number the War Housing Commission proposes to erect we shall have a programme of 54,000 homes, which will mean a surplus of homes in our own State. It is lunacy for the Government to carry on a wildcat venture of that sort. It is no use for the Premier to put it in round figures and say "We want to build 50,000 homes," and for someone else to get up and say, "We want 60,000 homes" as that will not get us anywhere. That is a dangerous line to take. We want to take into account our needs; we want to take into account the Commission's report on housing in our State and the other States of the Commonwealth, and we want to regulate our programme according to the needs of the State, otherwise we shall have chaos in the industry and we shall have houses for the bats to live in. In other words, our housing scheme will become

a national calamity. It is my purpose to try to point this out to the Government.

Again, why did the State Government allow the Commonwealth Government to step in as they did at Balmoral to acquire land owned by workers for building purposes? As a matter of fact, one worker who owned a piece of this land applied to the Commonwealth Government for the construction of a home under their war-housing scheme but the application was refused by the Department of War Organisation of Industry. He was not allowed to build and the owners of the rest of the land at Balmoral were merely holding it for the purposes of building homes as soon as they could get finance. Yet, without reference to these men the Commonwealth Government sent an officer to inspect this land because its position suited their requirements and acquired it compulsorily without reference to owners at all. I am pleased that Mr. Conelan, the Federal member for Griffith, took the matter up with the Commonwealth Government. He does not belong to this side of the Chamber but he saw the fairness of the owners' case and the unfairness of the action of the Government in taking this land from workers who required it to build homes for themselves. Eventually his voice was heard and the Commonwealth Government discontinued their scheme of acquiring this land. We know that in a house-building scheme, whether by the State or by the Commonwealth, we must have plans, we must acquire land on which to erect the buildings and we need to go very carefully into the matter of acquiring that land. It is all very well to swing power about because you possess it but before we acquire land for house-building we must approach the owners of land to see if they are willing to part with their ownership in it, thus preserving their freedom and rights in the land. A great noise would be raised if some member of the Government party owned a piece of land on which he contemplated building a home and the Government acquired it without consulting him. We should hear something then in condemnation of such an action. Why not step in now and give instructions to our own department handling this matter for the State and advise the Commonwealth Department to go easy in the matter of land acquisition and give their due rights to private owners of land the Commonwealth covets. This is a point that we cannot regard too lightly; preserving the rights of the individual in the ownership of land is a very important point. People in this State who have paid for land have the right to it. It is a sad state of affairs when an officer can go along, decide that the land is suitable for Commonwealth purposes, and take it without reference to the owner, who has to accept the valuation made by the Commonwealth. We need to go steady in these things. Let us remember that we are still a free country and we want to retain the rights of ownership in land and give the owners the treatment we expect one individual to give another.

Mr. Walsh: Why do you not give some idea of what should be done with these people who will not use the land?

Mr. DECKER: I am not afraid to go into that question. I think if a person has land that is suitable for building and the Commonwealth or the State Government wish to acquire that land, they should approach the owner and ascertain if he intends to make use of it, what his plans are, whether he will sell it, and what is his figure. If the owner is holding the land purely for speculative purposes and the Government cannot come to an arrangement for the purpose of building, then I say there may be some justification for their acquiring that land compulsorily and allowing the matter of costs to be fought out in the court. If on the other hand the owner has a good reason for holding it, if he has plans for its development, then the Government should give way to him and respect his rights of ownership in the way which we should like to be treated in private matters. If the Government acted in that way everybody would be more satisfied and they would find people helping the Government rather than hindering it. We know that there are people who have had their land acquired by the Commonwealth Government for war purposes up to three years ago and they have not been paid yet. That is another slur on the Commonwealth's handling of acquisitions. I know the Commonwealth Government pay interest up to the date of settlement but that is not everything. Why do they not pay for the land if it is acquired compulsorily and possession is taken by the Commonwealth Government?

Mr. Walsh: I should like to find out what they paid for the Annerley swamp out of which they made an aerodrome.

Mr. DECKER: If the hon. gentleman wanted to find out he could find that it was a token payment because probably the cash has not changed hands. The Commonwealth Government have not been short in their war loans and revenue has been buoyant, therefore they have no excuse for withholding payment for years after they have compulsorily acquired people's property.

Although the Commonwealth Government allow interest to the owner of the land to the date of settlement, on the other hand if possession is not given they charge interest as rent. A man who is occupying his own house that the Government have compulsorily acquired is charged rent for it, yet he is not able to receive the cash. This matter is worth looking into. There is no excuse for it. The State Government should be wide awake to the facts and the Commonwealth Government have no reason for not treating with individuals as individuals treat with one another in private life.

A number of houses are to be built for sale and quite a number are to be built for letting. The Public Curator is the agency through which these houses are let, certain rents are charged and certain rebates are allowed to tenants. The Premier stated here that the economic rents of the dwellings would be

according to a formula to be agreed on between the State and Commonwealth Treasurer. Would the Treasurer give this Committee the details of that formula?

What is the minimum rental to be charged on houses built for letting purposes under the war-housing scheme? The Public Curator makes the statement that 25s. a week is the minimum and this House should know the formula. We know that the rebates to the tenants are stated to consist of the differences between the economic rent and one-fifth of the family income equal to the basic wage. As the family income falls below the basic wage the rebate is to be increased by one-quarter of the amount by which the family income falls short of the basic wage and decreased by one-third of the amount by which the family exceeds the basic wage. The absolute minimum rental is to be 8s. a week and two-fifths of the loss is to be borne by the State and three-fifths by the Commonwealth.

The formula for arriving at the family income is:—

Family income—

- = whole of the husband's income;
- + two-thirds of wife's income (exclusive of child endowment);
- + one-third each child's income with a maximum of 30s. a week;
- Child's income of less than 10s. a week not included.

This system is entirely wrong. It gives relief to only a few of a large section of people. Why should relief in rent be given to a low-income family who live in a Commonwealth home, when the same relief cannot be given to a family living under the same conditions in a private home? The principle is absolutely wrong. If relief can be given to these people, the idea is all right. If we had a national security scheme, so that the same rentals were given to all sections of the community when the family income recedes below the basic wage, it would be all right. Why give a few hundred people in this State rebates and allowances because they live in a Commonwealth home, when other people in the same circumstances owning their own homes cannot get these rebates? The system is wrong, and this Government have no right to enter into one-sided agreements with the Commonwealth Government of that kind. It shows lack of perception. From the point of view of equity, the Government should have nothing to do with a scheme such as that. By all means help people who are unfortunate, but not under a system such as this. A system like this is no credit to this Government or to the Commonwealth Government, and when it becomes apparent to the people we shall hear voices of protest and justly so, against the Government for having become a party to it.

The Secretary for Public Works had much to say on the housing question. Evidently the hon. gentleman wishes to impose his ideas on the people. He likes a large kitchen. He thinks people do not want gadgets so long as they have a roof over their heads. He

spoke of standardisation of houses and pre-fabrication, to reduce costs. I remind the hon. gentleman that people have their own ideas with regard to the size, type, comfort and location of their homes, and want individuality depicted in their construction. At least it should be one of the freedoms left to the individual and his family to choose the home they desire. In Cairns and Bundaberg there has been quite a protest in regard to the cost of the three houses erected there. The Secretary for Public Works admitted that the high costs were due to the shortage of men, materials and competition. They were Government houses. No wonder there is a shortage in these spheres. If the Government want to do something concrete, I suggest that they be fair and fight for an equal priority to the private home-builder—ascertain the capacity of the citizen and private business undertakings to erect homes, balance the State efforts with non-governmental efforts; refrain from cornering building materials to the detriment of the private builders, see that the Government so regulate their programme that an excess of buildings in any part of the State is avoided, let individual requirements indicate the class of home to be erected, help owners to furnish their homes with modern labour-saving devices, and enforce safety regulations in the use of paints, materials, equipment and home sites. It is an astonishing fact that Governments will on their own initiative and without any reference to the people for whom they legislate, tax the people and use taxpayers' money, for erecting houses during a war period, and at the same time deny to many thousands of private individuals the right to build for themselves. Many taxpayers can finance their own undertakings, yet in a time of supposed war-economy, some millions of Government revenue can be diverted to housing. Under the cloak of National Security Regulations, the Commonwealth and State Governments are almost monopolising the building trade, in fact socialising the building industry.

The hon. member for Mackay stated that 200,000 homes were needed in Queensland. When an hon. member of this Committee makes a statement like that we can only say that he knows very little about the subject. Then he complained about the high cost of building, and I was surprised to hear that from an hon. member of the Government, especially when it is realised that 25 per cent. of the cost is taken up in labour. What makes materials dear? It is not only the materials themselves, but the labour costs that makes the price of homes so high. If we are to have cheap dwellings there can be very little saving on materials. The greatest saving this State has had has been the removal by the Commonwealth Government of that iniquitous 12 per cent. sales tax—that was one building cost that could not be justified—but the main cost in building is labour. If we are to have cheaper homes the only way is to have lower wages costs, but I say emphatically that we have to keep wages up to the required level, and we have to look to the building industry to erect the homes

needed in the State. The private building industry did this in pre-war days. Its services are responsible for the works being carried out by the Allied Works Council and the Commonwealth Government now, and this Government as well as the Commonwealth Government should allow the building industry to drift back naturally to its proper private sphere. If the building industry is given its head it will find a solution to the problem, it will devise a means of building quick homes cheaply, whereas the Government cannot be expected to do this. The system of competitive tender is an ideal way of keeping costs down. We know that the Government will not allow anyone to call tenders for labour only, and this was done deliberately in order to avoid the exploitation of labour. Why not keep up the good work the Government have done? Why not allow the building industry to get back to normal as soon as possible and carry out the work privately so that we can have an organised industry for the erection of the needed homes at the opportune time? I urge this Government to make representations to the Commonwealth Government to ease the ban on private building. I am not so foolish as to advocate the total abolition of the ban on private building in times of war, but there are many urgent cases, where people have the money and skill to carry out the work; there are cases in which people have the necessary materials, either second-hand or new, to erect at least the shell of a house. They also have the necessary skill—they may be retired carpenters—or may have skilled friends who will help them to do the work, yet they are refused permission to carry out these works. They are denied the right to erect a home by the Department of War Organisation of Industry.

(Time expired.)

Mr. TURNER (Kelvin Grove) (12.10 p.m.): The speech just delivered by the hon. member for Sandgate was discouraging to me. Only a few days ago the Prime Minister of Great Britain told us that we shall have to fight hard for every yard of country between our present position and the heart of Berlin. The President of the U.S.A. and the Prime Minister of Australia have been telling us that when the war with Germany is over it will take us at least another two years to defeat the Japanese in the Pacific, and despite all this we have the hon. member for Sandgate encouraging a spirit of complacency to an extent that I have no hesitation in saying is little different from the tactics of Fifth Columnist activities.

At 12.11 p.m.,

Mr. DEVRIES (Gregory) relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. TURNER: I wish to extend my congratulations to the Treasurer. In his first Financial Statement brought down, after only a few short months in office, he has convinced those people who are fair-minded enough to give credit where credit is due that he has a thorough knowledge of public affairs, that he has a thorough understanding of public budgeting.

The public accounting and budgeting system is entirely different from that required in private enterprise and I am satisfied that the Treasurer will make a very solid reply to the hon. member for Logan and the hon. member for Oxley, both of whom are qualified accountants and auditors. One would gather from the remarks of the hon. member for Logan that the Treasurer should use a cupboard containing a number of drawers, each representing a department of State and each containing the amount of money allocated to that department. His remarks reminded me of a person I knew some years ago and to whom I went for union contributions. It was his practice to keep a number of tobacco tins in a drawer and in each to deposit a small amount from time to time to meet payments for, say, lodge fees, union contributions, rent, and other items of expenditure. He could not understand that the same purpose could be achieved if all the payments were allowed to accumulate in one fund and were paid out of that one fund, as was done by the majority of wage-earners. I am satisfied that the Treasurer will give a satisfactory reply to the hon. members for Logan and Oxley for their criticism of his budgetary methods.

I have listened to the advocacy of the hon. member for Windsor that the Government should help certain industries. Only this morning he gave notice of a question concerning an industry on the Atherton Tableland. I have advocated these ideas for many years and I am now forced to the conclusion that private enterprise has failed. If private enterprise has to seek help from Governments, what is wrong with socialising that industry? To those people who have a horror of socialism, I suggest that they should read the definition of it in the dictionary and in the Encyclopaedia Britannica. Socialism is described in the Encyclopaedia Britannica as "Applied Christianity." I am of the opinion that in private enterprise and our capitalistic system we have got too far away from Christianity and no-one would be hurt if we applied socialism to many of our industries and by that means got closer to it and so did something to help our fellow men.

Mr. Brand: How are you going to apply socialism?

Mr. TURNER: I ask the hon. member to support the Government and he will see.

Mr. Brand: I thought the hon. member knew nothing about the subject.

Mr. TURNER: I know too much about it to be trapped by the hon. member's remark. I propose now to refer to the cost of war and to ask why we are not prepared to spend these colossal sums in times of peace? After over 2,000 years it is contended by some people that Christianity has failed. But Christianity has not failed; it has never been given a chance. Neither has democracy failed; true democracy has never been tried. It is true that churchianity has failed. People flock to the churches, bow their heads in prayer and when they come out of the

churches they forget why they have been there.

