

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER 1946**

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**TUESDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER, 1946.**

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

**QUESTIONS.**

**ARREARS OF STATE TAXES.**

**Mr. BRAND** (Isis) asked the Treasurer—

“1. What is the amount (or estimated amount) of income taxation, including State development tax, which was collectable by the State, but unpaid, when uniform taxation commenced to operate?”

“2. What was the understanding between the Commonwealth and State Governments regarding such amount?”

**Hon. J. LARCOMBE** (Rockhampton) replied—

“1. £846,481. This amount does not represent the full arrears of income taxation payable to the State under the relative Acts up to 30 June, 1942, as assessments for £317,712 were issued since that date, making the total assessments to 30 June, 1946, £1,164,193.

“2. The understanding of the Queensland Government is that an amount equal to the arrears of income taxation collected by the Commonwealth will be payable to the States when the Uniform Taxation Scheme and law terminate. This opinion is supported by the Solicitor-General of Queensland (Mr. W. G. Hamilton).”

**RICE-GROWING IN QUEENSLAND.**

**Mr. THEODORE** (Herbert) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“In view of the announcement which appeared in the “Telegraph” of 28 August in respect to the Wakool rice-growing project and the fact that in North Queensland there are large areas of land suitable for rice-growing and adequate water supplies available for irrigation, has his department any plans for the production of rice in Queensland?”

**Hon. H. H. COLLINS** (Cook) replied—

“A small supply of a number of varieties of rice seed has now been received from overseas. After adequate stocks of this seed have been built up tests will be made of the suitability of Queensland conditions for rice-growing.”

**DEVELOPMENT OF BLAIR ATHOL COAL-MINE; GASIFICATION OF COAL IN THE SEAM.**

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Murrumba—Leader of the Opposition) asked the Secretary for Mines—

“1. Has the committee appointed in 1945 to investigate the possibilities of the Blair Athol coalfield or the Commonwealth-State Commission ascertained the cost of production of coal at that place by the open-cut method? If so, what is the cost loaded on railway trucks at Blair Athol?”

“2. Have any investigations been made into the process of gasification of coal in the seam? If so, what are the findings? If not, will he consider the desirability of securing expert advice on this matter as a possible method of lessening the coal shortage, particularly in respect of small seams which are difficult and costly to work by the ordinary methods?”

**Hon. V. C. GAIR** (South Brisbane) replied—

“1. The cost of production of coal on the Blair Athol coalfield by large-scale open-cut operations has not yet been determined. The price of coal being produced at present by the open-cut method is 16s. 9d. per ton loaded on railway trucks at Blair Athol. The question of the examination of methods for converting operations to a fully mechanised basis for large-scale production, which it is considered would materially reduce the costs of production, is at present under discussion with the Commonwealth Government.

“2. Inquiries have been made regarding investigations in other parts of the world of underground gasification of coal. The information secured was confidential, but it may be stated that it was such as to indicate that there were no immediate prospects for commercial application of the technique.”

**SECRET SESSIONS, PREMIERS' CONFERENCE.**

**Mr. WANSTALL** (Toowong): Before I ask the next question standing to my name, I desire to point out that it has been altered. I now ask the Premier the following question standing to my name on the business sheet:—

“Referring to his answer of 28 August to the Leader of the Opposition that all sessions of the Premiers' Conference excepting one were open to the Press, is it not a fact that secret sessions were held for the discussion of the following matters:—(i.) Wheat Stabilisation Scheme; (ii.) rise in building costs; and (iii.) coal supplies?”

**Hon. E. M. HANLON** (Ithaca) replied—

“Yes.”

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! Before proceeding further with the questions, I wish to remind hon. members of the proper procedure with regard to questions. My duties are clear and definite. The Speaker exercises a general censorship over notices, particularly of questions to Ministers, and satisfies himself that any motion is in order before he puts a question upon it. As to the alteration to the question referred to by the hon. member for Toowong, some of that portion which was deleted was redundant. Another part made reference to a secret session of the Premiers' Conference, which, in the interests of the nation, I have exercised my right of deleting.

## STOCK INSPECTIONS, STANLEY ELECTORATE.

**Mr. MACDONALD** (Stanley) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“Is it a fact that a stock inspector, whose district is within the Stanley electorate, is denied access to a certain cattle property situated therein, and that inspections of this property are made by an inspector from another district? If so, is his department a consenting party to this irregular method of inspection?”

**Hon. H. H. COLLINS** (Cook) replied—

“Inspectors of stock by virtue of the powers vested in them by the Diseases in Stock Acts have the right of entry to any property for the legitimate performance of their duties. Inspections of stock located within a district supervised by an inspector of stock are normally carried out by that inspector, and I am not aware of any departure from that procedure within the Stanley electorate.”

## HOMES BUILT BY STATE HOUSING COMMISSION.

**Mr. DECKER** (Sandgate) asked the Secretary for Public Works—

“1. What was the number of houses built—(a) by and for the Housing Commission, and (b) privately—in each month for the months April to July inclusive?

“2. Is the present flow of building materials such as to indicate that the current rate of building will be maintained?”

**Hon. H. A. BRUCE** (The Tableland) replied—

“1. The figures for rental houses built by or for the Housing Commission and home purchase houses built by contractors for people who have obtained advances from the Housing Commission are as follows:—

(a) Completed—

Period.	Rental.	Home Purchase.	Total.
April ..	9	28	37
May ..	10	15	25
June ..	9	31	40
July ..	34	29	63

In addition to above completed houses, the end of the month totals of houses released for construction, but not completed, were—

Period.	Rental.	Home Purchase.	Total.
April ..	438	228	666
May ..	441	231	672
June ..	451	214	665
July ..	443	217	660

The above answer is based on the assumption that Mr. Decker is seeking information as to houses built under the State Housing Act—that is to say, houses built by and for the Housing Commission for rental, and houses built on account of private owners.

(b) If, by ‘privately,’ Mr. Decker means houses built in Queensland other than under the State Housing Act, the information is not available in this office.

“2. Yes.”

## PRICE CONTROL.

**Mr. PIE** (Windsor) asked the Premier—

“Is it a fact that, following agreement reached at the Premiers’ Conference, this Parliament will be asked to pass legislation delegating price control power to the Commonwealth Government, thus enabling it to continue indefinitely the present administration of controls after the date of repeal of the existing regulations?”

**Hon. E. M. HANLON** (Ithaca) replied—

“For the protection of the people from operations of unscrupulous profiteers, a Constitutional Convention of representatives of the Commonwealth Government and the Opposition in the Federal Parliament, and also the Premiers and Leaders of the Opposition of all the State Parliaments, held at Canberra in November and December, 1942, unanimously agreed to refer price control and profiteering to the Commonwealth for a period of five years after Australia ceased to be engaged in hostilities. Subsequently, the Queensland and New South Wales Parliaments transferred these powers in accordance with the decisions of the Convention, but in the other States the Governments were prevented from carrying out their undertaking by the political allies of the hon. member for Windsor, who control the Upper House in the other States. Price control has since been continued under the National Security Regulations, but as these regulations will expire at the end of this year, the recent conference of Premiers again unanimously affirmed the principle that price control should be continued, and the implementation of the machinery to give effect to the matter is to be examined by the Commonwealth and State legal officers.”

**Mr. Pie:** Surely it is an abuse of privilege, Mr. Speaker?

## ADDRESS IN REPLY.

FURTHER EXTENSION OF TIME FOR DEBATE.

**Hon. E. M. HANLON** (Ithaca—Premier): I move—

“That under the provisions of Standing Order No. 17 the period allotted to debate on the Address in Reply be further extended to eight full sitting days.”

Motion agreed to.

## PAPER.

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Balance-sheet of the Queensland Trustees Limited as at 30 June, 1946.

## ADDRESS IN REPLY.

## RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—SEVENTH ALLOTTED DAY.

Debate resumed from 29 August (see page 264) on Mr. Wood's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

**Hon. E. M. HANLON** (Ithaca—Premier), (11.15 a.m.), who was received with "Hear, hears," said: First of all I desire to extend my congratulations to the mover and seconder of this Address in Reply to the Speech of the Lieutenant-Governor. Hon. members will agree that the Government are fortunate in having two recruits in the one session who have delivered such fine opening speeches and given indication of such excellent debating ability. They will be a welcome addition to this Chamber. Both these hon. members in their opening speeches gave indication that they are going to be very valuable members of Parliament.

I want to express my pleasure at the appointment by His Majesty the King of Sir John Lavarack to the position of Governor of this State of Queensland.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. HANLON:** The appointment will be received with pleasure by every section of the people of Queensland, particularly by the ex-service men. It is indicative of the broadening outlook of the Imperial Government that a departure has been made this year in the appointment to two vacant positions in Australia of Australian citizens. Further, the appointment of General Freyberg as Governor-General of New Zealand, which also has taken place recently, and the appointment of a local man to the position of Governor-General of South Africa, are additional indications in that direction. For many years periodic requests have been made by the various Governments in Australia to the Dominion Office in London—on one occasion five Governments made a combined request—for the appointment of Australian citizens to the position of Governor, but a departure from custom has been frowned upon for many years. It is pleasing to see that recognition of the full stature of the various Dominions of the British Empire has at last come about.

I want to make it quite clear that in this matter the object of the party I have the honour to lead today has never been in any way to reflect on the capacity, loyalty or service to the State of previous appointees to the office. Some very brilliant men have been appointed from London to be Governors of Queensland. On every occasion the political party to which I belong has extended every possible courtesy to those gentlemen and given every possible aid to them. We have, however, always felt that any post at the disposal of His Majesty should be open to every citizen of every section of the Empire. We as Australian citizens have always taken the view that we would not take second place to anybody either for loyalty or ability and capacity to faithfully serve our country.

It is very pleasing to see that this appointment has been made. I am sure that when Sir John Lavarack arrives here some weeks hence to take up his appointment he will receive as cordial a welcome as any other appointee.

**Mr. Pie:** That appointment was made on your recommendation?

**Mr. HANLON:** No, such appointments are made by His Majesty on the recommendation of the Imperial Government.

**Mr. Pie:** I just wanted it clear.

**Mr. HANLON:** These appointments are made by His Majesty on the recommendation of the Imperial Government. The Government have certainly made certain recommendations to the Imperial Government on this matter.

I want also this morning to pay a small tribute to the service that the Lieutenant-Governor, the Hon. F. A. Cooper, has given to this State during the period he has been acting as the Administrator of the affairs of this State.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. HANLON:** I want to express, too, not only regret but also surprise at the attitude that some hon. members have taken in regard to Mr. Cooper and the position he occupies.

I have had the privilege of a very long friendship with Mr. Cooper. I first came in contact with him away back in the stormy days of 1911 and 1912; and I want to say that I have not had contact with any citizen of this country whom I would regard as a better citizen and a more conscientious, honest and sincere man than Mr. Cooper. It has been a privilege to know him. But for members who have served in the House with him—some for just a few years and others for a longer period—to suggest that Mr. Cooper in his position as Lieutenant-Governor would be politically biased or tainted is to my mind most objectionable. The hon. member for Windsor made reference by innuendo to the taint of party politician that would attach to Mr. Cooper. I want to point out that Mr. Cooper's career in public life has been outstanding for its loyalty and sincerity.

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. HANLON:** Away back in the past, when it was very unpopular and unprofitable to be a member of the Labour Party or to be an active participant in union affairs, Mr. Cooper was a member of the Labour Party and an active unionist. At the time when it was made a penal offence to be a unionist he was taking an active part in union affairs. In 1912, when the principle was being fought out whether working people had any right of organisation and association, Mr. Cooper sacrificed a very brilliant career with one of the great engineering companies of the British Empire as his contribution to the struggle for the freedom of the workers of the State. The hon. member who criticised him has a long way to go before he can measure up to Mr. Cooper's standard. When he has sacrificed his livelihood and income and left him-

self beggarly poor in his desire to give service to the people, then he can say he begins to approach the standard Mr. Cooper measures up to.

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. HANLON:** For a man who has devoted his time to personal profit and aggrandisement at the expense of the people to suggest that a man who has devoted his whole life to giving service to the people was politically tainted is the essence of hypocrisy. Hon. members who take up that attitude do not understand loyalty. They have not shown any loyalty themselves to any political party. The hon. members for Windsor and Sandgate have boxed the political compass in their careers in public life, jumping from party to party because of the advantage to be gained by selling out allegiance to one and joining another. The hon. member for Sandgate has been a U.A.P. man, a Country Party man, a Q.P.P. man, and now he is a Liberal Party man. The hon. member for Windsor was an Independent who desired to be a Labour candidate. He was anxious to be endorsed as Labour, but not having the qualifications—the Labour Party being notoriously careful of the people allowed to carry its banner—he was not accepted and he contested the Hamilton seat as an Independent. He came into this House and was loud in praise of the Labour Government—which of course was quite justified.

**Mr. Pie:** A different Labour Government than today.

**Mr. HANLON:** That is the excuse of everybody in the history of the Labour Party who ratted on it; it is always put up by every political rat who left the Labour Party. They all put up the same excuse, "It is not the same Labour Party." Read of what Kidston, Airey, Roberts, Billy Hughes, Cook, Joe Lyons, all said. Every one of them had the same excuse; according to them the Labour Party is continually changing and they are the only ones who remain true. Each one in succession abuses the party he has sold out. Each one in succession contends that the other fellow is the rat.

Neither of the hon. members who saw fit to reflect upon the political life and standard of citizenship of Mr. Cooper has shown the least indication of living up to the standard he has set. Why, Mr. Speaker, it is a stupid idea that because a man has been a member of a political party he cannot fill honestly any position of trust. It is too absurd to consider. Is the hon. member going to suggest that judges appointed to the bench in this State who are well known to be supporters of—

**An Opposition Member:** Dr. Evatt.

**Mr. HANLON:** No, I am speaking of the members of the Queensland bench and dealing with that first. Is the hon. member going to suggest that they are corrupt and give unfavourable decisions to anybody suspected of being a Labour supporter? This is a cowardly inference, a cowardly method of spreading poison—saying by inference

what they have not the courage to say by word of mouth. Does the hon. member for Windsor suggest that Sir John Latham does not give any person suspected of Labour associations or Labour affiliations who comes before the High Court of Australia a fair and honest deal? Is the hon. member going to suggest that one of the greatest Queenslanders who ever graced the bench, Sir Samuel Griffith, was unfair to people who disagreed with him? Sir Samuel disagreed politically with all branches of politics at the time. He disagreed with McIlwraith, a section of the anti-Labour Party, very vigorously and savagely. Of course, to him, the Labour political movement was anathema. I will say that Sir Samuel Griffith left behind him a record of impartial and fair dealing that very few judges in the history of the British Empire have been able to excel.

To suggest that any enlightened person who happens to be a member of the Labour Party and who has shaken off, probably in his early childhood, the ignorance and inhibitions associated with Conservatism is tainted apparently, but that a person is of course not tainted so long as he is a good Tory, lives on profits—making money, buying for little and selling for a lot, exploiting labour by working employees the longest hours they can possibly work and paying as little as he can, cheating in industry and sending in false income-tax returns—to suggest this is absurd. But to these men you are dangerous if you belong to the Labour movement that objects to all these things. Yet that is the attitude taken by the hon. member for Windsor and people associated with him politically. His political ancestry consists of every discredited politician that has ever led a political party in Australia. Consider the rapid change of front—United Australia Party, then Queensland People's Party, and now Liberal. Previous to that, Country-National Party and previous to that National Party; previously, a generation ago, Liberal Party.

You will see the political descendants of such men sitting on the cross Opposition bench here. They remind me of a story. Some years ago we had a dog show at Ithaca and a little boy brought a very playful dog into the ring, entered in the fox-terrier section. Although this dog had a short tail he had a rather massive body and quite a lot of hair. The judge told the boy to take the dog away, that he had no breed at all. The boy thereupon retorted, "I will have you know this dog is by all the best dogs in Petrie terrace." (Laughter.) That is the way in which we view the record politically of the hon. member who has seen fit to reflect on the character of one of the gentlemen who has set the highest standard of political life that has ever been known.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I move on to the speech delivered by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor. Hon. members opposite appeared to be peeved about this Speech. They complained that it contained a list of the achievements of the Labour Government in Queens-

land in the past couple of years and a strong progressive programme to be carried out in the next financial year.

What did the hon. member expect? Did he expect me to adopt the attitude that was adopted by hon. members opposite when they were previously in power, the attitude that "Trouble is upon us, we can do nothing, we are just going to lie down and weep?" This Government are not going to lie down and weep. We are governing in very troublous times indeed.

**Mr. Muller:** You will make somebody else weep.

**Mr. HANLON:** We will make the profiteers weep, yes. The hon. member is showing great concern about the profiteers this morning. He is very worried about how long price-control is going to go on. It is going to go on as long as the people of this country want it. They are not going to revert to the time when you could charge any price you liked, when you could fake invoices and costs. Mr. Speaker, you remember the position in the war before the one just ended, when price-control was instituted by a Labour Government in Queensland, by a new Government who had just come into office, a Government who had not had any previous experience of government, but with war upon the country decided that they were going to do something to stamp out the profiteering that had always been associated with war. They fixed margins of profit that could be charged by any vendor of commodities to the people. For instance, when shipments of paint, galvanised iron, clothing, hardware, or anything else came into this State they very often allegedly changed ownership half a dozen times by the time they came off the ship and went into store. The method used—since a margin on sale was allowed—was that Brown, for instance, imported some builder's hardware, promptly sold it to Smith at the allowed margin, Smith sold it to Jones, Jones sold to Murphy, each at the approved margin, and after it had gone round six or eight of his friends it landed back to Smith with half a dozen times the margin added to the cost. The members of the Labour Party at that time were inexperienced in these matters. They did not know the cunning of the profiteers and exploiters, so that notwithstanding a law to prohibit excessive charges, the profiteers got away with quite a lot of it while the men who went and served overseas found, when they came back and went into business, that for the next five or six years they worked their souls out trying to pay off the fall in the capital cost of their stocks, the fall that took place after the cessation of war.

One thing that the whole of Australia has learned from this war—intelligent Queenslanders have recognised it for many decades—is that if this country is going to be continued as a country of white population, if European civilisation is going to persist in it, the northern part of this continent must be developed and populated. Prior to this last war it was always difficult to get the people of the southern States to appreciate the

necessity of developing Northern Australia. It was very difficult in the past to make the New South Wales, Victorian, South Australian and Tasmanian people realise that their own safety depended upon peopling and developing the Northern Territory and the country east and west of it. However, the war has brought that lesson home to them. With an Asia overcrowded and very close to us, with a great improvement in methods of transport, with the understanding of the fact that land is at a premium in overcrowded Asia and that vast areas in our northern country are vacant and idle, they now fully appreciate the fact that they are not going to keep it unless they can put it to use. As a matter of fact, it would be immoral to allow us to do it. We as a community recognise the immorality of any person's holding land undeveloped and not in use when other people desire to use it for production. We recognise that principle in our land tax law. Every State and Federal Parliament recognises the principle, that if you have land unused and undeveloped a penalty rate of tax must apply to that land above the rate applying to developed and used land, and if it is morally right amongst ourselves it is morally right amongst the people of the world.

Unless we are prepared to use the land we have been fortunate enough to get in the northern part of this continent, we have no moral right to hold it. A year ago, that principle being recognised at Canberra, a committee was formed consisting of the Prime Minister as chairman, the Minister of the Interior, who was responsible for the Northern Territory—

**Mr. Pie:** Senator Collings?

**Mr. HANLON:** No, Senator Johnson—and the Premier of Queensland and the Premier of Western Australia. That committee was formed as a policy committee to promote the development of the northern part of this continent. The area taken was north of the tropic of Capricorn in Queensland right across the continent to the western borders. It was agreed that a working or professional committee should be appointed to investigate any matter referred to it, and the following committee of public service officers was appointed:—

Dr. H. C. Coombs, Director-General, Ministry of Post-war Reconstruction,

Mr. J. A. Carrodus, Secretary Department of the Interior,

Mr. A. E. V. Richards, Chief Executive Officer, C.S.I.R.,

Mr. J. R. Kemp, Co-ordinator General of Public Works, Queensland,

Mr. I. W. Morley, State Mining Engineer,

Mr. R. J. Dumas, Director of Works, Department of Public Works, W.A.,

Mr. W. A. Leslie, Pastoralist, of W.A.

**Mr. Maher:** Would it not be better to visualise the creation of a new State in the tropical area?

**Mr. HANLON:** The mere visualising of things does not get us anywhere; we want the work done. We visualise the populating of the whole of the north of Australia. We recognise that the works necessary to develop that part of Australia would be beyond the capacity of a State Government. The Commonwealth Government recognise that. They recognise that as part of the defence of this country we must populate and develop northern Australia. Therefore, to this committee was given the job of reporting on suitable work for the development of the North. The objective is to increase population; that is the first thing to be done. Then there are the welfare and development of the people, an increase in the value of production, and the best utilisation of the land and mineral resources.

At the present time the committee is engaged on an investigation of the pastoral industry of the north of Australia; it is going into the possibilities of agriculture, reforestation, the development of mining fields, which affords tremendous scope for exploitation. It has already dealt with the northern fishing industry and laid down a very promising programme for its development.

**Mr. Pie:** Can you get that information?

**Mr. HANLON:** We shall be able to give the hon. member particulars of it. The committee has put up an excellent proposal to re-establish the pearling and trochus and other shell industries, and by the way it has done the job and the speedy manner in which it is getting on with it—

**Mr. Maher:** How many known men of experience are on the committee?

**Mr. HANLON:** I have given the hon. member the list. In Queensland, I do not suppose you could get a more experienced and competent man than Mr. Kemp. The hon. member must not think that these men are going to northern Australia with a little hoe and spade to plant a cabbage. They are investigating, through competent officers whom they are entitled to appoint or co-opt, the prospects of successfully establishing industries. On their reports it will be decided whether we can afford to put money into establishing industries.