Mr. Macdonald: Render unto God the things that are God's, and unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's.

Mr. TURNER: Judge not, lest thou be judged. It has failed down through the ages to prevent war. However, none of us will ever quite realise just what Mr. Neville Chamberlain saved the world from on the occasion of his missions to win peace by negotiation.

None of us will ever be able to estimate the value of the time he gained or realise how Britain, during the time he was striving in negotiation with the aggressor nations was able to overcome her defence difficulties. It at least gave Britain a chance to make some preparation to avert an absolute disaster and defeat. None of us, I repeat, can estimate just what that has meant to all of us—not only to Britain but to the whole British Empire. The time thus gained proved of untold value. I shudder to think of what would have happened had Mr. Chamberlain been guided by some of his colleagues who urged him to crash right into Hitler and his well-equipped hordes. Had he listened to some of his own Ministers and supporters he would not have bothered having conferences with Hitler and some of his satellites, but would have just declared war. In my belief the war in that event would not have lasted three months, as Britain was quite unprepared militarily and Germany was thoroughly prepared. Germany would have crushed us to a pulp.

Mr. Brand: Do you really think that?

Mr. TURNER: I do think that. No right-thinking man could come to any other conclusion. Only a fool would think otherwise.

Mr. Brand: Have you ever heard of Dunkirk and the spirit of London?

Mr. TURNER: I will refer to Dunkirk later.

I want to refer to the spirit and struggles of our own Australian boys who were sent into Greece. If it had not been for their efforts in holding up the Hun there for two months Russia would have been defeated, and the defeat of Britain might have followed. It was not military strategy or force of arms that saved Moscow. It is a matter of history now that the Hun reached to within a few miles of Moscow, when weather conditions changed. It was those weather conditions that prevented the Hun from entering Moscow. Everyone appreciates the marvellous efforts the Russian soldiers and people generally have made in defence of their homeland, but they, like many people in our own country, unfortunately, will not give credit to the part our own boys played in holding up the Hun in Greece for two months, notwithstanding the fact that they were ill-equipped and the Fifth Column tactics adopted everywhere to hinder them. I heard of an occasion on which our boys in Greece

were ordered to retire to a rear position. Fifth Columnists, dressed in national costume, directed them down an olive grove. They had hardly arrived there and become settled when the Huns' air fleet dive-bombed and machine-gunned them, wounding and killing thousands of them. On another occasion another section of our boys were ordered to retreat and directed down a certain path where 54 motorised units became so bogged that they had to be abandoned. Our boys not only had to fight delaying actions, but had to combat such Fifth Column tactics. They had no air cover and were at the mercy of the Hun airmen. Notwithstanding that fact it took two months for the Huns to drive them out of Greece, and in those two months they helped to save Russia, just as the magnificent fight put up by Russia has helped to save us. Had Hitler been able to throw against us the mighty forces he threw against Russia our job would have been much more difficult. We were very fortunate indeed that Hitler made the foolish error of attacking Russia when he did because events have proved that his forces were not strong enough to attack three mighty nations such as Britain, the United States of America, and Russia at the one time, but in his egotism and vanity because of his military successes he thought he could acquire predominance over the whole world. However, he met his match, and we are in the happy position today of seeing the Allied forces almost as near to Berlin as the Germans were to Moscow. Hitler will not be able to drive either the British or the Russian forces back from Berlin as he was driven back from Moscow and France because the conditions are totally different.

That brings me to the thought of what was responsible for the fog that permitted 300,000 British soldiers, who were threatened with annihilation, to retire from Belgium through Dunkirk and what calmed the sea at the moment of evacuation. No military strategy was responsible for that. Nor did military strategy stop the Japanese from invading Australia. I have told hon. members that the weather conditions stopped the Germans from invading Moscow. We wipe these things aside and depend on arms.

We have to realise this: no matter what happens, when this war has been brought to a successful conclusion by force of arms, someone, somewhere, somehow, will have to set down a basis under which we can live. If that can be done after so much destruction, why cannot it be done at the beginning? We talk of a new order. What kind of a new order are we going to have? Are we going to put a few patches on the present order and allow the war-mongers to begin preparing for war immediately after the end of this one? I read in the Press last night that Germany is sending some of her selected officers to prepare for the next war. Are we going to allow that to happen after the war? When we have won this clash of arms, are we going to lay down terms for the future? Are we going to allow any nation to prepare for another war? We should call a halt now. I hope that the three great nations,

Britain, America, and Russia, will lay down conditions providing that the first attempt by any nation to prepare for another war will be dealt with immediately and that action will be taken to prevent them from making further preparations. I hope we shall evolve a method whereby international brotherhood will become a reality if for no other reason than that the salvation of civilisation and everything it stands for depend upon it. We must keep our minds on the objective we have set ourselves in this great struggle, but at the same time gather knowledge and wisdom so that immediately peace is restored we may set about building the new order. The futility of war is that it settles nothing but destroys much, and when it is all over we must go back to what we asked for in the beginning—peace by negotiation. Let us make up our minds—difficult though it may be while we are faced with the terrible realities of the situation—that when we reach the stage of peace by negotiation those who are left in a position of responsibility will determine to build a new world on a new basis, a new order in which it will be impossible for this state of affairs ever to occur again.

What I want in the world is a better deal for our workers. I never want to see, after this war, what we saw after the last war—the spectacle of thousands of men, willing and able to work, being deprived of an opportunity to work. A great many of these men had fought for the freedom of this country, yet they were compelled to tramp the countryside looking for jobs, leaving their wives and children behind them to subsist on rations.

Mr. Brand: That was while the Labour Government were in power.

Mr. TURNER: While a Tory Federal Government controlled the Treasury benches. The present Federal Government will see that such a thing as happened after the last war will not happen again. They have planned with this Government so that such a thing can never happen again while they are in office.

At 12.28 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. TURNER: I want to see the soldier get what he is entitled to. We talk about preference to returned soldiers. I am one of those who subscribe to the present preference to returned soldiers, as enunciated by the Prime Minister and the Premier in his policy speech.

Mr. Brand: What is that?

Mr. TURNER: If the hon. member does not interest himself in these matters, I do.

Mr. Brand: I have read it.

Mr. TURNER: The Federal Government appointed a committee of returned soldiers from all sides of the House, to prepare a preference clause that would be satisfactory to returned soldiers' organisations throughout the Commonwealth.

That preference clause was embodied in our policy speech and I subscribe to it. I go even further and require this addition: that for every 10 returned soldiers able and fit to work one partially incapacitated soldier be employed. Because a man suffers some incapacity, why should we cast him aside, in effect saying, "We don't want you any more; there are a large number of able-bodied men available." I want a preference clause that will make it compulsory on private enterprise to take one incapacitated soldier for every 10 able returned soldiers employed.

Mr. Brand: Would you not give them all economic security?

Mr. TURNER: We are aiming at that. We have made that provision but the hon. member and his kidney do everything possible to block our doing it.

Mr. Brand: No.

Mr. TURNER: They do. On every constructive move made by this Government they put their "buts" and their "ifs" and place obstacles in the way.

Mr. Brand: That is not true.

Mr. TURNER: Why do they not support our platform, the socialisation of industry? I should like to see the returned soldiers from this war establish themselves in industry on a co-operative basis.

Mr. Brand: Hear, hear!

Mr. TURNER: And show private enterprise how the thing can be worked.

Mr. Pie interjected.

Mr. TURNER: If I could not do it as well as the hon. member I would get out. Some of these men have proved their ability to do jobs for which they were not given credit in the Army. Before getting into the Army they were looked upon as merely slaves but they have disclosed that they have been able to conduct military affairs much more efficiently than those who have come out of executive and managerial positions.

Mr. Brand: You are in the Government and you can do as you like.

Mr. TURNER: I will make my speech as I see fit. Let me point out briefly what the last war cost and what may be done in the way of reconstruction if there is a moral, or, if you will, a spiritual regeneration of each individual—if every one of us regardless of political alignment, will determine that, as the old system has failed, a new one that the world has not tried before must be evolved. And we must come to the conclusion in building the new order that we must be just as lavish in our expenditure as we are today in destroying the old order. We pray that right may ultimately triumph, but it will not triumph unless we as individuals, as communities and as nations are right.

The figures relating to the war are staggering. The cost to all belligerent nations

from 1914 to 1918 was £37,000,000,000. The total value of destroyed property, the monetary loss through the death of soldiers and civilians, losses in production, losses sustained by neutral countries and the expenditure on relief works during the war period reached the colossal sum of £67,569,000,000. According to the best statistics obtainable, the last war cost 30,000,000 lives and destroyed property worth £80,000,000,000. With all that money a house costing £500 and containing furniture worth £200 could have been built on a 5-acre piece of land worth £20 an acre and given to every family in the U.S.A., Canada, Australia, England, Wales, Ireland, Scotland, France, Belgium, Germany, and Russia. After that had been done there would have been enough money left to give each city of 200,000 inhabitants or more in those countries a library costing £1,000,000, a hospital worth a similar amount, and a university costing £2,000,000. Even then there would have been left enough money, that at 5 per cent. per annum interest would have paid for all time a salary of £200 each to 125,000 nurses and an equal number of teachers. Having done all that, there would have been enough left out of the £80,000,000,000 to buy all France and Belgium and everything of value in those countries—farms, homes, factories, churches, and railways at the valuation placed on them in 1914. The authority for that statement is E. L. Bogart of the Carnegie Endowment of International Peace. It is contained in the Preliminary Economic Studies of War, No. 24, and in the Congressional Records of the U.S.A. dated 13 January 1928, p. 1446.

I have cited those figures because I want to give the Committee some idea of what could be done with the money that this war has cost to date. There has not been the terrible loss of life that occurred in the last war but the property destroyed, including passenger, cargo, and naval vessels lost and destroyed has been considerably greater than in all previous wars. Yet during the 20 years between the last war and this war we were forced through a man-made depression. They told us that the war had cost too much money, that there was no money left for peace-time to feed, clothe and shelter the people, returned soldiers and their wives and families included. This war has convinced the people that they were misled on that occasion. I am reminded of what the Tories, whom the hon. member for Isis supports, told the people when the Hon. E. G. Theodore, the Treasurer of the Commonwealth, suggested that this country could be lifted out of the depression by increasing the nation's credit by £18,000,000 through the circulation of notes, which could be recalled upon completion of the cycle. I have here a note that was issued by the then Tories to the people in a campaign against Mr. Theodore's suggestion. By this note they urged the people to be very careful about this suggestion. They flooded the country with copies of it. It had mutilated pictures of Theodore and Scullin, and on the back was a flattering picture of Mr. Lyons. They told the people that if Mr.

Theodore's suggestion was put into effect, their pound notes would not be worth any more than the note they circulated in their propaganda. They defeated the Scullin Government, but what did they do immediately they got into power? It must be remembered that when they attained office every note in circulation had upon it the words, "Guarantee to pay gold on demand." The Lyons Government obliterated those words with the result that the notes now in circulation are of no more value than the one I am displaying now, yet the Federal Government said they were legal tender. The people will not be gulled by that kind of thing again. If we can raise £540,000,000 for war we can raise £100,000,000 for peace.

Mr. Brand: Is that all?

Mr. TURNER: Yes. £100,000,000 would do more in peace-time than £540,000,000 could do in war-time.

Mr. Pie: Do you believe in internal currency or export currency?

Mr. TURNER: I believe in national currency.

I desire now to read the following statement by Bertrand Russell—

"The world that we must seek, is a world in which the creative spirit is alive, in which life is an adventure full of joy and hope, based rather upon the impulse to construct, than upon the desire to retain what we possess, or to seize what is possessed by others. It must be a world in which affection has free play, in which love is purged of the instinct for domination, in which cruelty and envy have been dispelled by happiness, and the unfettered development of all the instincts that build up life, and fill it with mental delights. Such a world is possible; it waits only for men who wish to create it. Meantime the world in which we exist has other aims. But it will pass away, burnt up in the fire of its own hot passions; and, from its ashes will spring a new and younger world full of fresh hope with the light of morning in its eyes."

It is with this ambition, with this ideal in view that this Government have planned well and truly, in co-operation with the Federal Government, who have also planned for a new and better Australia. The Treasurer has told us in his Budget just what he had planned for the State.

Quite frequently the question, "What secondary industries are you going to help?" is asked in this Chamber. Am I to take it from these questions that private enterprise is admitting that it has failed, because these questions come from the captains of industry? During the last session of the last Parliament I listened with amazement to the Leader of the Opposition on one occasion and the hon. member for Fassifern at another time delivering excellent speeches in favour of the socialisation of industry, and, judging from the speeches of most hon.

members opposite, it would seem that unconsciously or otherwise they favour socialisation of industry. I know they will not admit this but they are forever suggesting that the Government should help this one or that one to establish a particular industry.

How can hon. members opposite justify a proposal to use public funds to establish an industry and then use public funds again to buy its output so as to provide profits for the shareholders? If public funds can be used in that way why not get down to fundamentals at once and socialise the industry? If the people associated with such an industry can make such a success of it in their own interests and make profits for the shareholders, why can they not conduct it just as successfully for the public as a socialised industry? Let me put that to hon. members opposite.

Mr. Pie: Do you believe in profit-sharing in industry?