At the present moment the question of establishing two experiment farms in the Gulf country in Queensland is under consideration. I do not know whether they will be a success, but the matter has been referred to the State Department of Agriculture and Stock. There are some big black-soil areas in good rainfall belts in the Gulf country and the proposal has been made and forwarded by me to the department that two experiment farms should be established for the purpose of seeing amongst other things whether agricultural industries can be conducted in the Far North without irrigation. These areas have a wet season during which they get good rains, which never fail, but then they have to carry on over a dry period of about six to seven months. We can determine whether the areas will be successful for agricultural pursuits

only by having a proper investigation made and so demonstrating to interested people who are prepared to undertake agriculture there that it can be done. The subject of irrigation, water supply, and storage will be undertaken by competent engineers. It is not a farmer who is required to demonstrate the possibilities in this connection but engineers competent to do this work.

Mining surveys will be carried out by competent mining engineers, not by someone full of faith with a pan and shovel. Competent engineers are required for this work. The development of North Australia at this late hour is being tackled. This includes the development of the Blair Athol coalfield, which has been referred to the North Australia Development Committee, and investigations are now being carried out with a view to a complete mechanisation of the Blair Athol field, so that the coal may be mechanically handled right from the face until it is placed in the ship's holds at the port.

**Mr. Maher:** Who is financing that?

**Mr. HANLON:** It will be a matter for the Government to finance.

**Mr. Maher:** The State Government?

**Mr. HANLON:** The North Australia Development Committee is representative of both Governments and that is why the Commonwealth Government are in it. I told the hon. member that when I opened this part of my speech, but he was not listening. I want to remind hon. members that the very economic life of this country depends upon coal. The very existence of this country in the next half century as a white country depends upon an adequate supply of coal—today or as early as possible. Private enterprise may not regard the supply of that coal as being a profitable venture and so whether the nation lives or dies it will be of no concern to private enterprise.

**Mr. Pie** interjected.

**Mr. HANLON:** The hon. member can get into this development tomorrow. Private enterprise, if it likes, may take up this work. There is nothing to stop the hon. member from doing it. However, as a very large amount of capital will be involved and in the future atomic energy may destroy the value of coal as a fuel the big industrialists may be deterred from investing the large amount of capital that would be required for developing coal seams, especially when these industrialists feel that they may not get their money back in the next decade or so. As this development may require the expenditure of some millions of pounds, I think that private enterprise just will not do it, whether the life of the nation depends on it or not. And so it falls to the Governments, Commonwealth and State, to undertake this development. The method of doing this work is to be decided when the full survey has been made.

We shall need migrants to help in the development of the area and so the Commonwealth Government have every-

thing ready for the commencement of migration at the beginning of the coming year. It is not expected that more than about 35,000 migrants will be brought to this country in the first year of the immigration scheme. It is not that we have not the will to bring them here or that the migrants are not available but that the shipping resources of the world are not capable of handling a greater number than that. There has been a complete survey through the shipping companies of the possible berth space that will be available for the transfer of migrants to this country. A very thorough survey has been made in this connection through the companies that are willing and can carry the immigrants, and it has been determined that the largest number that can be carried during the first year of the scheme will be something like 35,000.

They may not be able to do that. That is the maximum figure they expect to be able to shift. We do not know whether happenings in the future may lessen the number of migrants to be brought. All States are preparing receptions to these people. They are not going to be shifted to the Northern Territory or Gulf country and left to root or die. They are coming in to spread through the general population of this country. As we demonstrate the success that can be achieved in the development of Northern Australia people of both overseas and our Australian native-born population will gladly go there if they see that a good livelihood and a successful career are to be had.

Many schemes have been tabled for the consideration of the North Australia Development Committee. For instance, the Queensland Government have had a continuous survey of our northern water resources going on. We have such proposals as the Burdekin River dam. Our engineers say that they have a site there where a dam will imprison more water than all the water-conservation schemes in Victoria. That is a job that is beyond the capacity of this State but undoubtedly the Commonwealth Government will come into it. The estimate we have will, with the successful damming of the Burdekin River at that particular point, give a supply of water for irrigation purposes for 500 farmers on the lowlands adjacent. That will mean, when you take into consideration the ancillary services, an improvement of population of over 50,000 in that area. That is a job that must be tackled. We must look at this country as one that must be developed.

All sorts of schemes have been submitted in this matter. Western Australia has submitted vast mining enterprises and also a water-storage proposal. The Minister of the Interior of the Commonwealth Government, who is in charge of the Northern Territory, is aware of the fact that the pastoral lands of the Northern Territory have never had fair treatment from the present holders of the leases. Thousands of square miles of country are held under lease there with not a fence or anything to break up the herds, nor has any great attention been paid to

improving the breeding of the cattle. They are just allowed to run on the country and the lessees simply rake off what they can, being satisfied to get a return on their capital. The Commonwealth Government realise that the pastoral industry there can be developed and are paying attention to that point in their desire to develop the Territory.

I mentioned the Blair Athol proposal in passing. We have to realise that coal is the basis of our secondary industries. I want to correct the idea quite frequently suggested that the coal shortage existing today is due to the slowing up of the miners in the production of coal. The fact is that it is due to the tremendously increased demand for coal, which has entirely outgrown the supply.

**Mr. Pie:** The production of coal is down.

**Mr. HANLON:** No.

**Mr. Maher:** Yes, it is.

**Mr. HANLON:** It is not down on pre-war figures. The hon. member is adopting an unfair attitude. There was a big production in the war period, where men worked themselves to a standstill in an effort to help the war effort. I can see the hon. member smiling. I am going to say this, as he smiles sarcastically, that no men worked harder in their contribution to the war effort. He is judging other people by himself. Because he never did any additional hard work during the war, and because he imposed no voluntary sacrifice on himself in this direction during the war, it is not to be supposed that other people did not. Our peak production has fallen off, of course, but the demand for coal is up millions of tons on what it was before the war. If we are to go on developing, it is going to rise still more, and we must get on with the production of coal. The State Government are going on with that, irrespective of whether the Commonwealth Government do it, we are going to go on with the provision of coal.

Another important matter that we have to face is transport. At the recent Premiers' Conference the Commonwealth Government put up to the States the proposal that we should hand over to the Commonwealth control of intrastate air transport. Members will realise that years ago we handed over to the Commonwealth Government the control of air navigation as far as standards and safety were concerned, but that did not transfer to the Commonwealth Government the right to control the running of airlines within the State. I took the view when the proposal was made to which I refer that we could not afford lightly to give away control of intrastate air transport, because we have already been going into the possibility of increasing airlines from the interior to the coast. One of the best aids to outback settlement would be to bring these people nearer to the centres of population by air. Furthermore, we can, in the years to come, supply by air such things as fresh meat, fish, soft drinks that we find difficult to transport by train or road,

and vegetables that have to be eaten fresh. The advance in aerial services made in the war period will be applied to civil transport in the next few years. Where we know the railways cannot give a service satisfactorily, the people are entitled to some other form of service. Where they cannot get satisfactory service by road, an airline must be made available. So far the States have not agreed to transfer intrastate air services to the Commonwealth.

Water storage is another very important thing that has to be faced in the next few years. When war broke out in 1939 hon. members will remember that the State Government had a programme of water conservation mapped out, but in common with many other projects it had to be dropped during the war. Now the war is over, as labour becomes available, those jobs must be pushed on. We are not concerned only with the large coast schemes. The great water-conservation areas are along the mountainous regions of the coast, but inland water conservation also must be encouraged. For that reason a survey is being made of the western rivers with a view to damming them at suitable points and backing up large quantities of water. It may not be possible to grow sufficient fodder in western Queensland to provide for stock in drought periods, but it is possible to provide sufficient water storage to cater to a great degree for fruit and the fresh-vegetable requirements of the people.

We have an agreement with the New South Wales Government for the damming of the border rivers. Legislation will be introduced in New South Wales this year and similar legislation in Queensland to enable the joint project to be undertaken. That will be pushed on as rapidly as possible. We are fortunate in this respect, that the catchment area is almost equally divided between the two States, and the irrigable land to be served is fairly equally divided between the two States; so there is no likelihood of any disagreement on those points.

I wish now to say a word or two on soldier settlement. Some hon. members have had something to say about the delay in settling soldiers on the land under the Commonwealth-States Land Settlement Scheme. That scheme is a very momentous one.

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

**Mr. HANLON:** I thank the hon. member for Kurilpa and hon. members generally for the courtesy extended me.

The Commonwealth-State scheme is a very momentous one and is taking quite a time to get into operation, but the State Government have not been idle. Last year we passed legislation that enabled us to advance money interest-free for a period to soldier settlers to enable them to get on their feet in buying farms. In addition the Commonwealth Government are making available loans up to £1,000 for the rehabilitation of men previously engaged in private industry.

To date, under the State scheme, 671 soldiers have obtained grants—under the interest-free loan scheme—to a total of £870,944, which enables them to enter into possession of properties, some fully improved, some partially improved, and some with very little improvement at all. All these men have been placed on the land.

**Mr. Edwards:** Under the State scheme?

**Mr. HANLON:** That is under the State scheme in Queensland. Under the Commonwealth scheme also the advances for rehabilitation in Queensland are handled by the Agricultural Bank, and 156 men received advances totalling £84,784. It will thus be seen that the settlement of soldiers on the land in this State has not been neglected by any means. These figures are quite good. One thing missing from the scheme in most cases, not in all, is that they are taking over already producing properties and consequently to this extent it is not adding to the primary production of the State. Of course, some of them are, by taking over property that is very little improved and adding improvements. The main scheme being developed by agreement with the Commonwealth will provide for additional primary production in the State.

I now come to secondary industries, on which hon. members had something to say. Notwithstanding the "knocking" by interested parties that goes on, secondary industries are moving very rapidly in Queensland. There is a tendency, very often inspired, to "knock" proposals to establish secondary industries in Queensland. For instance, southern manufacturers who have a good market here do not wish to see competitive interests established in Queensland to take that market from them and everything that can possibly be said to discourage the establishment of secondary industries here will be said. In addition, agents who are trading in goods produced in other States or countries are hostile to proposals for the establishment of secondary industries because they fear the loss of a lucrative source of income for themselves.

Our industries have been increased. Last year, Mr. Speaker, I made contact with a large motor firm in England which sent officers here to look at Rocklea. It finally decided not to take Rocklea. The first thing we knew about it was that it decided to take land in the South. The reason that company gave for abandoning Rocklea was that Queensland labour was too unreliable for the establishment of a large-scale secondary industry.

**Mr. Pie:** It is the most reliable labour in Australia.

**Mr. HANLON:** That is what I say. The head of a firm that established a heavy industry here during the war and has branches in every State in Australia called to see me a few months ago. He was looking for works in Brisbane. Discussing this matter, I told him the story we got from this motor firm. He said, "My experience is the reverse of that. We control similar industries in the

southern States as well as here, and the production per unit of labour in Queensland exceeds that of any other place we have in Australia." We had the same thing at the completion of the erection of the Story Bridge. Dr. Bradfield told the public gathering at the opening—several hon. members here were present—that in no job with which he had been associated had there been a better return for labour than he had got in the construction of that bridge.

**Mr. Pie:** Provided they have up-to-date tools.

**Mr. HANLON:** And provided they have two legs. They have to be equipped equally with others before we can get a comparison. The same thing applied at the graving dock on the Brisbane River. In no job with which those engineers had been associated had they ever been able to show a better return per unit of labour in any part of Australia.

**Mr. Pie:** But with that motor company, was not there some trouble to do with freight?

**Mr. HANLON:** I had a proposal to solve that problem. I had a proposal for a uniform freight rate, the same as we have for sugar. We could have got over that trouble but they decided on the southern site before we could do anything with that.

Those are the difficulties with which we find ourselves faced in the development of secondary industries here. I have said that the Government is doing everything possible to encourage secondary industries. We propose to go further, and establish, within the Department of Labour and Employment, a Secondary Industries Division. In the past we have acted as advocates on behalf of industrialists here, with the Commonwealth Government, for Commonwealth buildings. At present we are trying to get the Navy out of a building, so that another firm that proposes to establish a very fine industry here may go into it, and I am hopeful of success in that. In the meantime we have had great difficulty with Rocklea in that there was a flat rate of rental for the floor space. Before anybody could be established there we had to be in constant communication with the Secondary Industries Commission in the South, then the matter had to be referred to a sub-committee in Canberra. It was very difficult to get speedy decisions—and people who are looking for an opportunity to get into industry require speedy decisions. At all events, speedy decisions are very helpful.

We took up with the Commonwealth Government the sale of Rocklea to the State, and I want to say that the Commonwealth Government have met us very very well indeed in connection with the Rocklea works.

**Mr. Pie:** Have you taken that over completely? You have bought it from the Commonwealth Government?

**Mr. HANLON:** Yes. They sold the whole show, lock, stock and barrel, to us for £465,000, and I want to point out that it cost £900,000 to erect, but that was at a time when costs were terrific, with special road

haulage of material, with the overtime that was worked to keep the production of munitions going, and when wages were very high.

**Mr. Pie:** What is the floor area there?

**Mr. HANLON:** It is 816,893 square feet.

**Mr. Pie:** Then you got it cheap. That is only 10s. a square foot.

**Mr. HANLON:** Of course it is cheap: £465,000 was a bargain. It enables us to do better than we have been able to do in the past. For instance, if anyone is starting an industry we can give concessions in rent to enable him to get over the most difficult period in secondary industry, the time when everything is going out and nothing is coming in.

**Mr. Pie:** I suppose you are charging them an interest rate on capital invested?

**Mr. HANLON:** Yes, and we can make concessions beyond that if we desire to do so.

As a result of the report of the expert in canning whom we brought here, the Committee of Direction of Fruit Marketing is going on with the establishment of its cannery. That is going to be a modern job. The estimated cost is about £300,000 for the erection and equipping of the cannery. I heard the hon. member for Windsor say the other day that we had got hold of—

**Mr. Pie:** We thought you had, because everyone up north thinks he is going to get it.

**Mr. HANLON:** Why think we are going to get bad machinery? The hon. member suggests that we shall get old worn-out machinery.

**Mr. Pie:** You cannot get Ginaca.

**Mr. HANLON:** We are getting it—the hon. member will see that we are going to do the impossible. He might not be able to get it.

**Mr. Pie:** New ones?

**Mr. HANLON:** Yes. Nobody is going to be asked to work with old machines. It might be desirable to load junk onto the Government.

**Mr. Pie:** From Honolulu?

**Mr. HANLON:** We are not getting them from Honolulu; they are being specially manufactured for this job. As soon as the proposed cannery in Northern Queensland is established we shall get suitable machinery for it.

**Mr. Pie:** Where are you going to put the one in North Queensland?

**Mr. HANLON:** That is a matter for the people concerned to decide. The hon. member is annoyed about this proposal because he had dreams of an interest in a canning works himself, whereas with the advent of a co-operative enterprise he has to drop out. I can assure him, however, that the growers

will get modern machinery and equipment. The Government will not finance the establishment of prospective failures.

**Mr. Pie:** You want to get your market first.

**Mr. HANLON:** The market is here. Mr. Speaker, I am astounded to think of the attitude taken by certain people on the question of markets. I have heard that conferences attempt to restrict the production of citrus fruits in Australia because it is said that the market is flooded. How many oranges a year does the average child eat?

**Mr. Pie:** You cannot can any more pineapples without a quota.

**Mr. HANLON:** We will get over that. The hon. member should recognise that the reason why we have rushed on with the new factory is that the pineapple-growing industry has expanded during the years of war and as time goes on there will be a greater rush. There is a market for all that can be grown. To suggest that we have not a market in Australia for fruit that people rarely see is too ridiculous for words. Throughout Australia I suppose the children do not eat more than ten oranges a year each and it is an absurdity to think about restriction of production of any fruit in this country whilst the people are not getting enough of that fruit to eat. We will help in the financing of other co-operative enterprises.

As will be seen from His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech, we propose to introduce legislation to deal with the establishment of co-operative enterprises and profit-sharing. The hon. member for Windsor congratulated the Government on the profit-sharing part but neglected to offer any congratulations in connection with the co-operative part of it. I can assure him that by the measures we shall take there will be a distribution of profits amongst the consumers supporting and the workers engaged in the industry or business concerned.

**Mr. Pie:** You are going to extend generally in all directions?

**Mr. HANLON:** It is the only true profit-sharing there might be. In a co-operative pineapple cannery the people who grow the pines, those who process them, and the people who consume them will get the proceeds of the industry.

**Mr. Pie:** And the Government do not get anything?

**Mr. HANLON:** They will get the pines, at all events.

I propose to say a word or two about housing. Hon. members opposite are really grieved at the progress that the State Government have made in facing up to the housing shortage. They are really horrified to think that we are making a success of it.

**Mr. Pie:** Do you think that you are making a success of it?

**Mr. HANLON:** Yes, I do. I defy hon. members opposite to show me any line of production, any work in this country, where

the rate of output has grown from virtually nothing in one year to something like 4,000 houses in the next. The year before last virtually no houses were being built in Queensland but last year about 4,000 houses were built here. I defy any other enterprise in the Commonwealth to show an increase at a similar rate.

**Mr. Gair:** They wanted it handed over to a private contractor.

**Mr. HANLON:** Of course. When we began the housing programme hon. members opposite said, "Let the big contractor have a go at this and let the State keep out of it." We said, "Righto! We do not care who builds houses so long as we get houses built." So we called tenders for blocks of houses and here we gave an opportunity for any private contractor to undertake a job involving £20,000, £30,000, or £40,000. When the private contractors submitted their tenders it was found that their cost was so excessive that it would have been ruinous to go on with the job.

**Mr. Pie:** Only what it would cost to build them.

**Mr. HANLON:** I am going to give the hon. member something now. When the first lot of tenders was received for the Stafford group of houses the State Housing Commission reported to me that the figures were excessive. It was suggested that we should call tenders again. I said, "All right." We called tenders again and the quote came down by nearly £5,000 compared with the first one. The commission considered the matter and the manager said, "My estimate for these buildings is so-and-so. I can build them at a price several thousand pounds lower than even the second-tender price." I said, "All right, build them." As soon as we announced that we were going to build them by day labour some of the contractors said, "We will build them at your estimate." Who was it that was swindling the community? Separate prices were submitted for the one job, a certain price given in the first tender, and when we said, "No, we will not have that price" and called fresh tenders, those tenders were scaled down by several thousand pounds. It was still too high, still thousands of pounds above the estimate, and we decided to build them ourselves. Then the private contractors said, "We will build them at your estimate."

If these people had been honest and could have successfully built these houses at the department's estimate, why did they not say so in the first place and submit tenders somewhere in keeping with the department's estimate of the cost? That is the question I am asking. When materials are scarce private enterprise wants to make a profit out of that circumstance. It demands an excessive profit for its work and that is what the Government have to resist. We have gone on with the building of houses with our little day-labour gangs, but we have not absorbed all the building trade labour. We have only a given number of men employed by the State Housing Commission on day-labour work but

they are going on rapidly building the houses. That is a check on the exploiter, on the one who would impose inflated prices on the people so as to get inflated profits.

I was very proud at the recent Premiers' Conference, when the question of building costs was raised by the Prime Minister, to hear him say that Queensland is the only State about which he had not a complaint. Of course, costs are higher than before the war, but the cost of everything is higher than before the war. Take our most frequent critics on the subject of costs and on the failure to get back to normal in these things—the daily papers. Why do they not get back to normal? Why do they not get their costs back to normal? They never seem to think that the obligation is on them as much as anyone else. If it is so easy to get back to normal, why have not the daily papers who criticise us so frequently got back to normal? They cannot do it. That is the trouble. After one of the recent editorials in which they took the Government to task for not getting back to normal and not getting costs down to the pre-war scale, I took out a comparison of the daily papers, taking one week in August of this year with the same week in August of 1939.

I found on going through each newspaper in this city and comparing its issues in 1939 with those of 1946 that the size had been considerably reduced. In 1939 in a given week the "Telegraph" had a daily average of 26 pages, whereas in 1946, in a similar period, it had been reduced to 12½ pages. The same applies to the "Courier-Mail." Its daily average number of pages in one week in 1939 was 23½ pages whereas in 1946 it was only 10½ pages. Yet the price of both journals was the same! That shows that we are all in the same boat.

**Mr. Pie:** They are on a quota for paper.

**Mr. HANLON:** Did the hon. member ever hear of any other quotas.

**Mr. Pie:** Yes, there are quotas.

**Mr. HANLON:** Are we not on a quota? We have only an X quantity of timber. That is all we have. That is the sole amount of timber that can go into building. We are also on a quota for iron and all roofing materials. We are all on a quota. I know that newspapers too are on a quota, and because of that cannot give bigger papers today, but we are in the same position. We cannot build more houses because we cannot get additional material or men. What we are doing is seeing that the maximum amount of houses that can be built with available material and labour is being built. That is the attitude.

Furthermore, we cannot concentrate on the building of houses alone. We have a job going on at the Women's Hospital in order to get us over a difficulty there. The birth-rate has increased. Private hospitals have closed down owing to difficulties, leaving hospitals controlled by the Government to make up the deficiencies. The Government cannot close up their institutions and say, "We will go out of business for a year or two because

things are difficult." We must not only do our own job but face up to additional difficulties caused by the fact that private enterprise has gone out of business.

We have only a certain amount of building-trade labour available, and we have hospital building going on in other towns also, a certain amount is also going on in connection with our schools, a certain amount is required in our road programme and our developmental programme generally. Access roads must be made to forestry reserves before we can get timber, and so on. Roads are necessary to improve communication. We also have an allocation of 700 men engaged in the building trades for secondary industry. It would be impossible for the Government to take up the attitude "We will build homes only and not make provision for people who live in them to get work." Therefore we have a certain allocation of labour on industrial building.