Mr. TURNER: No, I believe that the profits of industry should go to all the people and not to the few who invest their money in it.

Mr. Kerr: That more or less happens now.

Mr. TURNER: I know of no instance of it. Of course, I know that a number of businesses share their profits at the end of the year with some of their employees for the purpose of avoiding taxation, on the pretext that they are generous employers.

Mr. Brand: Do you believe in production for use and not for profit?

Mr. TURNER: I do.

Mr. Pie: Then you are a Communist?

Mr. TURNER: I am not a Communist. If the hon. member for Windsor were as consistent in his political beliefs as I am in mine he would not be where he is today. He has frequently suggested that we should help those industries with which he is associated, industries that are competing or endeavouring to compete with such low-wage countries as Japan and India. I suggest that we should concentrate our attention on an industry that is peculiar to Australia, the most solid industry and the most wealthy in this country. In this connection I must say that I listened with rapt attention and keen interest to the strong urge by the hon. member for Warrego that we should manufacture the wool produced in this country. His was a very instructive speech. Looking back over the history of the wool industry I find that the first woollen manufacture was established in Australia as far back as 1801 but despite all the so-called ambitions of private enterprise we now have only 96 woollen factories in Australia. We produce the best wool in the world in Australia, particularly in Queensland, but we send it to the other side of the world, not only to Great Britain but to other countries and after it has gone through about a dozen different channels, each extracting its cost of commission, it

comes back in the form of cloth to our warehouses from which it is distributed to the tailors and then to the wearers.

Mr. Pie: You are entirely wrong.

Mr. TURNER: I am not wrong at all, as the hon. member would know if he cared to investigate what I say. Let me give hon. members some idea of how the capitalistic system ties up enterprises in the interests of a few. About 10 years ago a very enterprising firm in Brisbane desired to take over the total output of one of the Queensland woollen mills. Negotiations were in train and it was agreed that this firm should absorb the entire output. But there was a nigger in the woodpile, in that a man in Melbourne working in a small office had the control of the woollen mill in his hands. An arrangement was in existence whereby the people for whom the Melbourne man acted were entitled to get a commission on every piece of material or every yard produced and sold from the Queensland mill. Naturally enough the Brisbane firm that desired to absorb the whole output refused to pay a commission on its purchases from the woollen mill and so the negotiations broke down.

The hon. member for Warrego told us that already we had some very efficient wool scourers established in Queensland and that the water required for scouring purposes was the best of its kind to be found in the world.

Mr. Pie: Where is that?

Mr. TURNER: The hon. member for Warrego told the hon. member where it is. I have come to the conclusion that the reason why woollen industries are not established in a greater degree than they are in Australia today is the control exercised by the financial magnates. I refer to such financial institutions as the Australian Estates and Mortgage Co. Ltd., Dalgety and Co. Ltd., New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Ltd., and the Australian Mercantile Land and Finance Co. Ltd. Their ramifications are world-wide. The firms in Australia are only branches of larger firms overseas. They will not allow the growers to treat the wool here. They have in their grip many of them who through misfortune have not been able to meet their obligations and these financial institutions manage and control their holdings. What do they do? They send the wool, in many cases, not through the local brokerage concerns but direct to England. That wool should be marketed in Australia. Every bale of wool should be scoured here. They insist that one-third of the grease should remain in the wool. In other words, our wool scourers are not permitted to scour it thoroughly.

Mr. Nicklin: Why do they insist on that?

Mr. TURNER: I do not know; it is because of some technical reason. If anyone should suggest that we send our sugar-cane over to England, to be crushed and manufactured into sugar, we should scoff at the suggestion, but it is just as ridiculous to me that we should send our wool to England

in the grease. I have heard that some of our wool scourers have stacks and stacks of lanoline because there was no market for it.

Mr. Nicklin: There is a market for it today.

Mr. TURNER: Yes, they will take many things today that they would not take formerly. They are taking glycerine out of tallow now.

Mr. Nicklin: They have only just discovered the value of lanoline.

Mr. TURNER: Lanoline has been used extensively in this country for years, but preference has been given to the imported article over the local one.

Take the lower grades of wool. Only 15 per cent. of the contents of an unscoured bale is really wool. Is it not nonsense that freight and space should be found for the 85 per cent. of the bale that is dirt?

Mr. Brand interjected.

Mr. TURNER: If the hon. member for Isis knows so much about it I issue a challenge to him. If he proves what I say is wrong I will resign my seat in Parliament if he undertakes to do likewise if I am proved to be right. That is how truthful my statement is.

Mr. Brand: Who will be the judge?

Mr. TURNER: Anyone can judge the position; the hon. member can pick whom he likes. I am telling the truth. The lower-grade wool is our greatest burden in the matter of freight space. If this wool was scoured before being railed to port for shipment we should have more space on our railways to carry other goods and less freight to be paid on the wool itself. The dirt, manure, &c., in the lower-grade greasy wool, should be left in the wool scourers. I know of no industry that would create more employment in Australia than the woollen industry.

Mr. Pie: It is one of the biggest industries in Australia today.

Mr. TURNER: That justifies my statement that it would create more employment than any other industry in Australia gives today. Why dilly-dally about the little cotton mills?

Mr. Pie: The cotton mills would employ about 10,000 people.

Mr. TURNER: And the woollen mills would employ about 210,000 people. Why do we not spin our wool and send the cloth overseas?

Mr. Pie: We are spinning it.

Mr. TURNER: The hon. member is endeavouring to make people believe that he is an encyclopaedia. They do not do it in Victoria and Tasmania to the extent to which I want to see them do it. The last figures revealed that we sent 339,000,000 lb. of wool to England, whereas it should have been pro-

cessed in Australia and sent to England in cloth.

An Opposition Member: We are short of man-power.

Mr. TURNER: We should have the man-power here, if these things had been done before the war—

Mr. Brand: We tried to get the Labour Government to do it but they would not do it.

Mr. TURNER: The only one the hon. member tried to do anything for is the member for Isis; that is the only thought he has.

Until we treat the wool in this country we shall continue to be the wood-and-water joey. We can spin it as cheaply here as they can in any country in the world because several of our scourers do not require any soap or soda, as the water, when heated to a certain degree, is effective in scouring the wool. In addition to that we have cheap and ample water supply in the districts where the scourers are situated, abundance of fuel is available, and railways already run to them. We have every possible facility necessary to make an industry successful. If we erected mills in these localities where scourers are already established and where rail transport is available it would not be long before we had other industries there, and so we should have the decentralisation process in full operation. The congregation of the employees would bring about the establishment of grocery stores, butcher shops and bakeries, and milkmen would follow. Dairying centres would spring up, and butter factories and other industries which would increase the population. As these industries grew, so we could systematically encourage immigration from the other side.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr. TURNER: Would they encourage industries in this country while their money was invested in Britain?

Much has been said about immigration, but I invite members to consider the position Britain is in today. Are we sure Britain will want to lose any of her people when the war is over? Has not Britain been so battered that she will need every available man and woman to reconstruct the damage before she will encourage them to leave the home country in any numbers? I suggest we make an appeal to the people of Australia to care for some of the British war orphans. I know many people who would be willing not only to care for these orphans but to adopt them, although I am sure they would let them retain the names of their fathers who suffered and died for them in this war; I think it would be a shame to take away the names of their parents. I am fully confident that if we made an appeal we should find enough people to take up the 30,000 of these young war orphans and bring them up as their own children. I am also confident that these orphans would become good Australians. By taking this action we should be not only increasing our population but

relieving Britain of the tremendous burden of looking after these young people when the war is over.

If on the other hand the desire is to encourage some of the adult population of England to come to Australia we must put our house in order and make the conditions attractive for them. Good as the conditions here are, they are not as good as I would have them. I am strongly opposed to the long hours and arduous labour of female workers in our factories. These conditions destroy our womanhood and if we would have our children become the virile race of our forbears, I suggest a reduction in the working hours for females in factories.

Mr. Pie: What do you suggest?

Mr. TURNER: Nothing more than 36 hours a week and if possible 30 hours a week. Many of these girls have come from homes in the country and now have to pay for board and lodging. Their leisure hours are taken up with making and repairing, washing and ironing their clothes. But apart from that altogether, the work is so arduous that the present working hours are too long.

I should like to see the conditions such that the wife of every working man could take a good holiday at the end of each year. I have been married for a number of years but since she was married my wife has never had a holiday. Certainly she has had a change of environment when I have rented a house at the seaside and taken her and the family there, but my wife has worked harder during that fortnight than she would have had she remained at home. Children on holidays create more work and seaside houses are much more difficult than the home to keep clean. Really that is no holiday for a wife. When a holiday period comes round, I should like the conditions to be such that every working man could take his wife away and board. This would ensure that she would have at least the same leisure on the holiday as the husband. There are some who are able to leave their families at home but 90 per cent. of Australian mothers and fathers cannot do that. I should like conditions made such that the wife and mother would have an equal holiday with the husband and father and family.

In addition, I should like to see a change in the basic wage although I am not so concerned to see an increase in the present basic wage as I am to see other reforms because I have realised for many years that an increase in the basic wage means really only an increase in the price of the commodity in the basket that comprises the basic wage. I want to see a greater number of commodities in the basket. At the present time it is restricted. There should be additional commodities and a greater variety.

Mr. Hiley: You mean the weighted index?

Mr. TURNER: Yes. At the present time a number of commodities shown in the schedule are unobtainable. Substitutes have to be used. I am satisfied from my experi-

ence that if we are going to provide work for all there must be a general reduction in working hours. I am not one of those who advocate this reduction for the purpose of giving somebody some overtime at the end of the week; as many people say, such a reduction is a false reduction. I have spoken to many people who have fought for a reduction in working hours but they have been worried chiefly because they feared their industry could not survive with a shorter working week.

Mr. Pie: It does not matter how many hours you work as long as they are all on the same basis.

Mr. TURNER: Exactly, and the central Government will have to legislate for a basic wage that will give equal purchasing power over the whole of the Commonwealth and the same working hours. We should not have a state of affairs under which Victorian manufacturers, with a lower basic wage and longer working week, can compete unfairly with Queensland industries. If we want Queensland industries to succeed we should give preference to goods made in this State. In saying that I do not mean that if Queensland manufacturers put inferior articles on the market we should buy them. We want value for our money and if local manufacturers will not give us that we should go elsewhere. There are, however, many people in Queensland who can produce all the goods we require of equal quality to anything made in the Southern States.

Mr. Pie: Every month £2,250,000 worth of goods comes into this State from southern manufacturers.

Mr. TURNER: That is so.

Mr. Macdonald: Why is that?

Mr. TURNER: Because we are not loyal to our own State and because the people in the South have a longer working week and a lower basic wage and are therefore able to give bigger discounts than the Queensland manufacturer. If we are going to see this State progress as it should I advise all Queenslanders to patronise the Queensland manufacturers wherever they are equal in quality and price. By that means our industries will grow until they become serious competitors with the Southern people.

It must be appreciated, too, that it is no use bringing industries here from New South Wales and causing unemployment in that State. That is merely shifting the evil from one place to another. Again, it is no good manufacturing goods in Australia if we are going to cause unemployment in other countries, in England in particular. We have to find a means of curing unemployment. I am satisfied that the Federal Government have planned, in co-operation with the State Government, a method of providing work for all those who are able and willing to work.

I advise all hon. members to obtain and read a copy of a book issued by the Federal Government showing what they propose doing for the returned soldier. It is their intention

to train returned soldiers in the various industries and to pay them while they are being so trained.

Mr. Pie: What is the book?

Mr. TURNER: It is called "The Outline of Repatriation." Any man who is interested in the returned soldiers will be convinced after reading it that the Federal Government have done everything possible to provide for our returned soldiers.

Mr. BRAND (Isis) (2.25 p.m.): Midst all the flurry of the Financial Statement, with its mass of figures depicting the flourishing position of the State's finances, the debate has been very animated indeed, with all hon. members urging upon the Treasurer the best means of spending his hoarded wealth. I suppose they have been moved to do so because there is the sum of £8,501,000 standing to the credit of the Post-war Reconstruction and Development Trust Fund, and £2,128,000 to the credit of the Unemployment Insurance Fund.

The debate has been singular in that there has been a notable change of opinion on the part of hon. members of the Labour Party. No longer do hon. members sitting behind the present Cabinet have for its members the respect they had from 1914 onwards. They are now prepared to criticise the Government and their policy. It all started with the hon. member for Toowoomba, who in a brilliant speech told the Government that their attitude towards the Public Service was wrong. His speech was in agreement with what the Country Party had been telling the Government since 1920. The hon. member for Toowoomba contended that we have to obtain men of brilliance for the Public Service to carry on the great public works of the State.

As Labour's policy has been one of promotion on the basis of seniority, the service has not attracted that excellent type of man that should take charge of our great public institutions. That there are many brilliant people in the Public Service is known to every hon. member.

Mr. Devries: Then there are suitability and efficiency to be considered, too.