During last year certain hon. members complained that we did not pay sufficient attention to the construction of secondary-industry buildings. The amount spent last year in secondary-industry building was £660,000. That was much more than the year before. We have to do that. We cannot concentrate on building houses solely. If we concentrated the number of men engaged on secondary-industry building today on building houses we should produce a certain number of houses, but the position would be too absurd to contemplate. I am very satisfied with the progress that the State Housing Commission has made so far, but that must not be the end of progress. I shall not be satisfied with a target of 4,000 houses this year, the same as last year. The number of houses and industrial buildings for the current year must be greater than last year. Obviously, as we get more men back into industry, the progress will be greater and as a result we must improve on the previous year's work. If we can improve at the same rate this year as we did last year then that will be O.K.

**Mr. Pie:** Are you happy about the rental basis of those houses?

**Mr. HANLON:** We are building houses both for rental and for people to own.

**Mr. Pie:** Are you satisfied with what is being charged to those people for rent?

**Mr. HANLON:** Yes.

**Mr. Pie:** The fluctuating rental?

**Mr. HANLON:** Yes.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. HANLON:** I am glad the hon. member reminded me; I meant to have something to say to him on that. The hon. member has a habit of rushing into the Press every week-end with some very ill-considered and very often untrue statement concerning the activities of the Government. We cannot help these things; we are getting quite used to them, but it is bad political business to tell untruths.

**Mr. Pie:** I agree with you.

**Mr. HANLON:** I want to call the attention of the hon. member to them. On the housing question the hon. member, in the "Courier-Mail" of 9 August, 1946, is reported—

"Mr Pie quoted the case of an ex-serviceman who received £6 10s. a week, had three children, aged 8, 6 and 2 years, and who was paying £1 10s. a week for one of the houses, while his next-door neighbour, with identically the same house, and no children, and who was on the basic wage, was paying only 19s. a week.

"'It seems that the more you earn the more you pay,' said Mr. Pie. 'For a perfect example of stupid bureaucracy that is one.'"

To put the thing right he would say, "The less you earn the less you pay." There is no increase in rental because of a high salary; there is a reduction in rental because of the low salary.

**Mr. Pie:** The more you earn the more you pay.

**Mr. HANLON:** No, the less you earn the less you pay—an entirely different thing. Let the hon. member apply himself to a bit of simple reasoning and mathematics. A house costs an amount to construct; the rent is the amount that will pay interest on the capital debt, redemption over 30 years—I think it is 30 years for wood—and the cost of maintenance during that period. That might work out at £1 10s. a week. That is the economic rental. We do not care whether a man is on £10 a week, £20 a week or £40 a week, he pays the economic rental.

**Mr. Pie:** Thirty shillings?

**Mr. HANLON:** Yes, but if somebody with a large family who is on the basic wage is put in—

**Mr. Pie:** No, no children.

**Mr. HANLON:** I am putting the same position. He gets a reduction in his rent. It is not a matter of, the more you get the more you pay. Nobody pays more than the actual economic rent of a house. If your economic circumstances are such that you cannot pay the economic rent, a subsidy on that rent is given by the Commonwealth and the State.

**Mr. Pie:** What is the economic rent?

**Mr. HANLON:** I will come to that later. It does not matter whether it is 2s. or £2, the principle is the same. The maximum rent is the economic rent; that is the rent we must charge to pay for the house. The actual rent is the economic rent less any subsidy the commission thinks is in accordance with your income per member of the family. I do not mind the hon. member's being mistaken, but he should not tell a falsehood. I sent a question over to the commission and demanded an explanation. I did not think the hon. member would tell a deliberate falsehood. This is the reply:—

"The only ex-service man answering that description on the Stafford Estate has on each side of him neighbours who pay

£1 13s. 6d. a week. One has a family of five and the other three. The designs and floor areas of the three houses are totally different."

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. gentleman has exhausted the time allowed him under the Standing Orders. I desire to say to hon. members that it is a time-honoured practice in every Parliament in Australia to give to the Leader of the Government or the Opposition sufficient time to enable him to complete his speech. I ask hon. members whether they are willing that the Premier be granted additional time to complete his speech?

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. HANLON:** I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members of the House for that very fine courtesy. I will not keep you much longer.

No such position as the hon. member quotes exists, and I would suggest that before any person tells a story of this kind, and makes in the Press a charge that an officer of the Public Service is doing something that is wrong and dishonest, he at least should give that officer the opportunity of saying whether it is true or false. The State Housing Commission is compelled to work under an agreement between the Commonwealth and State Governments, which lays down exactly the allowances that must be made.

**Mr. Pie:** There are different rentals for different homes.

**Mr. HANLON:** That is quite right, but the story the hon. member told is not the truth.

Another statement the hon. member made in the same article was that there were 42 houses with rentals ranging from 19s to £3 a week, according to the earning capacity of the occupants. Again that is untrue.

**Mr. Pie:** That is what they told me.

**Mr. HANLON:** Mr. Speaker, did you ever hear such a statement from a man who aspires to lead a Government?

**Mr. Brand:** Your department.

**Mr. Morris:** He did say that.

**Mr. HANLON:** He did not. Did you ever hear such an excuse from a man who solicits the people of this country for the right to lead a Government—saying that a statement of that kind is justified because somebody told him?

**Mr. Pie:** I will get it lined up.

At 12.26 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. Mann, Brisbane) relieved Mr. Speaker in the chair.

**Mr. HANLON:** Mr. Young's report is—  
"No tenant at Stafford pays £3 a week. The highest rental charged to date is £1 15s. a week."

I would suggest that the hon. member make some attempt to get the truth of these things. Interested persons will always tell malicious stories about Government departments or members of the Government, but that does not justify a member of this House in repeating that story without making some attempt to verify his facts. I would suggest, in the hon. member's own interests as the leader of a Party, that the hon. member pay attention to the truth of the statements he makes, because nothing is more destructive of the prestige of a member of this House than a statement that is false.

During this debate there have been attacks about the attitude of the Government during the recent strike. I contend that the Government acted in a sensible and intelligent way in that strike. I know that Fascists believe that people should be bludgeoned, beaten, and machine-gunned into obeying orders. I know that the Communists believe there should be no discipline in industry. This Government do not support the view of either party. We believe that it is our duty to bring working conditions to the highest possible standard, that the return for labour and the standard of living for men engaged in any industry should be as high as an industry can possibly give them. We also believe that both parties to a dispute can be honest, and that disputes do arise in industry, but our job was to get that industry going with as little dislocation as possible. The point I wish to make particularly is the absurdity of this story of compelling men to work. One hon. member, I think the hon. member for Isis, speaking away in the bush—

**Mr. Brand:** No.

**Mr. HANLON:** Yes. Speaking away out in the bush, he said that the court declared this strike to be an illegal strike and went on "This was the time for Mr. Hanlon and Mr. Gair to apply the penal clauses of the Act, but they failed to exhibit sufficient 'guts' to do so." That was a statement that could be excused if it came from a person who had never been in public life.

**Mr. Brand:** Where do you say I said that?

**Mr. HANLON:** I will get you the paper I quoted it from—in the hon. member's own area. I looked at it just before I came to the House this morning. Such a suggestion—that the Government should impose penalties that the courts are there to impose—is unwarranted, coming from any member of this House. If there is anything more destructive of freedom and democracy it is the imposition of penalties by Governments.

**Mr. Brand:** You are putting your own interpretation on it.

**Mr. HANLON:** I am putting the question as I see it. The day when a Government can impose penalties on people without a trial by the court will be the day when liberty has gone completely from this country, and anything I can do to prevent any Government or any political party from imposing punitive penalties upon the citizens of this

country without a fair trial I will do. Hon. members betray their outlook on these matters when they say that Ministers should punish these people. The punishment is laid down in the law and the court administers the law. The obligation of the judges and the court, when application is made, is to apply what penalties they think fit, and whether the hon. member for Windsor and the hon. member for Isis like it or not, nobody is going to interfere with the courts in the infliction of penalties while this party remains the Government of Queensland.

**Mr. Pie:** But what if the penalty is not carried out?

**Mr. HANLON:** I am telling the hon. member the position as it is.

I want to remind hon. members also that intelligent people of their own political faith realise the futility anywhere of trying to use force or duress upon the workers to make them work. I read a very interesting article on the present Coal Production Bill, which has passed through the Commonwealth Parliament and is now before the State Parliament of New South Wales. That article expresses the industrial position very very well indeed and it is not written by a Labour politician. It appears in the "Australasian Business Conditions Bulletin," published by Hemingway & Robertson, who are not affiliated with the A.L.P. It gives a very clear summary of the arguments for the Bill and it then gives an equally lucid summary of the arguments against the Bill and finishes with its own conclusions. It says—

"The miners are indicted for irresponsibility, indiscipline, stoppages of a trivial character, and failure to carry out agreements and rulings. The Government, on the other hand, is often blamed for failure to uphold the law, for surrendering to the miners, for not taking firm action against the law-breakers and agitators. The question which immediately poses itself is whether coercive measures—arrests, prosecutions, gaol sentences, mass fines, and the freezing of union funds—would do more to get more coal produced than more conciliatory measures. It seems reasonable to suppose that, given the class loyalty of the miners and their principle of 'one out, all out,' little could be expected from intimidation or repression. To accuse the miners of practices and attitudes inconsistent with civilised society, and then to resort to industrial barbarisms seems a strangely contradictory policy."

That is the position summed up by a writer who has looked dispassionately at the question. To say that because these people did wrong we should resort to barbarisms, cruelty, intimidation and repression, is a policy of despair. I know it is the hang-over from a dictator, but it is a policy of despair because the people of this country will never stand it. The surest way to spread industrial disorder in this country is to endeavour to impose penal sentences upon the men. What did Joe Cook accomplish when he put penal provisions upon the miners of New South Wales 30 years ago? Whatever has been

accomplished by imposing penal conditions on the workers when they have attempted to improve their conditions? Hon. members should remember that you can imprison a man's body but you can never imprison his ideals or his thoughts. Thoughts and ideals go beyond any prisons or any form of punishment. They persist and grow. The more you do to repress them, the stronger they are. This attitude of inflicting penal conditions on the workers is too stupid to have any attention given to it.

I just wish to conclude by saying that notwithstanding all the stories that have been told about the sins of the workers, an interesting article appears in another journal, the Sydney "Sunday Telegraph" which again is not affiliated with the A.L.P. It deals with the general rise in production in this country, and goes on to say—

"Production is actually greater than before the war, but falls short of requirements because the demand is so much greater.

"This is caused by shortage of reserve stocks, greater spending power and population increases.

"Most authorities agree that production is at its maximum, allowing for inefficiency by managers and employers."

It continues—

"At the same time employers are still making big profits, despite their claims of lost efficiency and appalling increases in overhead."

That is not a Labour statement but the statement of a journal that has nothing to do with the Labour Party and one that opposes us politically.

**Mr. Pie:** Who controls that paper? Does not Mr. Theodore control it?

**Mr. HANLON:** I do not know that he does. The "Sunday Telegraph" flays the Labour Party. It supports the hon. member's political zombie friend, Mr. Menzies.

The statements made by members of the Opposition are very weak, many of them untrue, and others distorted. I was absent from the House on duty for the Government but I had their speeches read and the points taken out of them and I say that if you take out the falsehoods and the distortions and take out the very wishful things sometimes expressed there has not been a solid word of adverse criticism of the Speech delivered by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor. I believe that the programme outlined will be tremendously useful to the people of this State and I am sure the members of this side of the House appreciate what is proposed to be done for the development of Queensland during the next decade.

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. HILTON (Carnarvon) (12.37 p.m.):** I wish to take the opportunity of making a few observations in the debate now drawing to a close. At the outset I associate myself with remarks made by the Premier regarding the appointment of Sir John Lavarack. I feel that all Queenslanders will welcome the

appointment of this distinguished Australian to the governorship of this State. I feel that I am echoing the sentiments of all hon. members when I wish him a very long and happy term of office.

I also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, wish to express my personal appreciation of the entry to this Parliament of the mover and seconder of the motion before the House. Their election is a clear manifestation that the people they represent continue to endorse the policy and administration of the Government of this State. They are well versed in matters political and industrial and the tribute paid to them on their maiden speeches speaks for itself. With others I join in wishing them very long and successful Parliamentary careers.

I have heard it said that the Address in Reply debate is a waste of time but I strongly disagree with that opinion. I hold the view that it serves many useful purposes. In the first place it enables members to state their opinions on current problems.

It enables them to advocate matters of major importance of concern to their electorates, and it offers an opportunity to the Government of the day to ascertain the general needs and desires of the people as a whole. Furthermore, it acts as a safety valve to our great democratic political machine. That fact alone is a very valuable aspect of the debate.

During this debate we have had many and varied views on the many problems that have been mentioned and there is no denying the fact that they are numerous and varied, both from the international and the domestic viewpoint. It would be impossible to deal adequately with many of them in the limited time allowed to hon. members in this debate, but I propose to make some observations on some of them.

Many people are extremely disappointed that the world has not already settled down to a state of normality, that peace and harmony do not prevail, although the war has been over for 12 months. I hold the view that the great psychological upset caused by the war is still linked with the international situation and that there can be no stability, no return to the normal way of life until the international situation has cleared and the four freedoms mentioned in the Atlantic Charter are an accomplished fact. When these four freedoms will be an established fact or when the peace treaties are concluded, if ever they are, God alone knows. Up to date the attempts of the nations holding conflicting ideologies to provide a charter that will ensure lasting security and peace for the world have been dismally abortive. There is the old saying that you cannot mix oil and water and that can be aptly applied to the international deliberations taking place at the present time. Those deliberations started off with a great flourish of trumpets, with hope and inspiration in the mind of every thinking person, but judged from the reports served up to us in the Press from time to time that hope and aspiration does not appear likely to be realised but is being

dashed to the ground. I do not think it is possible to mix oil and water, and by that I mean that it is impossible to find a happy solution of our world problems by trying to mix the foul corrosive water of dictatorship with the free smooth oil of democracy. I think those few words sum up the position of the present time.

When I refer to dictatorship, of course, I refer to the dictatorship that is inherent in the Communist set-up and its philosophy. If anyone should disagree with that contention, then I submit no other authority than Joseph Stalin himself. This Communist dictatorship is a very real thing, and its machinations and its evil influences are preventing a solution of world problems. Stalin himself, in a book written by him entitled "The Foundations of Leninism," at page 35, says—

"Communism is a dictatorship untrammelled by law and based on violence."

Those words speak for themselves. It is a system untrammelled by law and based on violence. That means, of course, that it can be nothing more nor less than a revolutionary dictatorship. I repeat that when you have a big nation subscribing to that ideology participating in the formation of a charter designed to bring world peace I do not think the object will be achieved.

It is significant to read in the day's Press a report sponsored by a committee set up by the United States of America to deal with this question of Communism. That report speaks for itself. I wish that some impartial body could be set up in this country to make an investigation into the whole subject, because Communism is preventing a return to normality after the war in this country, and its effects are very ill indeed. We have seen that illustrated time and time again. There is some awakening to the evil it presents, and some lessening of the apathy that has been in existence not only in the ranks of trade unions but all sections of the community. The sooner we recognise the position and shake off that apathy, get down to fundamentals and begin the very necessary work of establishing a better world order free from any influences of dictatorship the better will be our progress.

It is rather interesting at the present time to reflect on the efforts of Opposition members, not only in this Parliament but those opposed to Labour throughout the Commonwealth, to tack this label of Communism onto the Labour Party. Bereft of any constructive policy of their own, they are endeavouring to do this with a view to influencing public opinion in the forthcoming Federal election. I would point out to these gentlemen, and to the thinking public, that if they want to ascertain who of the political leaders have opposed the tactics practised by Russia they should read of the great Labour leaders of England, Australia and New Zealand and the part played by them in recent conferences. My candid view is that

Communism received the greatest fillip in English-speaking countries by the statements made by none other than Winston Churchill and the late President Roosevelt. In saying this I do not detract in any way from the magnificent war leadership of these two men, but what happened at Potsdam, at Yalta, and at other places is only now coming out. People in this country who read that Winston Churchill described Stalin as "that truly great man" sat up and took notice. When also they heard of the fulsome flattery that was bestowed on Stalin by the late President Roosevelt they also took notice. It is only now that the veil has been torn aside and that sound, democratic Labour leaders are facing up to the position and playing their part in preventing the encroachment of the communistic philosophy and doctrine in the affairs of the world's council.

Labour has a very fine political policy indeed. It is designed to provide the new world order that we heard so much about during the war. Opposition members throw up their hands in horror when Labour's policy is mentioned, and scream "Socialism," but any honest person who wishes to become fully cognisant of Labour's policy has only to read its political programme and understand its implications. They realise that Socialism advocated by the Labour Party is basically sound, and is designed to cater fully for all sections of the community and to develop this great State. Rabid, radical Socialism must of necessity lead to a dictatorship; that is one of the fundamental differences—an unbridgeable gap between the policy of the Labour Party and that of the Communist Party. I point out to hon. members that Mussolini was a rabid, radical Socialist in his early days, and in pursuance of his line of thought he developed the policy of Fascism. Hitler followed with his National Socialism; and for my part I could never perceive any fundamental difference between the philosophy of Fascism, Nazi-ism, and Communism. I make that statement plainly, and I want right now to draw the line of demarcation between the policy of the Labour Party and the policy of the Communist Party. I deprecate very much the unfair statements and unwarranted inferences of Opposition members and the Press throughout the length and breadth of the country in an effort to discredit the policy and programme of the great Australian Labour Party.

It is interesting that that line of action should be pursued at the present time, because in the very near future there will be a referendum on certain matters that are vital to the interests of the people of this great Commonwealth. I wish to deal with one aspect of the referendum proposals, because they are vitally linked with the policy of the Labour Party as it affects primary production. I refer to the marketing proposals that are put forward by the Commonwealth Government. There is a howl from the Opposition members about the wheat stabilisation scheme, recently promulgated by the Federal Labour Government

under the war-time powers they still possess, but which will cease at the close of this year. I think it is very necessary indeed that the marketing proposals contained in the referendum should be carried, because if they are not carried it is possible that the wheat-growers of Australia will be in a very difficult position after the close of this year. I heard the hon. member for Fassifern wax indignant the other day about the Federal proposals relating to the wheat stabilisation scheme. I ask the hon. member to take his mind back to the year 1939, to the position of the wheat industry before war broke out.

**Mr. Muller:** When world values were much lower than they are today.

**Mr. HILTON:** I know that. I made a speech on the wheat industry in 1939 too. I think the hon. member remembers it. The hon. member knows that in 1939 wheat values were at the lowest on record; and absolute disaster faced the wheat-growers of Australia. The Menzies Government tried to formulate a stabilisation scheme, but it was opposed by the State of Victoria; and because the Federal Government did not have adequate powers the whole thing crashed.

But for the advent of the war, which materially altered the position of the wheat-growers, God knows how they would have fared; and there is no saying that the same position will not again exist in the course of two or three years.

In 1939 there was a world carry-over of 852,000,000 bushels, world prices were down to the lowest on record, and the growers in this State and the Commonwealth were faced with the possibility of receiving anything as low as from 1s. to 1s. 6d. a bushel. Action had to be taken, and the Federal Government under their war-time powers took action. The first action taken in 1939 by the Menzies Government was for a scheme that would provide 3s. 10d. a bushel only for a limited crop of 140,000,000 bushels. That was the first step in this stabilisation of the wheat industry, but at that time the best that these men who are now posing as the forthcoming saviours of primary producers in this country could do was to make an offer of 3s. 10d. a bushel for 140,000,000 bushels only.

After the collapse of the Menzies Government—because of their lack of policy in this direction they lost many rural seats in the southern States—the Curtin Government took office and shortly afterwards the Scully wheat scheme was brought down. That scheme was a vast improvement on that offered by the previous Government—the Menzies Government. Under it 4s. a bushel was guaranteed to any farmer for the first 3,000 bushels and a net advance of 2s. a bushel on the remainder of his crop. The net advance was subsequently increased to 3s. a bushel at sidings. For the 1945-46 season the scheme was improved to the extent that the growers were receiving the equivalent of 5s. a bushel at sidings. Now

the Commonwealth Government come forward with a new plan guaranteeing 5s. 2d. a bushel for a period of five years.

**Mr. Muller:** Showing a big profit out of it.

**Mr. HILTON:** They are not showing a big profit. They have brought down a sound stabilisation scheme. Of any price realised over 5s. 2d. and up to 9s. 6d. the growers get 50 per cent. and the remainder goes into the Stabilisation Fund to provide for possible slumps. Neither the hon. member for Fassifern nor any other person can say that there is not a possibility that when full production is realised in the wheat-growing countries of the world there will not be a further decline in wheat prices and the policy of controlled growing will have to be enforced again in this country.

**Mr. Decker:** There is no risk for a few years anyhow.

**Mr. HILTON:** This scheme is for five years. There is no saying that the scheme cannot be modified, extended, or altered, and it is wise under present conditions for any Government to provide for five years ahead. Every primary producer should welcome the idea of being guaranteed economic security for five years. Of course, if Labour is in office then, as no doubt it will be, that scheme will be further extended until stabilisation is made a permanent feature of legislation in this country.

At 2.15 p.m.,

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the chair.

**Mr. HILTON:** I repeat that in view of the past history of the wheat industry it is essential that the powers sought by the Federal Government be vested in them and it is pure hypocrisy for members of the Country Party, both State and Federal, to oppose those proposals. Never in the past have any Government comprising Liberal and Country Party, or any other Government except a Labour Government, put forward any sound scheme designed to stabilise the wheat industry and give the growers economic security in the future. No-one can say that the parlous condition in which the wheat industry was placed at the beginning of the war will not recur when the major wheat-producing countries of the world are producing to their maximum again—and in these days of mechanical farming that may not be so long. No doubt we shall again see in this country the necessity for pursuing a policy of stabilisation and orderly growing and marketing. I earnestly commend the proposals now being put before the people in that respect.