Mr. BRAND: The hon. member now introduces suitability and efficiency, but when Labour first came into power in 1914, promotion in the Public Service was purely on the basis of seniority. Later on that basis was altered to provide for suitability and efficiency. We know that the present Government have been trying to get away from their policy in this respect. As a matter of fact, what the hon. member for Toowoomba advocated will have to take place if we are to obtain brilliant men to take control of our public service. Unless we do that we cannot attract the best brains the country has to offer. I can well understand that the Government regard the challenge by the hon. member for Toowoomba as a challenge to the Labour Government. Did not the Secretary for Public Works take up the challenge and argue that the previous

policy had produced some very brilliant men? On the other hand, the Minister for Transport supported the hon. member for Toowoomba. Here we have a challenge to the policy of the Labour Government from Labour members themselves. Time and time again we have said in this Parliament that the Government were not giving the attention to matters of State that would tend to develop the country as it should be developed. We have criticised the Government in Parliament and out of it.

Mr. Duggan: Would you say that what was good enough in 1914 would necessarily be good enough today?

Mr. BRAND: No. I give the hon. member commendation for the speech he delivered in Parliament recently.

Mr. Devries: It was honest criticism.

Mr. BRAND: It was, and I give the hon. member credit for it. Is there a body of thought within the Government party ranks that wishes to challenge the hon. member for Toowoomba? He has every right, as a member of this Parliament, to make the statements he did. It only goes to show that there is need for a vigorous policy, and that if we are to get anywhere at all we shall have to change the present hard and fast policy of the Government. I can well understand that the hon. member for Bowen would feel that Government policy in this respect must remain. He contended that he stood right behind Labour's original objective.

After the criticisms by the hon. member for Toowoomba, the hon. member for Gregory spoke of the forgotten West.

Mr. Devries: I did not say the "forgotten" West.

Mr. BRAND: Did he not? I give this credit to the hon. member for Gregory, that he went on to say that the Government had paid a little backhanded compliment to the West, but in essence he said that the West was forgotten. And the West is forgotten, and so is the North. Now they are talking about the forgotten North, but both the West and the North are parts of this State that are supposed to be governed by the Labour Government.

The hon. member for Kelvin Grove had a great deal to say about socialisation, but his ideals about it were not in keeping with the policy of the Government. He did mention incidentally that if he could not support that ideal in words he would do so morally. I hope that the Treasurer will use his hoarded wealth to do these things that the Government were urged to do and are now again being urged to do to develop the country. There is this important fact to remember, that while State finances are still in a very buoyant state, the same cannot be said of the Commonwealth Government or of individuals throughout the country.

It is obvious that the Governments of the world who are financing the war are not financing it by balanced Budgets. We have

been able to show balanced Budgets and tremendous surpluses because we are in fact in the midst of war.

Mr. Bruce: You said it was hoarded wealth.

Mr. BRAND: It is being hoarded; the hon. gentleman knows that perfectly well. It is not very pleasant to know that we can make a great deal of financial progress only during war, that in peace we oftentimes cannot balance the Budget and that in times of depression we have to show huge deficits. Today we are suffering more than anything else from heavy taxation. I say in this Parliament that there would be no shortage of coal if there was no taxation; there would be no shortage of coal in Australia if there were post-war credits of taxation. Do we not learn from the tremendous increase of the note issue that there is a great deal of hoarded money in the pockets of the people? Why? Why is black-marketing so rampant?

Mr. Walsh: Tell us why.

Mr. BRAND: Because of heavy taxation. I recognise that the Treasurer is not in a position to relieve the people of this State of taxation to a great extent, because direct taxation is imposed by the Federal Government who pay a certain part to the State.

Mr. Bruce: How would you finance the war?

Mr. BRAND: I recognise that the Government who are financing this country in total war must have all the money they can get to wage a successful war. It has been found that just as industry requires a plentiful supply of money for progress so do Governments require a plentiful supply of money to wage a successful war. If you are going to wage a successful war there must be a plentiful supply of money and I do not believe that the people should be exempt from taxation and that therefore we might not be in a position to wage this war successfully.

Mr. Bruce: That is not what you said.

Mr. BRAND: The hon. gentleman must not misrepresent what I said.

Mr. Hanlon: He only repeated what you said.

Mr. BRAND: I said if there was no taxation we should not be short of coal. I also say that if there were post-war credits the same would apply.

Mr. Bruce: You would trick them.

Mr. BRAND: There is no trick in post-war credits. The hon. gentlemen sitting on the front bench know perfectly well that Britain today has found that what I have been saying is a fact. When they brought down the last Budget special provision was made for the small-salaried men up to £1,000 as it was realised that he was the backbone of the nation. That being so, he received special relief from taxation. In this country

we shall have to do the same. It is not a very pleasing commentary on the development of this country that we find ourselves getting very short of wheat. Every Government should see that sufficient of this commodity is grown. That is a foremost duty of any Government in every country in the world.

Mr. Walsh: Do you say there is a shortage of wheat in Australia?

Mr. BRAND: Our aim at least should be to double our production. Every State that can produce it should endeavour to do so. We have not done so in this State. I realise that the Commonwealth Government have made certain regulations under which wheat is acquired at a certain price, namely, 4s. a bushel for the first 3,000 bushels produced. Above that it is 3s. whereas last year it was 2s. That is one of the most stupid policies that could be pursued. This Government have not endeavoured in any way to try to increase the production of wheat in Queensland. In Victoria, owing to adverse weather conditions, production is estimated at between 5,000,000 and 7,000,000 bushels. The average production in that State is 37,000,000 bushels and they have a consumption quota of 17,000,000 bushels.

Mr. Walsh: How many growers grow over 2,000 bushels in Queensland? You cannot answer that.

Mr. BRAND: The Minister says I cannot answer.

Mr. Walsh: How many growers are there in Queensland who grow over 2,000 bushels?

Mr. BRAND: I will not discuss the matter with the hon. gentleman who refused to place a paper on the table the other day when an hon. member of this Chamber felt that it was a forgery. He should have put it on the table. Neither he nor other members of the cabinet have given sufficient thought to Queensland's wheat production. Surely to goodness we can expect at least that this is one industry the Government would endeavour to help in order to obtain the production of wheat required for this State! We have to draw our wheat from other States.

Mr. Walsh: How many growers grow over 2,000 bushels in Queensland?

Mr. BRAND: Quite a number. The hon. member is asking a question but he does not know the import of it. I am not going to discuss it with him. All I know is that if that restriction was removed there would be heavier wheat production and they have endeavoured to remove that restriction by increasing the price from 2s. to 3s. a bushel for production over 3,000 bushels, which indicates clearly that they realise something has to be done to help this great industry.

There is one thing the Treasurer has stated in his Budget that appears to me to be common sense—

“Although the numbers engaged in primary industries will eventually be considerably greater than the present numbers,

most of the future increase in the working population will be absorbed in secondary and service industries."

The Treasurer, who is an old parliamentarian with a long experience of Cabinet rank, knows well that if this country is to be developed properly it has to be on a well balanced economy, and all the people must not be on the land or in secondary industry. I am pleased to note this encouraging remark in the Financial Statement because it indicates that the Government are giving some thought to the development of secondary industries in Queensland. The Hon. the Treasurer goes on to show that they are mapping out regional cities in suitable places where industry can be established so that there will be a decentralisation of manufacturing industries.

Mr. Walsh: You will oppose that—if industries were erected in certain parts of Queensland.

Mr. BRAND: I am satisfied to know—

Mr. Walsh: You are saying anything now.

Mr. BRAND: I am satisfied the Minister would say anything. When he opens his mouth he does not know what he is going to say next.

The hon. member for Windsor has been endeavouring to awaken the Government to their responsibility in regard to the manufacturing industry and I am pleased he has succeeded.

Mr. Hanlon: The Budget speech was printed and published before the hon. member for Windsor spoke.

Mr. BRAND: He has been speaking since the beginning of Parliament and during last Parliament his speeches were devoted to the manufacturing industry.

Mr. Hanlon: The Government were helping secondary industries before he came into Parliament.

Mr. BRAND: I hope they are going to help them still further. The Treasurer will certainly have a very large field to work in if he is going to carry out this Statement. This policy is one that could receive better consideration from the Commonwealth and the Government. It would be a foolish policy to place men on the land to be ruined. After all, markets are of great importance; they must be available before you can put men on the land. While we recognise that we must find land for the settlement of our soldiers and our service men, who have helped to save this country, the Government, in order to ensure the success of such settlement, must develop secondary industries.

A great development must come and there is no reason why raw materials produced here in large quantities should not be manufactured in Queensland. That would be a splendid market for the producers of our raw materials.

Mr. Jesson: There is no reason why they should not grow all their own sugar in Victoria either.

Mr. BRAND: The hon. member may think so but we know that people who are growing sugar in Victoria will not grow any more because they would then have to come into the sugar pool and they do not want to do that.

I am very pleased to know that the Government do not intend to settle the country with agricultural industries for whose produce no markets can be found. There is any amount of land in Queensland capable of closer settlement for agricultural and stock industries but the settlement of returned soldiers particularly should be done with due caution. Every hon. member who has spoken in this Chamber on soldier settlement has indicated that he has no desire to see a repetition of the occurrences that followed the last war, of men being settled on such country as that at Beerburum and the like.

Mr. Jesson: They were settled.

Mr. BRAND: I want to see them settled on land that will provide a decent living for them.

Mr. Theodore: You do not want to see them exploited by the landholders?

Mr. BRAND: No, and they have no right to be and I do not think hon. members of this Committee wish it. There should be a committee of this House at least to investigate all the proposals being submitted. It is all very well for the Government to sit cosily in their chairs and say that because certain officers of the department suggest something to them we have to accept it. I leave it to the common sense of members of this Chamber.

Mr. Walsh: You had such a committee after the last war.

Mr. BRAND: We did not.

Mr. Walsh: The Leader of the Opposition, Charlie Taylor, was on it.

Mr. BRAND: The Minister for Transport is again making a mis-statement.

Mr. Walsh: It is true.

Mr. BRAND: The hon. gentleman said we had a similar committee last time. I would tell him, and he can verify it by searching in the records of the House, that there was no such thing as a parliamentary committee to investigate it.

Mr. Walsh: I said a similar committee, on which was the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. BRAND: There was not a similar committee. I am urging that this Chamber should investigate all the projects submitted for the settlement of returned soldiers. I care not from which side of the House they come. I am quite satisfied that there are men with experience of the qualities of land to know what is the reasonable thing for a man to make a living on. We should demand that from this Parliament, knowing what we do of the experience of the settlement of returned soldiers after the last war.

Mr. Power: You certainly settled them in 1929.

Mr. BRAND: Yes, they were settled by a Labour Government. There is so much in this Financial Statement that I wish to proceed with my speech. The Treasurer states—

“Our primary industries must follow a long-term policy to achieve greater yield, higher quality and increased efficiency all round. This can only be attained by the application of more scientific methods to farming, more research and better organisation. Much of this, particularly research and dissemination of knowledge, is the responsibility of the Government and plans have been prepared accordingly.”

That sounds very well but I wish that it were actually being carried out. I should be very sorry to think that the Treasurer could not carry it out. There are great industries of great moment to Queensland such as the sheep, the cattle, the dairying, the sugar, and the fruit industries, but what has been the experience of all these industries as regards technical advisers of the department? What encouragement has been given by the Government to ensure there will be technical advice to help an industry?

Mr. Jesson: You know that what Labour has promised Labour has done.

Mr. BRAND: Yes—what Labour has promised, Labour has done, but we find that the annual endowment of £7,000 from the Government of the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations has been reduced to £5,664.

Mr. Walsh: Why not be honest about it? You know.

Mr. BRAND: I do not know anything other than what has been stated in the Budget. In that department there is a credit of £32,956 11s. 3d., to which the Government contributes only £7,000 a year.

Mr. Walsh: The industry is quite satisfied with that.

Mr. BRAND: The industry is satisfied with £7,000, but why reduce it to £5,000? Why is no provision made for the salary of assistant director? I asked in this Assembly whether the salary of £912 paid to Mr. Arthur Bell, as assistant director, was paid out of sugar funds, and the Minister said that it was not. I want to know what help the Government are giving to this technical branch of the sugar industry. Are they going to take from it the services of Mr. Arthur Bell, who is one of the best men we have had in this bureau since its establishment? Today, when the industry needs technical men, Mr. Bell is not being used in the capacity of technical adviser to the industry.

Mr. Devries: But you are highly organised in the sugar industry.

Mr. BRAND: We are, but throughout the world technical advisers on sugar matters are hard to obtain. We have been told that the salary of the only mill technologist we

have is going to be increased, but the Estimates make no provision for it. During this session I spoke on the matter, and urged that greater consideration be given to the question of withdrawing men from the control of the Public Service Commissioner and placing them under the Minister, so that their services to the State might be recognised in the proper way.

Mr. Walsh: You would complain of political influence then.

Mr. BRAND: There is no political influence in that. Surely the hon. gentleman's mind is not so warped as to think that because an approach is made to the Minister one is seeking to use political influence?

Mr. Walsh: I said that that is what you would say.

Mr. BRAND: As I said before, the Minister will say anything. It would seem that the Government are not giving any consideration to the development of primary production by providing scientific help because they are taking away from the sugar industry the one man who can give it scientific aid.

In these days not only hon. members of this Assembly, but the people in general, are considering proposals for the post-war period. Many communities are giving consideration to the establishment of electrical undertakings. Others are anxious to establish abattoirs in various centres and they are giving a good deal of time and thought to the matter. Something should be done by the Department of Agriculture and Stock by way of making scientific investigations and giving advice to the various communities now as to whether their proposals will be practicable. The Government should make some statement, for instance, as to whether they desire abattoirs to be established in country centres. If they do not want that to be done they should say so. The Government should examine the possibility of erecting abattoirs in this State, in order that they might be in a position to inform the people of certain areas whether the population warrants their erection.