Apart from the wheat industry, these proposals are necessary for all forms of primary production. Labour's rural policy is comprehensive. It is designed to give the maximum amount of security to primary producers. One of the best endorsements of Labour's policy in this direction that I have heard came from the Leader of the Country Party last session when, during the debate on the amendment to the Industrial and Provident Societies Act,

he asked the Premier to have issued a booklet setting out the legislation that has been brought down by the Labour Government giving a charter to primary producers. He wanted that information prepared so that it could be broadcast and held up as an example for all other Governments to follow. The Federal Labour Party's rural policy is identical with that of the State Labour Party, and I ask how any man can consistently argue against that policy during the forthcoming referendum after having so strongly endorsed it last session.

Compulsory organisation is essential in the interests of all primary producers. We in Queensland have led the way in this direction. Our policy has been praised loudly time and time again, both in the Press and by our political opponents. It is to be regretted that our political opponents, although on the one hand they praise our policy, they do, on the other when it suits them—when an election comes along—roundly condemn it, calling it Communism, Socialism, or any other 'ism' that comes into their minds. I repeat that for the protection of the primary producer it is essential that the Commonwealth Government be given the powers they seek.

I come now to another important primary industry about which I have spoken in this Chamber year after year. I refer to the tobacco industry. Last year I drew attention in this House to the great decline that had occurred in it.

**Mr. Muller:** Are you advocating organised marketing and socialisation?

**Mr. HILTON:** It is part of the Labour Party's programme and if my friend wants to get a clear picture of the whole position I invite him to read the Labour Party's political programme, where he will see that it stands for organised marketing and co-operation. Call it what you like, but it is a form of Socialism that the Labour Party stands for and what the Premier referred to this morning in regard to secondary industries. I challenge any hon. member of the Opposition to fault it, because I have heard them from time to time express approval of it. I repeat that the Leader of the Opposition asked that a booklet be prepared so that the people could read it and understand it more fully.

**Mr. Collins:** Organised marketing saved the butter industry.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. HILTON:** There has been a serious decline over the last six or seven years in the tobacco industry, and that has come about notwithstanding the fact that since the Federal Labour Party came into power they have taken steps to help that industry to the full. I realise that a shortage of man-power and other war factors were responsible for some of the decline. The latest figures made available to me show that there has been a serious decline indeed in the industry in Queensland. They show that the total number of growers in 1938-39 was 663, whereas it had fallen to 301 for the year 1945-46. The

acreage harvested in 1938-39 was 3,554 acres but it had fallen to 2,125 acres in 1945-46. Likewise, the production and the value of that production have declined accordingly. I say again that this has taken place despite the fact that a Federal Labour Government, at the request of the responsible Federal Minister, in 1942 allowed a 10 per cent. increase over the 1941 price, and a further 10 per cent. increase in 1943 and in 1944-1945 made available a subsidy of £75,000. Despite all those things the system of marketing appraisals is not all that it should be and the growers are discontented.

Speaking on this matter some 12 months ago I made the bold statement that the tobacco-growers were being robbed, and I repeat that statement, because only last week a man who has been growing tobacco for the last nine years told me he would not plant in the coming season, and when asked the reason said that the method of appraisal is too one-sided, the grower is really at the mercy of the appraisers and cannot get justice or satisfaction. The only solution to the whole problem is to grant the Federal Government the powers they seek so that there will be a compulsory organisation of the growers and they will elect their own men to represent them on the board. By this they should be able to lay down a policy that will be in their interests and in the interests of the community as a whole. I realise that on the board, as constituted, the Federal Government did make an honest attempt to give the growers a majority.

But I question the sincerity of those representatives because of the results that have been achieved. They were not elected by the growers, they were appointed, and I confess I do not know how the appointments were made. Any member of the board who allows the present unsatisfactory state of things to continue is not genuinely representing the growers.

My electorate is the only one in southern Queensland that produces tobacco. Last December I attended a protest meeting of the growers at which the growers' representative was present. I asked him certain questions relating to the industry but he told me that the information was confidential and that he could not give it to the growers at that stage or any other stage. I then told him candidly that if as a growers' representative he could not tell the growers what was their own business he should resign from the board as a protest. There must be compulsory organisation and of course compulsory election of growers' representatives. When you have a board constituted in that way the marketing problems that are worrying the growers so much today will disappear.

I strongly urge the State Secretary for Agriculture and Stock to give consideration to a proposal to adopt the scheme that has been proposed for the tuition, instruction and examination of those seeking appointment as appraisers. These men should be trained, they should be skilled in the art of appraising. Growers have told me that low-grade tobacco has been appraised on the same basis as that of the highest quality they produce.

The explanation of that is that either the appraisers did not know their job or were not doing it honestly. Therefore I recommend to the Minister that he give consideration to the making of representations to the Commonwealth Government for the appointment of highly qualified appraisers who can do the job satisfactorily and will be free from any outside influences.

The same argument in relation to compulsory organisation of primary producers can be applied to all forms of primary production. Even the graziers at the present time are waging a conflict over this very question; they are taking a ballot on whether they will have compulsory organisation or not. That is in accordance with Labour's policy. Right at the outset we laid down this principle and we passed legislation ensuring that primary producers could have compulsory organisation and control of their own destinies.

Many items of great interest and hope for the State were mentioned in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech with which he opened this session of Parliament. I desire in the little time left to me to make reference to one or two matters in particular.

The first is that an agreement has been reached between New South Wales and Queensland as to water conservation on the border stream. Representing the electors in Queensland who will be most concerned in this proposal, I welcome the news very gladly indeed and so do the many people who live in the area. One has only to visit the proposed dam site at Mingoola to realise the immense possibilities in that area. Certain acreages have been mentioned as being suitable for irrigation but, as I said before, the whole matter has not yet been fully explored or detailed information concerning it made available. In my opinion there are hundreds of thousands of acres on both sides of the river, that is, in Queensland and New South Wales that will benefit by this proposed policy, and here is a place in Australia in which, if water is available, thousands of suitable immigrants together with our own citizens can be placed on the land.

When water is provided there it will result in a great deal of closer settlement. That will go a long way towards settling the land hunger existing for our own citizens. With the application of water to the land there and at other places we shall have land eminently suited for migrants who wish to settle in this great continent. I suggest that when the detailed plans of that big scheme are being worked out consideration be given to the incorporation with it of a hydro-electric scheme. Taking the site itself, the height of the proposed wall, and the flow that will take place in that stream, it is apparent, even to a layman not conversant with engineering problems, that there will be sufficient water there to operate a hydro-electric scheme.

**Mr. Macdonald:** You have only a normal flow there.

**Mr. HILTON:** That is so. The dam will conserve a large volume of water, and the normal flow can be directed through the spillway and to electric generators. The

normal flow, plus the fall given by the dam, will provide ample power to generate vast quantities of electricity. That, in conjunction with the application of water to the fertile regions in that area, will mean much for the primary producers and the closer settlement we hope will take place there.

**Mr. Macdonald:** You cannot use water for irrigation and also for hydro-electric power.

**Mr. HILTON:** I see no reason why the overflow of water from that dam, after it has fulfilled its purpose of generating hydro-electric power, cannot be utilised for irrigation as well. However, that is a question for experts to determine. When details of the scheme are being worked out that aspect of the matter can be kept in mind. Again, if during a dry season the flow of water diminishes to such an extent that it will no longer provide sufficient power to operate the hydro-electric scheme, there is a vast coal deposit in close proximity to the dam, running from Ashford in New South Wales to the Queensland border. My information of that deposit is that it is immense, but has never been worked because of its isolated position. There you have a very valuable auxiliary to generating power in the event of waters not being sufficient to work continuously the hydro-electric scheme I have suggested.

Those are projects that mean much to the people. But the road in achieving them is long and hard. We need man-power, money and materials. This country has not yet been able to regain its feet after its magnificent effort in the great war, but where there is a will there is a way. My earnest message to the people is that they co-operate and work wholeheartedly towards carrying out these projects, so that we make this the great State and continent that we confidently expect it to be in years to come.

**Mr. O'SHEA (Warrego) (2.34 p.m.):** I desire to congratulate the mover and seconder of this motion, whose speeches followed on the excellent Speech of the Lieutenant-Governor, Hon. F. A. Cooper. I also take this opportunity of congratulating Mr. Cooper on his elevation to the position of Lieutenant-Governor.

I propose to deal as well as I can with the subject of irrigation, which has had "quite a belting" round this Chamber during this debate on the Address in Reply. Several members of the Opposition have referred to "getting on with the job of irrigation in a statesmanlike manner." Statesmen do not usually conserve enough water to carry out the job of irrigation. First of all, it is very important to examine every possibility that the State offers for the purpose. According to some of the statements made from time to time, one would imagine that it was only a matter of going out and building a concrete wall across a creek somewhere out in the back country.

I heard a remark by the hon. member for Stanley—and I hope he was only trying to irritate the hon. member for Carnarvon—that he was not giving it as his considered

opinion—that water could not be used for the generation of hydro-electric power and irrigation both. I should like to know what method they have in the Burrinjuck scheme for separating the water used for the generation of electric power from the water used for irrigation farther down, on the Griffiths-Leeton area. It would be a man-sized job to separate the two volumes of water. It is very easy for us to talk about this business of irrigation, but I do believe what the hon. member for Carnarvon has said: that the only possible scheme we have in sight for the generation of electric power is the Mingoola scheme. I understand that it will not be very long before an agreement is completed and the necessary legislation passed through the New South Wales Parliament and this Parliament to put the scheme under way. It has been urged, particularly by members of The New Deal for the West Party, whatever they might be, that we must go in for a widespread irrigation scheme. I noticed some time back the Secretary for Public Lands mentioned various schemes that have already been examined by people who are in a position to give some expert advice on the matter. Until there is a thorough survey and until the engineers have gone thoroughly into the matter it will be dangerous to attempt to go on with this general scheme of irrigation. What is the use of talking about irrigating from the Warrego River? You know something about the Warrego River, Mr. Speaker, and what would be the use of talking about building a weir across that river with 60 or 70 feet of sand on the bottom? It is no use arguing about these things. The only possible chance you have of doing it is to do it where you have a site suitable for the construction of a weir or a lock or a dam or whatever you like to call it.

The Paroo Shire Council has not sat down and waited. It has had an engineer on the job and reached the blue-print stage for the construction of a dam at Cunnamulla to hold 1,000,000,000 gallons of water. That is the only site on the Warrego River I know of that would be useful for that purpose, unless there is another at Baker's Bend or the Mangalore waterhole, at which however the irrigation facilities are not as favourable as they are in the Cunnamulla area. In irrigation several factors have to be considered. It is a simple matter to establish a system of sprays to irrigate two or three acres but in irrigation on the scale that is necessary to give some relief to the parched areas of the West we must think in terms of hundreds of acres. The only system that would be reasonably cheap there is the flooding system in which, however, there are problems too. Drainage and other matters have to be taken into consideration. It is not much use for a layman to argue that these jobs should be done and ask why they are not done. It is 12 months since the war ended and various members of the Opposition have said the Government will do nothing. Even the Leader of the Opposition the other day said that had material and man-power been available the Government would not have done the job. If we throw away thousands of pounds or hundreds of thousands of pounds, nay,

millions of pounds on experiments we shall not get very far. I would remind hon. members opposite, for instance, of the experiment that cost the Victorian Government about £35,000,000 for compensation. We do not want such an experiment in Queensland.