Mr. Farrell: That depends upon the cattle.

Mr. BRAND: The cattle are in the country. The cattle are brought from the country to central killing places. If that is to be the policy of the Government then it would be to their advantage and to the advantage of the people generally to say so, in order that those who are vitally concerned may make the necessary preparations to meet the new conditions. Perhaps the people expect the Government to finance all such undertakings, and the Government should tell them whether that is their intention. The Government should be frank enough to say whether they are going to bring down a Bill to encourage the establishment of such works. I believe that we should be frank in regard to post-war planning. We should be able to say to the people that they would be wise in establishing many things. Already I have referred to the forgotten West. The

people in the North now contend that theirs is a forgotten North. Very recently the Cairns Chamber of Commerce invited delegates from the far North and far North-West to meet at conference in Cairns to discuss post-war projects. Naturally the people from those far distant places are looking to the Government to provide financial means for the development of such projects. Today we heard of Labour's policy of socialisation. Perhaps the people think that socialisation means that the Government will find all the money and that it will be repaid to them in convenient instalments.

Mr. Theodore: You know that already 34 Exchange Boards have given consideration to such schemes.

Mr. BRAND: I know that, but the mere submission of a scheme does not make it an established fact. A great deal more than that is required. Before the war the Melbourne "Argus" made this observation about the North—

"Nowhere else in the world is the white man handling tropical production with such success as in Queensland. Our country can nowhere else show the same spectacle of man-directed energy."

Here we have an influential journal like the Melbourne "Argus" setting out what can be accomplished in the North.

It is appropriate now that I should quote the motion that was carried at the Cairns conference to which I referred a moment ago—

"That representation be made to Governments to take the necessary action to establish secondary industries in North Queensland as far as relates to power alcohol, building boards, distillery, sugar refinery, or other uses of by-products from this industry. These suggestions are brought forward on account of the mechanical devices at present being developed in the industry which will have the tendency to greatly reduce costs."

It is remarkable that there should be an agitation for the construction of another sugar refinery in Queensland. There is a sugar refinery in each of the capitals of Australia, and there is also one at Bundaberg. The refinery in Sydney is capable of refining enough sugar to meet the requirements of the people of New South Wales. Of course, the north-eastern corner of that State is supplied from Brisbane. Brisbane is able to refine only about 35,000 tons of raw sugar, and Bundaberg about 15,000 tons, a total of 50,000 tons, which approximates the requirements of this State. The object of establishing a refinery in each of the capital cities of Australia was to obtain the very conditions that we now have in the sugar industry in Australia—for the purpose of securing the help and co-operation of the people of the other States in the existing set-up in the industry whereby an embargo was imposed on the importation of black-grown sugar and Australia's home market was reserved for the local industry.

This is the most economical way of handling refined sugar. It is much easier to transport raw sugar by water than the refined product. The sugar industry and Governments also accepted this policy of establishing refineries in the centres of population. The Brisbane refinery could do more work than it is doing and the Bundaberg refinery also could do more than it is doing, but there the economic factor must be taken into consideration, that is, this method is the most economical yet found. It is a fact that sugar is being refined in the refineries of Australia more cheaply than anywhere else in the world.

Mr. Pie: What do you attribute that to?

Mr. BRAND: To good sound business methods centralising the refineries in all capital cities. I do not know whether it would be advisable to establish a refinery in Cairns with a capacity of one-half of one mill's production of raw sugar manufactured there.

Mr. Jesson: You know it would be economical.

Mr. BRAND: I do not know whether it would be economically sound to do so, yet people are encouraged to urge its consideration to the Government. The motion I read says—"That this Government be advised."

Mr. Farrell: You do not agree with the argument?

Mr. BRAND: I do not agree with the argument so far as the establishment of a sugar refinery is concerned, but it is all right for the manufacture of power alcohol and other by-products of sugar. Encouragement to do so should be given by the Government to the people concerned. What I am more interested in is that we should have a proper set-up to train the thoughts of the people along the right lines as to what the Government propose to do, so that our efforts may be directed to developing this State and making the best use of the industry.

Mr. Jesson: You mean for the raw sugar to be sent to Sydney and for the by-products to be sent back to Cairns and treated there?

Mr. BRAND: I do not. The hon. member knows the motion I have read deals with by-products of the raw sugar industry, not of refined sugar.

Mr. Jesson: You have to refine the sugar to get the by-products.

Mr. BRAND: After all, the refinery in Brisbane is giving a great deal of work to good Queenslanders, and whether working in Brisbane or elsewhere they are working to the economic advantage of Queensland in general.

I should like to say something about immigration which has been referred to by a number of hon. members during this debate. Since the war began many additional people have come to Queensland, necessitating

the carriage of a great deal of goods by our railway system. As a result, whereas in 1938-39 the railway revenue was £7,657,344, in 1943-44 it was £16,116,406, notwithstanding the many restrictions placed on passenger and ordinary goods traffic. In other words, notwithstanding these restrictions the revenue more than doubled itself. It is quite reasonable to encourage a vigorous policy of immigration. We are vitally interested in the peopling of this State. If our population was doubled our railways would continue to be the success they have been since the war began. There is no reason why we should not do it, but we should give priority first to Britishers and secondly to people of the Nordic blood. These are the people who founded the Australian race and they should have priority; they are the founders of Australian stock, which is the best in the world. There are no people in the world to surpass the exploits of the A.I.F. and R.A.A.F.

Mr. Jesson: We must learn to treat them rightly. What do you think of the treatment by the Victorian Government of the Australians in the Mallee country?

Mr. BRAND: If we are going in for an immigration policy I am going to plump for Britishers first. I hope delegations that go overseas for the purpose of encouraging immigration will go to the countries from which the founders of this country came, that they will go to Great Britain first. After all, I think we should give something more to Britain; we should recognise what Britain has meant to the development of this country.

Mr. Jesson: We meant a great deal to Britain, too.

Mr. BRAND: Exactly. I want to pay a tribute to her for what she has done for us. After all, we hear much about the appointment of Governors. This is one link at least that we have with Britain—the appointment of Governors direct from the King. I see no reason why that practice should not be continued. After all, the present occupier has done a very good job; I think we can do with more of them. I believe that this attachment to the Motherland is a good one for us. We have to realise that Britain is willing to do a great deal for us. We know that she can buy sugar cheaper than she can get it from Australia. What does she pay for sugar? She gives preference of £3 15s. a ton for raw sugar and £5 16s. 8d. for refined sugar. She gives many preferences to the other dominions as well. That preference was worth £1,500,000 a year to Queensland before the war.

Mr. Power: It is a pity she did not treat us the same with beef, instead of buying it from Argentina.

Mr. BRAND: As far as butter and beef are concerned, they elected to take the surplus beef and butter till 1948.

Mr. Power: They have now, not prior to the war.

Mr. BRAND: And throughout the war. The British Government have done well by Australian industries, particularly industries that are within Queensland. I think we should pay a tribute to Britain for the magnificent way in which she has treated her colonies and the magnificent way in which she has upheld the Empire through this ghastly war. The least we can do is to see, when we want people to come to this country, that we have Britishers first. We can do that and I propose to do it. I recognise that they make very excellent Queenslanders. I have heard statements about others being excellent farmers, which is true, but the best farmer in Queensland is the Australian who comes from the stock I have mentioned. The young Australian is the best sugar farmer in Queensland. The young man is doing a great job. He is attending to the scientific side of the industry and he sees to it that the wage standards are not slaughtered. He is a magnificent cane-grower, a splendid dairyman, and an excellent wheat-grower; as a worker in any of the industries, the Australian is the best man.

Mr. Theodore: The Australian-born immigrant is the best.

Mr. BRAND: He is the best citizen we have.

The Treasurer has also mentioned subsidies to local bodies. This is nothing new. Governments have been giving subsidies to local bodies for a number of years. I do not say that a subsidy rise from 15 per cent. to 50 per cent. is any departure from the principle that previously prevailed.

Mr. Jesson: That means the Government are going to carry it out.

Mr. BRAND: I am glad to hear from the hon. member that it is an indication that the Government propose to carry it out. The interjection clarifies what the Government propose to do about it and shows that there will not be any departure from what was done in the past. We hear much about new orders and that sort of thing, and if this is part of the new order we are almost getting into reverse gear, because prior to the war local authorities received a 66-per-cent. subsidy on many of their projects.

Mr. Jesson: For a long time before the war.

Mr. BRAND: I am pleased to have the assurance of the hon. member, as local authorities will be looked to for the development of electricity supply particularly, and assistance in the laying of the foundations of schemes that will be of great help to agriculturists. In this Budget the Government have submitted a proposal to subsidise irrigation projects to the extent of 50 to 100 per cent. Irrigation would undoubtedly be one of the most useful developments to take place in agricultural areas. But we are entitled to know if money will be made available for the purpose. The mere statement that there will be subsidy from 50 per cent. to 100 per cent. does not indicate that money

will be available and there are many areas that could be developed by electrification and irrigation. It would be an encouragement to proceed with such projects if the Government would only say they will have the money and will help them all they can. The mere fact that a statement appears in the Budget does not indicate that there will be any great developments. I was hoping that we should be able to give greater encouragement to local authorities, because for a considerable time they have been labouring under difficulties.

Before my time expires, I wish to deal with some matters affecting the sugar industry. It has been the custom of the Sugar Board to make a supplementary payment in September on the previous year's crop. This occurred for the seasons 1941 and 1942. The growers for the season 1941 received a supplementary payment in September 1942 of 12s. per ton for 94 net titre sugar. In September 1943, 6s. 8d. a ton was paid on the 1942 crop. This year no statement was made by the Premier that any supplementary payment would be made to the industry by the Sugar Board, although it was believed that there was sufficient to enable a payment of 5s. a ton to be made. Some statement should be made by the Premier in regard to the practice.

Mr. Theodore: You cannot make a statement unless the facts are known.

Mr. BRAND: The fact should be known to him.

Mr. Theodore: They may be.

Mr. BRAND: They should be, and must be, known to him in September. He was able to make an announcement in 1942 and 1943, and the facts must be known to him now. There is a belief that there is sufficient money to warrant the payment of 5s. a ton for sugar of the 1943 crop. That should be made to the industry. We are told, of course, by the Minister for Transport, that the Government guaranteed the price to be paid to the sugar industry. By way of interjection the Treasurer said the Government paid for the sugar, but he later amended that statement to guaranteeing the payment.

Mr. Pie: What would be their reason for holding it back?

Mr. BRAND: The only reason why it is being held back is that we have a new board and it will be able to pay it out on the 1944 proceeds. Otherwise I do not know why it should not be made. We are told that the Government guaranteed payment. This is the guarantee—that they will, on behalf of the sugar industry in Australia, accept responsibility for any loss arising from the exportation of surplus sugar from Australia. That is the agreement between the Commonwealth Government and the State. When speaking during another debate, the Minister for Transport said he could not understand why this obligation applied first in the agreement of 1925.

It is obvious that there was no need for it before 1925 because at that time we did not

export sugar. That practice was introduced only with the beginning of our export trade. In return for the Queensland Government's giving that guarantee, the Commonwealth Government guaranteed that no sugar would be imported, but I remind hon. members that as a result of their guarantee the State Government have not been called upon to pay one penny towards the board's operations. The board pays all costs out of the proceeds of the crop and returns the balance to the industry.

Mr. Pie: Who pays for the sugar that is stored?

Mr. BRAND: The Sugar Board, by arrangement with the C.S.R. Co. The C.S.R. Co. makes no charges for financing the export sugar.

Mr. Theodore: But you know that when sugar was sent overseas to be sold before the war the State Government had to stand any losses that might have been incurred.

Mr. BRAND: But the hon. member also knows that the Sugar Board, on behalf of the industry, pays insurance on all sugar sent overseas. If sugar is lost a claim is made on the insurance companies. The hon. member knows that has happened. Further, the Queensland Government have not been called upon to make up any deficiencies by losses in sugar. My point is that I should like to know from the Premier why a supplementary payment was not made for the 1943 crop. Recently the Tariff Board inquired into the prosperity of the sugar industry and satisfied itself that the raw-milling side of the industry had suffered a loss of £400,000 before paying income tax, and based its calculations on an average of the three normal seasons of 1936, 1937, and 1938. The industry then expected that instead of increasing the price of sugar the Commonwealth would grant a subsidy to make up for the losses. Anyone who has studied the industry during war years knows that as a result of war it has suffered many set-backs, and I see no reason why the Commonwealth Government should not do what they have done for other industries and make good the losses incurred.

(Time expired.)

Mr. McINTYRE (Cunningham) (3.25 p.m.): At the outset I wish to compliment the Treasurer upon the presentation of his first Budget. This is the first time I have had an opportunity of examining a Budget, and I have been interested not only in what is to be found in it but in everything that has been said about it.

Inexperienced as I am in political life, I cannot help thinking that many regrettable things have been said. To me it is to be regretted that some hon. members have not seen fit to extend to others the courtesy they claim for themselves. It must be remembered that each hon. member is sent here by the people of his electorate to represent them in Parliament and we should extend to him

every consideration and courtesy whether we agree with his political views or not.

Much has been said about prominent men in Labour and other public movements. These men already have great records of service and nothing that may be said here can make much difference to them one way or the other.

With the war on our hands we should be well advised to give our attention to its many problems and in a spirit of political co-operation endeavour collectively to measure up to the responsibilities that are ours in these troubled times. Sometimes we boast of the fact that no bombs have fallen on our land and that no foreign foot was set on our shores, but I sometimes wonder whether it would not have been better for us if a bomb or two had fallen here and there to inspire us to an appreciation of our responsibilities and our dependence one upon the other. I do not purpose to have much to say about the Budget. I do not think that money is the important factor that we are led to believe it is. After all, it is only a medium of exchange. Production and not money is the basis of real wealth. I intend to direct my remarks to the conditions that prevail on the food front. I am one of those who believe that the war is by no means nearing an end and that we still have a long way to go, although I think we can be heartened by some of the happenings in Europe in recent times. Some of the things that have occurred have been very encouraging, but they have brought about enormous problems that are now agitating the minds of many of our leading men. As I see it, our chief justification for the liberation of the suppressed countries is in our right and our ability to feed the people. It is an enormous problem. We have heard much down through the years concerning the severe food rationing that has operated in England, and this problem has been aggravated by the recent liberation of the peoples in Europe. The problem has become so serious that leading persons in our Empire have been called upon to make a world-wide survey to estimate what can be collected to meet the difficulties that confront us. This survey has been carried out by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, commonly known as U.N.R.R.A. We have a representative of that great organisation in our country endeavouring to find out what contribution we are able to make to the solution of this major problem. We also have a representative of the British Ministry of Food, in Mr. Bankes Amery, who has endeavoured to inspire us to a sense of our responsibilities in this direction, but I fear that his has been a voice crying in the wilderness and that we have not taken much notice of him. Estimates are being obtained and at the moment the Commonwealth is engaged in the finalising of long-term contracts to supply food to the British Government. Maximum targets have been set and quotas established and they are being passed on to the manufacturers, particularly those associated with the dairying industry, which is expected to make an important contribution to this great undertaking.

I am not going to offer any apology for the producers. I believe they have done a splendid job right through the piece, first in their response to arms when war broke out, which according to military statistics was greater in rural areas than elsewhere, so that the intake of man-power from such areas was relatively low later, when conscription was brought in. The producers have done a splendid job, not only at the moment, but right throughout the years. They have gone on producing despite many difficulties although they were more hindered than helped in their great undertaking by the leaders of the nation. As I study the Budget I find that little relief is suggested. That may not be desirable or wise but I believe that the producers should receive all the administrative help that it is possible to give them. After all, they cannot produce without the necessary implements. We had that demonstrated when the lowlands of Europe were overrun by our enemies, and the people were deprived of their essential implements of war.

There is on the food front a complete shortage of many essential requirements. When our Prime Minister recently returned from the Empire conferences he emphasised that one of our most important responsibilities was the production of food. The time is long overdue when we should establish a priority No. 1 for all the requirements of the primary industries. A dairy farmer cannot produce with a farm and dairy herd alone; he must of necessity have other things. These requirements are generally admitted but nothing worth while is being done beyond public statements, suggested planning and investigating. I can tell hon. members that our primary producers today are a very tired people. Old men who had retired have been brought back into the industry in an endeavour to stem the downward trend of production, which is a very serious thing.

Mr. Collins: That applies to all industries, too.

Mr. McINTYRE: That may be so. We regard this as one of our major and most important requirements for the successful prosecution of the war. If something is not done, and that quickly, there will be a collapse of our primary industry. We have been told again and again, particularly by some of our leading men, that we must dig for victory. We have been warned that the shortage of food might in the final result lead to our ultimate defeat. Therefore, our greatest contribution to this war is the contribution we can make in food not only to our fighting men, but to the starving peoples in the nations that are being liberated. To do that many things are required, particularly if we are going to stem the downward trend of production. Notwithstanding anything that may be said to the contrary we know that there is a depression going on all the time on the food front. All we have to do to confirm that statement is to study reliable statistics. One of the essential requirements, probably the first, is man-power. We should decide whether a man will

make a greater contribution to the war effort in the fighting forces or on the food front.

Mr. Devries: They cannot have it both ways.

Mr. McINTYRE: That is so, but is it not better to have a percentage providing food for those who are fighting? We have on many occasions been informed that an army marches on its stomach. What is more important when training a man to be a soldier and supplying him with the necessary arms and ammunition than providing him with food? Therefore, we must have men and we must have labour. I can speak from experience and say that one of the major distressing factors on the food front is the shortage of labour. Until we arrive at a practical understanding and make a common-sense approach to this important question we shall get nowhere. Another important matter for consideration is the supply of essential machinery of all kinds. There is a shortage of tractors, and our primary producers are crying out because of it. If anyone disbelieves that I ask him to interview Mr. Yore, who is in charge of the machinery control, who has a headache every day because of the problems he faces. There is an acute shortage of tractors.

Mr. Devries: He does a good job.

Mr. McINTYRE: He does a splendid job.

Another subject I wish to bring before this Committee is the supply of essential parts for that machinery and the tractors now operating. I know of one small garage in a primary-producing centre where eight tractors are tied up for the lack of certain parts, not large parts, but parts that are essential to keep them operating. These tractors are essential to save the wheat crop that is ripening on the Darling Downs. Nothing much is being done about it. I know one man who is agitated about this matter, and I will give his experience in order to show how the controls operate. He went to Sydney. He managed to find in a retail establishment one of the essential requirements necessary to put his machinery in working order. It was unobtainable in Queensland. After discovering it in a retail store in Sydney he sat down and wrote out an application for its release. He took it along to the department responsible. There he was "knocked back"—because he was an honest man. He gave his address on the form as Queensland.

The officer of the department said "As you are living in another State you cannot obtain the release." So he had to come back to Queensland and that unit of machinery is still waiting till somebody, somewhere, makes it possible for it to be transferred from a southern township to Queensland before he will be able to get his machinery operating.

Another very important factor in primary production is transport. There are many things associated with transport, including the vexed question of time. The Secretary for Public Works told us last week that we

could not get tyres because there is a war on. I say that we must have tyres for the very reason that there is a war on.

Mr. Bruce: Did the hon. member say that the Secretary for Public Works said that they could not get tyres because there was a war on?

Mr. McINTYRE: I meant the Minister for Transport, who said when speaking in this Chamber that no tyres were available because there was a war on. I believe that because there is a war on and because we have a priority job to do, we should have tyres. We should not mind so much, if we did not find that these essential requirements, so much needed in primary production, are being supplied for less important work. The other day a question was asked by the hon. member for East Toowoomba, the answer to which demonstrated that tyres were being made available for things that were less essential and important than primary production.

Mr. Cooper: How much rubber did you grow last year?

Mr. McINTYRE: I did not grow any.

Mr. Cooper: Of course you didn't; neither did anybody else in the British Empire.

Mr. McINTYRE: I am referring to not only tyres but other essential things, such as trucks and cars, and everything associated with transport. We find these things are acutely short, and that is a factor that is retarding production. We should not mind that except that we are told again and again, from those in a position to know, of the great importance of primary production and of food.

Another thing retarding production is the lack of good roads. Some hon. members have had no practical experience of the difficulties of transport on roads in our rural areas. I quote the case of a dairying company on the Downs that had to send 2,000 gallons of milk to Brisbane daily, in the winter when the milk position was agitating the minds of all thinking people. After a moderate fall of rain the road to the factory was in such a condition that the transport truck was pulled out of the bog half a dozen times, and arrived so late in the afternoon that it was too late to send the milk to the city. I suggest to the Government that something could be done by subsidising local authorities. As a result of representations made to this Parliament, and to the ex-Secretary for Agriculture and Stock, Mr. Bulcock, a sum of £30,000 was on one occasion made available to the dairying industry to subsidise a road-building programme. That is only a drop in the ocean. With the enormous surplus of money available in the Treasury, it is the duty of the Government to remedy this anomaly, by liberally subsidising our rural local authorities in order that they might build roads to help our primary production. When I speak about production, I do not confine it to this year or next year, but I

have in mind the contracts that extend over a long period of years. It will be many years before the world-wide food problem will be solved, therefore I contend that we should look ahead.

Another factor in primary production and land activities generally is prices. The Premier has just returned from the South, where he attended a conference at which the settling of soldiers on the land was considered. What happened in regard to the settling of soldiers on the land after the last war? Many things happened, but I know from practical experience that one of the major factors in the failure of the settlements was prices. I know that many soldiers were sent onto land that was non-productive, but many were sent onto land that was productive, and they produced a great deal, but the prices factor beat them all the way. Unless we have responsible administrators who will do something to solve the problem of prices in primary production, it is foolish for us to suggest settling soldiers on the land.

We can easily do a soldier an injustice by inducing him to go in for primary production and then failing to provide the wherewithal to make it an economic success. One of the major problems to which we must pay attention is the establishment of minimum prices for our primary products. As far as the dairying industry is concerned we are not complaining in that regard because we have a producers' organisation that has been looking after our requirements but if any hon. member is not satisfied as to the disabilities associated with primary production I ask him to study the report of the Royal Commission into the marketing of fruit and vegetables tabled here. He will find that the position is very serious. The least we can do is to take the necessary steps to establish a price that will cover cost of production plus a living wage for both employer and employee engaged in the industry and until that is done we may as well forget about inducing soldiers or anyone else to go on the land. That is justifiable for three reasons—wisdom, necessity and justice—and, as I said previously, one of the major factors in the failure of soldier settlements was price.

When addressing the Committee last week the hon. member for Gregory spoke on the basic wage in relation to our primary producers. There is a practice in the Public Service that is recognised as being sound, that a public servant receives a wage increase the farther he goes from the centre of commerce. The increase is progressive according to the distance he goes from the thickly populated centres. It is regarded in the light of allowance for increased cost of living. In primary activities the very opposite prevails: the further a man is from the centre of industry the greater premium he is asked to pay on everything he touches. There is a progressive rise according to the distance from the thickly populated centres. After all, wages can be gauged by not the actual money received but by its purchasing power. Judged on that standard there is a lower living wage in the rural areas than in towns. This could be overcome

to a large extent by the establishment of uniform prices for the State for a number of commodities. There are a number that lend themselves to this principle. Already such a principle is in operation in industry. The Toowoomba Foundry Co., which manufactures windmills and engines, has the same price for either Queensland or Western Australia. Other items are being brought under that principle and I think that in a number of instances a uniform price could be established and this would mean a uniform purchasing basis over the whole of this State.

Petrol lends itself to the application of this principle. On one occasion I received a lift in a motor-car from some men from the West. The nearer to the cities these men came the cheaper the petrol became and the louder they swore—the roads were better and the petrol was cheaper. Where they had come from they had to pay almost double the price for their petrol and had no road conveniences. They felt they had a grievance. In addition, the depreciation on a truck or motor-car out in those areas is infinitely greater than when the vehicle moves over bitumen roads. Something should be done about that.

It is little use criticising without offering something constructive in return. In the Federal sphere the War Advisory Council advises the Commonwealth Government on everything associated with our war activities.

We could set up in this State a committee comprising all sections of the House, to act in the capacity of a State Advisory Council. I have learnt since I have been here that no one section of the Assembly has a monopoly of the brains of Parliament or of constructive suggestions. The council I suggest could prepare comprehensive plans and consider proposals to be presented to the Federal authorities, and by that means we should get somewhere. The Federal Government were refused the powers they sought by way of referendum but something could be done by a State Advisory Council.

When dealing with the war housing scheme the other day the Secretary for Public Works spoke about the difficulties associated with our State scheme, indeed with housing schemes in general, and I agree with what he said. I point out, too, that the anomalies to which he referred as existing in Brisbane are common to the whole State. The housing position in all rural areas is acute. If we continue with the present scheme our housing problems will not be solved for many years, if ever, and we should explore every avenue of speeding up home-building. The State Advances Corporation could be used to the full and we should give favourable consideration to the construction of sections only of houses of approved types, the remainder to be completed later. This system has been a success in many of our public buildings and I see no reason why it could not be used with advantage in housing.

Our present Treasurer did a splendid job in helping our hospitals but we must have decentralisation of our health and hospital

facilities and special attention should be given to the requirements of rural areas.

Much has been said about rail transport and the deterioration that has taken place in our railways through the exigencies of war and shortage of supply, but in my opinion the war has given to the Queensland railways a monopoly of transport and it is the duty of those railways to give a standard of service and efficiency that will enable them to compete successfully with other forms of transport in the post-war period.

Since I have been in this Chamber I have noticed a general lack of knowledge of the wheat industry. Only a few days ago the hon. member for Warrego said that as far as he knew there were no restrictions on the wheat industry in Queensland. I disagree with that statement, just as I disagree with the statement he made last year and again this year that only one man had made a success of the fat-lamb industry. Whilst I do not wish to detract from that man's achievement I do wish to inform the hon. member for Warrego that dozens of men in my electorate have been eminently successful in that industry. The Cunningham electorate is the home of the fat-lamb industry and I invite the hon. member to repeat his statement there. If he does, I am afraid he will not return for some time.

I propose now to read one or two extracts from statements published in our local newspapers by prominent men in connection with the wheat industry. The first statement to which I wish to refer is one made by Mr. Scully, Minister for Commerce. This is the way he was reported last Thursday in Canberra:—

“He said the Australian Wheat Board estimated that the harvest would be 55,000,000 bushels, but State representatives attending the meeting of the Standing Committee on Agriculture took a more serious view, estimating that the crop would be no more than 48,000,000 bushels, the lowest since the drought year of 1914.

“Mr. Scully emphasised that an all-out effort would have to be made to produce all kinds of fodder and it might be necessary to adopt extraordinary means to achieve the objective.”

On top of that we have the following report of comments by Mr. Field, a member of the Australian Wheat Board—

“Sydney, Monday.—Because of the serious decline in production, it may not be possible to send any more wheat overseas. Mr. Ernest Field, a member of the Australian Wheat Board, told the executive of the Farmers and Settlers' Association in Sydney. Already, he said, it was certain that the wheat would have to be brought from South Australia and Western Australia for Sydney flour mills, and it looked as if the power alcohol plant at Cowra would have to close.”

It is to be regretted that our own Secretary for Agriculture and Stock should have had to go south to take orders concerning the

control of the wheat industry in Queensland. Here is a report of his comments—

“Mr. Williams said that admittedly, drought conditions in the Southern States had been more than any other factor or combination of factors a potential cause in restricting the areas planted and the ultimate yield this year.

“But, for all that, there had been a steady decline in acreage plantings over the past few years from approximately 12 million acres in 1941 to 8½ millions in the 1943-44 season.

“In a corresponding manner the actual wheat yield had declined from 153 million bushels to 94 million bushels over the same period, on top of which steady decline came the enormous drop to 48 million bushels for the current season.”

There are several reasons for the drop in the production of wheat from 153,000,000 bushels in the first year of the introduction or the imposition of the Wheat Industry Stabilisation Scheme to 48,000,000 bushels. All I can say is that it is attributable to the application of the scheme. The Queensland Government should have strongly advised the Commonwealth authorities to leave Queensland out of the scheme.

Perhaps it would be as well to tell hon. members something about the scheme. Licences and quotas were established. A grower got a licence to grow so much wheat and a quota, too, whereby he was to be paid 4s. a bushel for the first 3,000 bushels and after that a first payment of only 2s. a bushel. It has been said by hon. members opposite that the Queensland Government stabilised the wheat industry in this State but records show that over a period of 19 years, including the depression period, the State Wheat Board, acting independently of the Commonwealth, returned to the wheat-growers of Queensland an average net price of 4s. 7½d. a bushel. Is it any wonder that after the imposition of a stabilisation scheme production should decline in Queensland? What is more, consumption increased and still nothing was done to remedy the position. We know that we have been short of many essential requirements and we have been told time and again that transport is one of our major problems but right down through this period it has been necessary for the Queensland Wheat Board to satisfy the demands in this State by transporting from the Southern States an average of 2,400 tons of wheat a week continuously. That was the minimum amount all the time and inquiries at the State Wheat Board's office in Toowoomba show that there is a serious lag in the supplying of orders for essential requirements. Today our local wheat supply is exhausted and from now on it will become necessary to transport from 1,000 to 1,100 tons of wheat daily from the South in an attempt to supply essential requirements. The supplies in New South Wales and Victoria are no longer available to us and so our requirements must be drawn from South Australia and Western Australia. I want to issue this warning—that should there be

a holdup in the transport of this wheat, even for only a short time, there will be no wheat to grist in Queensland at all.

It would surprise hon. members, and perhaps wake them up to their responsibilities, if some morning when they went to the baker's shop they found no bread to be bought.

When the position became serious in Queensland the Minister for Commerce, Mr. Scully, in an attempt to lift wheat production in Queensland, decided to increase the licences. He made an offer to the producers of Queensland that licences might be increased. These additional licences were only temporary—this is the unfortunate aspect of the offer. The granting of additional licences did not necessarily carry increased quotas. Therefore the wheat producers were expected to keep on producing, and increase their production, at a price that was not a payable one. Before the producer could get a quota it was necessary for him to give an assurance that he had a plant of his own to grow and harvest the additional wheat. Those who know anything about the production of wheat know that a plant capable of handling 3,000 bushels of wheat is capable of handling 10,000 bushels. The idea, in fact the suggestion, was that the producer should be obliged to carry additional plant for every 3,000 bushels of wheat that he produced on a payable price basis. It was a most ridiculous suggestion. Naturally, the farmers did not respond.

What did the Minister for Commerce say then? He said he would acquire their properties and rent them to others to produce the wheat. He was challenged in the Federal House to put his plan into operation, but he never undertook to do so, nor could he do so. I wonder what the hon. member for Windsor would say if the suggestion was put up to him that he could produce so much in his factory at a payable price, and beyond that he must manufacture at a loss. If, however, he desired another quota at a payable price he would be compelled to provide another complete plant. The thing is ridiculous. The only way to overcome the present difficulty is to abolish wheat stabilisation and control in Queensland altogether. The only logical and sensible thing to do until Queensland can grow sufficient wheat for its own requirements is to act along those lines.

Another aspect that is operating in the Wheat Board's administration that is very unfair to the primary producers is the fact that we have a system of payment of subsidies in relation to certain primary products. Wheat is being supplied to some of those industries to boost production. Perhaps it is the correct thing to offer subsidies to those industries but it is iniquitous to ask the wheat industry to finance those subsidies. If for national reasons it is necessary to subsidise certain industries, why should the wheat industry find the finance for such subsidies? It is a national responsibility. I charge the Queensland Government with a lack of the necessary courage to move to get these anomalies rectified. What they have done,

not only during this period but towards the wheat industry in the past, has been deplorable. I have only to hark back to the time when the wheat-growers in Queensland decided to establish their own co-operative milling establishment. They required money to do so. They came to this Government, asked for the necessary financial assistance, and met with a blank refusal. Evidently the Government were not interested in primary production or in fostering the co-operative movement. Despite that refusal, the wheat-growers launched out on this venture without Government assistance.

Mr. Hilton: The growers did not know where they were until the Government established the Wheat Board.

Mr. McINTYRE: This venture was launched a dozen years after the Wheat Board was established. The growers established a co-operative milling venture, despite the opposition of the Government.

Mr. Hanlon: There was never Government opposition to that project.

Mr. McINTYRE: I will tell the hon. gentleman where the opposition was. Some years ago, just about the time the co-operative mill was established and a Wheat Board election was pending, we had a man—or men—in the industry who was regarded as a leader. He represented the primary producers on both the Wheat Board and the co-operative mill. The then Secretary for Agriculture and Stock issued a regulation or proclamation to the effect that this man could not be a director on a co-operative mill at the same time as he occupied a position on the Queensland Wheat Board.

Mr. Hanlon: That may have a different meaning altogether.

Mr. McINTYRE: That is the position. The hon. gentleman may apply the meaning. That regulation had the effect of disqualifying him and depriving the wheat-growers of the benefit of his services on the Wheat Board. Not only did the Government do that but they made the effect of the regulation retrospective and applicable to any man who had been associated with milling interests in the previous 12 months.

Mr. Hilton: He tried to stop you people from selling yourselves out.

Mr. McINTYRE: Let that be as it may. I was appointed to come here as a member of a deputation to the then Secretary for Agriculture and Stock. We informed him that we conceded that a man could not be a buyer and a seller, but we asked him to cut out the retrospective part of it and let the wheat-growers decide whether their key man would represent them on the Wheat Board or the co-operative mill.

Mr. Hanlon: You admit the falsehood when you say you admitted that a man could not be a buyer and a seller.

Mr. McINTYRE: We said we conceded it. I admitted nothing. I said we conceded that. We asked the then Minister to cut out

the retrospective part and let the wheat-growers decide whether their man would represent them on the co-operative mill board or on the Wheat Board, and he refused to do it. The result was that two of the key men were debarred from contesting that election. A Wheat Board election took place, and the Minister in his wisdom rightly or wrongly decided that there was not a man elected by the producers who was capable of being chairman of the Wheat Board, and he appointed a man to the position, who was disqualified under the Minister's own proclamation from contesting the Wheat Board election, a man who had not only been associated with the milling industry during the previous 12 months but had been associated with a milling industry that went broke during that period. He increased his salary by £350 a year and asked the wheat-growers to pay it. That is typical of the sympathy extended to the wheat-growers by this Government. Unfortunately, the wheat-growers had no opportunity to express their views on the matter until quite recently. Not only did Mr. Bulecock appoint this man as chairman of the Wheat Board, but he also appointed him as the Queensland representative on the Australian Wheat Board; and he also decided that at the end of 12 months the wheat-growers should have the opportunity of saying who should represent them. In the early part of this year the wheat-growers had that opportunity. What did they do? I advise hon. members to consult the results of that election. They dumped him and put another man in. It was not so much a vote against that man as it was an expression of resentment against the treatment they had received in the past from the Government of this State.

I do not know much about the coal industry, and I hope I shall never be guilty of making ill-informed and ill-advised statements about any industry, but I do say that if the same injustices exist in the coal industry as exist in the primary-producing industries we should have stop-work meetings and strikes that would shake the foundations of this country. The primary producers could do that, but they are too big to do it under war conditions. They have their sons and brothers in Singapore and they have others fighting the ruthless enemy; and they realise their responsibility to measure up to the requirements of the nation and find the wherewithal to feed these men. They are too big to cease work, but as I said before if the same injustices existed in the coal and other industrial activities there would certainly be a major hold-up.

Mr. LUCKINS (Maree) (4.15 p.m.): I am pleased to have an opportunity of discussing the Treasurer's Financial Statement.

First I wish to express my thanks and appreciation of the great service rendered to this State by our fighting services. We hope they will be in a position to return very soon after completing the job they have undertaken.

I wish to refer to one outstanding fact in world affairs—I expected the Premier to mention it—the National Day of China, the

thirty-third birthday of the foundation of the republic. I pay my respects to the Chinese for their efforts to liberate this world from the oppressors.

Most of the speakers in the debate have dealt with subjects that were very interesting and very important to the welfare of this State. First of all I congratulate the Treasurer on his elevation to that position. I think it will tax his ability through the coming year. Income for the past year was £28,000,000. That is now being reduced by £3,000,000 and he has budgeted for £25,000,000 to carry on the essential services of this State. I foresee a drop in revenue in many directions, one of the most important being the railways. The Budget anticipates a drop in income of £3,000,000 and in expenditure of £1,057,000 in the Railways. There are many important votes in the Budget, as set out by the Treasurer, some showing increases and a very few decreases. One in particular is balanced well, there being only a few hundred pounds difference, that of the Department of Justice. A similar remark applies to the Department of Health and Home Affairs, but I wish to deal with one or two items that call for attention and explanation in the Treasurer's own department.

The first and most important is the £48,860 for the Legislative Assembly and the £33,000 odd for contingencies. For special services of the Unemployment Insurance Fund there is a grant of £130,000. Why the Treasurer should earmark that amount of consolidated revenue to increase the amount of £2,128,000 already in credit in the Unemployment Insurance Fund is beyond me. I do not know whether it is the peculiar method of the Treasurer of this State to put away in some fund or other amounts of this kind for a rainy day so that he will have in the near future a substantial reserve in the fund to draw on for other services. I certainly should like an explanation. We are entitled to know why £130,000 has been earmarked from Consolidated Revenue to fortify the £2,128,000 already in credit in the Unemployment Insurance Fund. I shall be glad to have that explanation because the purpose is not set out, except that it is for special services. Last year £190,000 was set aside from revenue for that purpose. Am I right in forecasting that during this Financial Year the Commonwealth Government will take over that department and if so, will they ask for the amount of £2,000,000-odd pounds in credit?

I am concerned about the increase of expenditure on contingencies in the Chief Secretary's Department. The amount may be essential but it requires explanation. Why have the contingencies been increased from £66,000 to £99,820? These are very large amounts of money to appear under this heading and the public are entitled to know how, when and where the money is expended. If there is necessity for such a large amount it is essential that we should have a very clear and concise balance sheet in the Budget. I have always complained about these things; no remark or explanation is attached to the Estimates.

I observe in the vote for the Department of Health and Home Affairs a decrease of £10,000 and I presume most of this is due to the decrease in the A.R.P. fund. At this stage I ask if the Minister has decided to disband the A.R.P. in all its personnel or whether he will fulfil the promise given by the former Minister to call these men together and thank them personally for the great services they have rendered to this State. I understand that in another vote an amount is set aside also for A.R.P. work and I am wondering what amount is set aside for the chief warden for the period under review.

The amount for hospitals is decreased by £100,000. I can understand that because I believe the Commonwealth Government propose contributing a certain amount towards this service, but I should like the Minister to enlarge on what is actually proposed in this direction. Again, I should like to know if he has any definite proposal in mind for the building of a public hospital on the south side of the Brisbane River, in South Brisbane in particular, where 42 per cent. of the city's population resides. Such a service is essential in that area.

I am glad to know that provision for the lazaret has been increased. I have spoken on the conditions at Peel Island and my efforts have been rewarded by the fact that the sum to be made available has been increased by £3,600. I should like to know if the electricity and water services that were promised 7 or 8 years ago are likely to become realities during this financial year. As the unfortunate inmates are placed in the lazaret in the interests of society, it is the Government's duty to see to it that they get the best possible conditions.

The amount to be appropriated for the police has been increased by £44,000 and this is only a just reward to the police for their services. The policeman is still suffering, however, in that his conditions are not what I should like them to be. Last year I referred to the fact that policemen got one day a fortnight off in lieu of overtime. I should like to see them paid for the overtime worked. If our police force is to continue to be one of the best and most efficient in Australia the men must be treated properly and remunerated suitably for their services. Here I should like to draw the Minister's attention to the fact that the traffic police receive 1s. a day more than the ordinary police and I cannot understand the reason for it. They both do a fine job and they should receive the same rate of pay.

Mr. Hanlon: The Police Union understands.

Mr. LUCKINS: I do not understand it and I should like to know the reason why there is this difference in pay. It should also concern the Labour Party because one of the planks of their platform to which I subscribe is that an injury to one should be the concern of all.

In the vote for Department of Public Works there has been an increase of £850 in contingencies. Again, I should like to know what the contingencies are. I do not

think that it can be said that there are likely to be any extra contingencies over those of last year. The Treasurer should set out in detail what these increases are for.

Then there is an increase of £4,000 in the contingencies item of the vote for local government.

Mr. Hanlon: All those figures will come before you when the departments are being discussed.

Mr. LUCKINS: But we do not get them in detail. I am not suggesting anything ulterior in these increases but I should like to know exactly what they are for.

If this amount is for increased salaries, wages, allowances or other items, I am entitled to know it. I should be delighted to go through the accounts with the Treasurer, and I give him the assurance that I shall regard all items other than those of a public nature as being confidential.

Coming to the Department of Labour and Employment, I am reminded that the Co-ordination of Employment Facilities Act of 1941 was the pet subject of the former Minister in charge of the department, now the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs. The Estimates disclose, under the heading of "The Co-ordination of Employment Facilities Act of 1941" that there is a staff of three, and that a sum of £2,000 is required for contingencies. The staff absorb an amount of £1,660 for salaries, independent of the £2,000, but an amount of £2,000 is required to meet the cost of stamps, fares, overtime and other items. Might I here mention, by way of comparison, that in the Public Service Commissioner's Department an amount of £2,160 is required for contingencies, where the staff number 29? I should like to know why an amount of £2,000 is required for contingencies where there is a staff of three, when £2,160 is regarded as sufficient where there is a staff of 29.

I am pleased to note that for the Chief Office, Department of Justice, the amount required this year is only about £370 in excess of the amount appropriated last year. That is excellent budgeting, and I commend the officer responsible for it. We might feel that there are innumerable difficulties in the way of budgeting for a department, but the experts who have a thorough knowledge of its requirements can budget pretty close to the mark. And as I say, it is excellent budgeting in the case of this department, and I compliment the officer concerned.

Coming to the Treasury, I should like first of all to compliment the Treasurer on his appointment to that new office. Somehow I feel that he will have some difficulty in balancing the Budget in the two years to come. Under the heading of "Contingencies" there is an amount of £150,000 for this year, an additional amount to meet salary increases of all departments, excluding the Railway Department. I want to make particular note of the fact that it says "excluding Railway Department."

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I should like to draw the attention of the hon. member to the fact that the items he is now discussing are contained in the Estimates, and that they will come up for discussion when the Estimates are before the Committee. I should also like to mention that "May" says at page 526 that the details should be discussed on the Estimates in Committee. The hon. member is out of order in discussing these items in detail now.

Mr. LUCKINS: I regret to note that the assistance to cotton-growers has been reduced by £22,000. The cotton industry should be encouraged, and it should be the aim of the Government to give it all the financial help that they can. However, the Government have not seen fit to provide the money that will be required to foster this important industry and to carry out research work associated with it.

It has been publicly stated by responsible Ministers that the Government proposed to carry out a reclassification of Public Service positions, and in common with many other hon. members I await the new classification to find out the actual intentions of the Government. I was delighted to hear the hon. member for Toowoomba draw attention to the serious position in the Public Service, and I am right behind him in his advocacy for a better and improved service.

If there is one thing we desire more than another it is to bring this State to the forefront. That can be done only if our public servants are not disgruntled and dissatisfied with their conditions. That can be achieved only by permitting them to qualify themselves for the highest posts in the service and if they are paid wages or salaries in keeping with what is being paid in private industry for similar services. It has been peculiar to this Government for a long time past that they have given niggardly compensation to public servants for the services they render. Recently they found it necessary to increase the classification of the Under Secretary of the Department of Health and Home Affairs. He was receiving only a niggardly salary for the important and onerous work he was doing. The public servants have been very disturbed over their conditions. I had expected before now that the Government would be prepared to pay the men and women in the service salaries in keeping with the importance of their work and payments for similar work in private industry. The hon. member for Toowoomba admitted that private enterprise had attracted some very promising officials from the service. That is a terrible indictment of the Government. We require the best brains in our administration and unless the public servants get rewards commensurate with the duties they discharge this practice of attracting the most promising from their ranks into private enterprise will continue.

The Budget reflects an increased appropriation for the Department of Public Instruction of £241,000. That to my mind will not reward the great body of employees in this department as they deserve. I want

to see our State school teachers well rewarded to compensate them for their long studies to qualify to educate our children to the highest standards. That cannot be accomplished if 70 per cent. of them are receiving less than £300 per annum. That is not a living wage in accordance with my standards, taking into consideration the present high cost of living. That is a matter that should have been taken notice of by the Director-General of Education. It should be his business to see that his staff, who are well qualified, are rewarded by the payment of more than £6 a week. It is a scandalous state of affairs that men with such exceptional educational qualifications should receive the miserable pittance, in many cases, of less than £6 a week. Many of them are married men. Attention must be focused on this matter to compel the Government to take action at an early date to see that these men and women are fittingly rewarded for the splendid services they render. Not so long ago students at the Teachers' Training College were receiving, under this Labour Government, a weekly allowance of 5s., which under public pressure was increased to 15s. I now ask the Minister to investigate the practice of sending these trainees to relieve in State Schools, without any reward whatsoever if the period does not exceed eight days. It is true that they are entitled to receive some reward on the ninth day but it invariably happens that they are transferred before that day, merely to relieve the department of the payment of the fee. It is tragic that these students are denied even this little bit of consideration when the department might show its appreciation of their services by making some payment, which would help in meeting present high costs of living. I am amazed that this Government should permit that practice. I am further amazed to think that the Director-General permits it. There are men in camps engaged in war work today earning up to £10 and £12 a week on unskilled work yet 70 per cent. of our school teachers, who are compelled to study intensively to qualify for the posts they hold, are receiving under £6 a week.

That calls for attention, and I am going to hammer at these things until there is a rectification of the evil. I feel, like many others, that if it has been an oversight on the part of the Government, the matter should be quickly settled so that the people who have served long terms may be rewarded.

In regard to superannuation, one unit entitles a person to draw £1 a week on retiring, and that denies them the right to the old-age pension, which is 27s. a week.

Only recently a question was asked about the remuneration of the string quartette band set up by the department. Two or three of these members receive £10 a week and the leader £15 a week. Let us compare the value to the children of the musical education provided by this band with the education given by the teacher. One teacher gets £6 a week after qualifying to teach the children on many subjects, and the other receives up to £15 a week for playing an

instrument. It is very obvious that if the quartette is worth £10 to £15 a week the teacher must be worth something more. The teacher works longer hours and in many cases it is very difficult to find suitable accommodation for young girls who are sent out to the country. I know the department has been faced with difficulties in giving the children of distant parts the education they require.

The Budget the Treasurer is budgeting this year is for £3,000,000 less revenue and £1,057,000 less expenditure in the railways. I notice there is provision for an increase in the Railway Department, Chief Office, to the extent of £17,500, and I would like to know whether any provision has been made for an increase in the wages staff who have done such a wonderful job during the last three years. I take off my hat and bow to these men who have rendered signal service to the department and the State. I think a claim for an increase in salary and an improvement in living conditions should receive further consideration at the hands of the Government.

I advocated subways many years ago. The Town Planner and the Government should get together on the matter. A tribute could be paid to the returned soldiers, sailors, airmen, and members of the women's auxiliaries if the Government resumed the block of land opposite the Treasury Building bounded by George and Queen streets and North Quay to the Supreme Court on which a fine monument in the form of a garden could be established to commemorate the gallant men and women who served the nation.

The many excellent areas of Queensland have been spoken about by members generally. I am pleased the hon. member for Gregory spoke so much of his area. It is helpful to hear members who will enlighten us on the difficulties that confront settlers in those distant parts. In contrast with the hon. member for Gregory I represent one of the very smallest areas in Queensland—I suppose in about a quarter of an hour I could walk from one end to the other—but I realise the difficulties of members who have large areas to traverse. I shall always do anything I can to further the interests of the western and northern people who have contributed so much to the progress of Queensland and have played their part in maintaining decent wages and conditions for our younger generation.

In conclusion I urge that the Government seriously consider the introduction sooner or later of tourist bureaus and the appointment of trade commissioners in different parts of the world. This is essential if we are to develop our secondary industries. Taxation is so high in Queensland today that I hope it will not go higher until some reward has been given to secondary industries and other essential services that have played a prominent part in bringing to the Treasury of Queensland the money that it is receiving today.

Mr. TAYLOR (Maranoa) (4.46 p.m.): I join with other members of this Assembly in congratulating you on attaining the high

position that you have reached, Mr. Mann, and I feel sure that you will discharge your duties in a very capable manner. To the Treasurer also I pay a compliment, on an excellent Budget. All hon. members must be pleased that the financial affairs of the State are in such a prosperous and good position. I am sure that as time goes on the Treasurer will carry out his duties, in a way that will be pleasing to all.

I have listened to some very good speeches in this Committee and I was particularly impressed by those of the hon. members for Gregory, Barcoo and Warrego. They put the case for more consideration and a better deal for the inland parts of the State in a very statesmanlike way. We people who have lived our lives in the back country know the possibilities of the State and are sure that given an opportunity these areas can be developed considerably. The area I am proud to represent in this Parliament has possibilities equal to any other if it gets the assistance it requires in many ways. This afternoon the hon. member for Cunningham mentioned that the hon. member for Warrego had said that one gentleman raised virtually all the fat lambs in Queensland. For the information of that hon. member I would tell him that in good seasons only 14,000 fat lambs are raised in Queensland—probably the average is 11,000—and when one considers that one good sized freezing works would slaughter that number in one day, one realises that the hon. member for Warrego cannot be accused of making a mis-statement.

The same hon. member also told this Committee of the splendid water available for woolscouring. The water in Roma and the adjacent areas to be found in unlimited quantities is equal to any water in Queensland in cleansing properties. Without fear of contradiction I say that Roma or Mitchell is ideally situated for wool scours which are long overdue. In the not far distant years the towns of the Maranoa will be among the largest inland towns because they have everything to encourage industry. I am sure that all members will agree that if this or any other State is to prosper, prosperity must first be evident in the pastoral areas; then only can city dwellers hope to remain in constant and full-time employment.

The education of children away from the coast areas will have to receive consideration. The children in the back country are as intelligent as those of the city, but so far they have not had the same educational facilities, and I am glad to know that the Government intend to do something for them. The children of the boundary rider, the shearer and the bush worker should have the means of getting the same education as the city children. Unfortunately that is not the position today but I believe that in the very near future something will be done by the Government to rectify it.

It has been said that water is life. We have many rivers suitable for weiring and locking, and one of the first duties of this or any other Government is to prepare plans for carrying out this work as soon as man-power

is available after the cessation of hostilities. Land settlement will play an important part in the development of Queensland and I believe that the Government have a very attractive programme to offer. In the Maranoa electorate we have large areas of land close to the rail-head and within easy reach of markets, that are suitable for closer settlement, but the people on the land will have to receive more help. If help is offered and land-owners do not take advantage of it, then the land should be taken from them and given to others who will bring it to full production.

Again, the days when we can neglect to provide for the people in the outback areas some of the amenities provided for city dwellers are gone. If we are to encourage people to return to and remain on the land in these areas, we shall have to give them every possible amenity. The hon. member for Gregory has told us already about the high cost of living in these areas. When I tell hon. members that what can be bought for 14s. in Brisbane costs £1 in parts of my electorate, they will readily see the great disadvantage at which these people are placed, and if when this war is over we expect people to return to the back country, a good deal of consideration will have to be given to this matter.

Much has been said about the wool industry. We all agree that it is the most important industry in the State, and it must get every help and encouragement to expand. In my opinion this can be done only by establishing in the back country such industries as meat works, wool scours and other industries connected with beef and wool production. I believe that these works can be carried out only if we conserve our water resources and make it possible to bring our fertile lands to maximum productivity. In the area I represent, there are wonderful opportunities for the weiring of our rivers. On a previous occasion I spoke here about the ease with which the river at St. George could be locked. The cost of this work would not be great.

A splendid weir with an excellent foundation could be constructed at that site to impound a very useful body of water. I am told by experts in irrigation and water conservation that the most difficult problem in these schemes is in getting firm foundations for dams and retaining walls but at St. George we have such a foundation and I hope that this will be one of the first projects to be considered by the Government. In travelling throughout the Maranoa one can find many small streams, creeks and rivers that lend themselves to the construction of irrigation works and I firmly believe that it is only by the locking of these streams and thereby impounding a more or less permanent supply of water that the back country will be developed and become prosperous.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 5 p.m.