I have had the advantage of having spent nine years on the dams and irrigation areas in the South. I do not know whether that enables me to speak with authority but at least it allows me to speak with as much authority as the majority of members in this House. The other day we had the absurdity of hearing in this Chamber a member saying that the Government were responsible for the aggravation of the drought condition. I do not know whether the Opposition think that the Government in general or the Cabinet in particular should be supermen. I do think that they do not but that they were merely talking; and sometimes it is so very handy to say such things when one is not compelled to deliver the goods.

I have noticed that every critic of the Government has kept severely away from the conservation of fodder.

At 2.45 p.m.,

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

**Mr. O'SHEA:** I believe that the time will come when it will be necessary for the Government to compel certain people in this State to conserve fodder. They say it cannot be done, that it is too expensive, but I know of one station in New South Wales running 150,000 sheep that has never suffered loss since the 1902 drought. There they learned their lesson in 1902 and have conserved thousands upon thousands of tons of fodder ever since. I refer to Wingadee Station, owned by the A.N.Z.L.C. In addition to running 150,000 sheep a year, Wingadee is one of the places where thousands of Queensland cattle find a resting-place. They come from Dalgona, and go via Boatman to Wingadee. They are all owned by the one company.

**Mr. Macdonald:** That is the Australian and N.Z. Land Co.?

**Mr. O'SHEA:** I do not know what it is, but I know that Dalgona, Boatman, Wingadee and one or two others are owned by the same company.

Fodder conservation is important, and no one will ever convince me that it cannot be put into effect in Queensland, on the Western Downs in particular. I know of no better fodder than Mitchell grass which grows in abundance all over the Western Downs. Experiments carried out at some places have proved that hay made from Mitchell grass is equal to any other hay it is possible to grow.

**Mr. Jones:** Rodney Downs had a number of stacks in the 1926 drought and was able to keep its sheep alive.

**Mr. O'SHEA:** Maxvale is another property that conserves fodder and I do not think any serious losses occur there. Of

course, if the selector, pastoralist or landholder is not willing to co-operate with the Government, the only thing to do is compel him to take action to protect himself.

**Mr. Muller:** Wipe him out.

**Mr. O'SHEA:** Not at all. I noticed the other day that a man in Victoria who could not feed his pigs and who locked them up and let them die was sentenced to three months' imprisonment, yet the cocky in Queensland can let his stock die, either through laziness, meanness, or other cause, and he is not reported by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

How many people ever make any attempt to conserve fodder? Very few indeed, yet the moment a drought overtakes us, the moment the stock begin to get poor we hear cries of "What are the Government doing?" The Government have put the people on the land, they have given it to them or leased it to them, on conditions far more favourable than those obtaining in any other State in the Commonwealth.

I shall not go into international affairs but shall keep my remarks to Australia and particularly to Queensland. I believe that this State offers great facilities for the conservation of fodder—I mean bush fodder to a very large extent. Let us go to the Downs and to Dalby and the wheat-growing areas of this State and ask the farmers on the Opposition benches how many men in the wheat areas cut a headland. No-one will answer me, for the reason that nobody does cut a headland. Farmers go into a crop with a machine and there is waste in the stripping of the crop.

**Mr. Muller:** I suggest you go on a farm for a while.

**Mr. O'SHEA:** I suggest that the hon. member do better with his farm. I have had all the experience many years ago that I want in farming.

**Mr. Muller:** What, stopping other people from working?

**Mr. O'SHEA:** I am not like some hon. members opposite; I have not favoured strikes or lockouts, and I have never had anything to do with the shutting-down of an industry if it does not suit me or the people I am associated with. There is much to be said about strikes, and let me digress a moment to deal with strikes. I want to know how much more criminality there is in a body of workers or wage-earners going on strike than in an employer's locking out his workers? The Secretary for Public Works mentioned John Brown, the coal king, a few days ago. It is on record that in 1927 he wanted the cessation of work at Richmond Main and Pelaw Main, and decided to get some fellows to organise a strike. He anonymously donated £1,500 towards the strike funds. He was a very charitable man. It suited him to have a strike in the industry but the hon. member for Fassifern would not be as scientific as that. He would simply say, "I am locking you out." Strikes do take place and I say that I am a member of

an organisation that has endeavoured to keep its men at work, but if we have a just cause we will go on strike. If there is no other means of redress, we will stage a strike.

**Mr. Muller:** And hold the whole country up?

**Mr. O'SHEA:** We do not do that; we stage our strikes scientifically. You see, we have scientific ideas.

Now I wish to speak about those who say, "Oh, they are inciting insurrection and that sort of thing." Let us compare some remarks passed in this House only a few days ago with something that was said in this very Parliament 55 years ago by F. T. Brentnall, a member of the Upper House, and let us see the striking similarity of the language of today to that of 55 years ago.

**Mr. Macdonald:** History repeats itself, you know.

**Mr. O'SHEA:** The other day the hon. member for West Moreton said, "Something will have to be done, we shall have to take drastic action. Put them in gaol, gaol them, gaol them. Yes, that is the only thing." I want to know: is the man who goes on strike and decides to withhold his labour power from the employer who is not suiting him guilty of any greater crime than the man who employs him and chisels him for part of his wages? I listened to the doleful dirge of the hon. member for Cunningham the other day. Some time ago I interjected while he was speaking, and I think it was the hon. member for Fassifern who said, "Deny it, deny it." I asked him whether it was not a fact that a company of which he was a chairman was prosecuted for a breach of the award.

**Mr. Muller:** What was the breach?

**Mr. O'SHEA:** Paying a man less than he was entitled to under the award.

**Mr. MULLER:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The hon. member implies that I am associated with a company that has been guilty of paying an employee less than the award. I say that is a deliberate untruth, and I ask that it be withdrawn.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I think the hon. member for Warrego was referring to the hon. member for Cunningham.

**Mr. Muller:** He was referring to me.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I think the hon. member for Warrego was referring to the hon. member for Cunningham, not to the hon. member for Fassifern.

**Mr. Muller:** If he sidesteps it is all right, but he did refer to me or my company.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. O'SHEA:** I have no intention of sidestepping anything. If I have occasion to tell the hon. member anything I shall not sidestep, but I shall tell him. If I have the goods on him, make no mistake about it, I shall let him have it. What I said was that I interjected and asked a question of the hon.

member for Cunningham and I said that I believed it was the hon. member for Fassifern who said, "Deny it, deny it." Now, there is the statement I made. I have heard, although the accusation was denied, that the Mount Tyson Dairy Association was prosecuted for a breach of an award. I am sorry that the hon. member for Cunningham is not here, because I have waited 12 months to bring this matter along to prove that he was guilty. If a person associated with a company, co-operative or not, is guilty of countenancing a breach of an award, or of robbing a man of part of his wages, he comes very close to the category of an industrial criminal.

**Mr. Macdonald:** Too stupid for words.

**Mr. O'SHEA:** It may not suit the hon. member, but it suits me.

**Mr. Macdonald:** It is not common sense.

**Mr. O'SHEA:** I want to go a little further now. I want to know what excuse can be made for all those people from whom there is collected, yearly, about £100,000 representing short-payment of wages.

**Mr. Kerr:** It has not been hundreds of thousands since Labour has been in power.

**Mr. O'SHEA:** The hon. member would not know.

**Mr. Bruce:** One union alone collects that amount.

**Mr. O'SHEA:** One union alone collects over £50,000 a year, without the help of the Department of Labour and Employment or of any other organisation. That is a very conservative estimate too, but that is the amount collected yearly by that one union in respect of breaches of awards in the State of Queensland.

**Mr. Macdonald:** These defaulters were Labour supporters.

**Mr. O'SHEA:** The defaulters were some of the friends of hon. members opposite, not Labour supporters. I have had a little experience with some of their supporters, who are not Labour supporters. We will not mention names in case that might make him a little uncomfortable.

I am sorry that the hon. member for West Moreton is not present, as I asked him to be here this afternoon. What I want to know is: why are the words he used—"these terrible men, these wicked men, and these desperadoes who blockaded Queensland more effectively than the Japanese did"—so similar to the language employed in this House by the late Hon. F. T. Brentnall 55 years ago. He then said—

"I have not the least doubt in my mind that the intention was to bring on a general insurrection . . ."

He was referring to the strike that took place in 1891.

**Mr. Muller:** What are you quoting from?

**Mr. O'SHEA:** The book called "Alice in Wonderland"—

" . . . in the colony; but it was precipitated by the violent action of a section of the strikers who may be regarded as the scum of the country."

That was said here 55 years ago. There is no alteration of those views today. The utterances I have quoted show that there has been no alteration in the outlook of the people who have been financed by the wage-slaves of this country; they are the same as the words of someone who happens to be silent at the present time.

**Mr. Muller:** Give us the name of the little book.

**Mr. O'SHEA:** The hon. member will be able to get it later on.

I now come to the maudlin utterances made by that bad old mandarin in connection with the wage-earners of this State. He said, "I represent the workers." Has he ratted on his party? Has he left his party? It is news to me that the Q.P.P. represents anything but vested interests in this State. If he has changed his policy, I suggest that his party should have a meeting and that they call him to order.

**Mr. Morris:** Who is it you are talking about?

**Mr. O'SHEA:** I am talking about that dapper old mandarin you have in your party.

**Mr. Morris:** We have no such man in our party.

**Mr. O'SHEA:** Yes, and when you begin to register you will work it up. I do not propose to deal any further with that part of the issue in the recent strike but I do suggest the spirit of conciliation that has been so very much in evidence for a considerable number of years in Queensland will be restored and that it will continue to be used in future. No-one regrets more than I do that a strike took place in this State in the meat industry. We hear the same old wail every day—that £6,000,000 was lost by the graziers. I want to know where we got all the meat that was marketed in Brisbane during the period of the strike. I want to know where we got it from before this money was lost. I also want to know, following on a statement made the other day by the hon. member for West Moreton, what happened to more than one million sheep that were sold to the Riverina and are now in the Riverina and whether those sheep are represented in the millions of money he spoke about. That is one place alone—more than 1,000,000 sheep were bought in Queensland and sent to the Riverina.

It is true that losses have been heavy. There is a scream for subsidies and drought relief and that kind of thing. Would hon. members opposite consider the advisability of extending subsidies to the workers who lose employment in these districts through the ravages of drought? No, they will not be considered at all. The question is this: if drought relief is to be provided, to what extent can it be done when you cannot buy fodder and the sheep and cattle cannot eat pound notes, silver or pennies? After all, when you consider that lucerne hay is round about £17, £18 or £20 a ton in the Cunnamulluk district for the purpose of feeding sheep—and they will live on 4 oz. a day if the

get some corn with it—you get an idea of the cost. If it is possible for us to alleviate drought conditions by making weirs where practicable and irrigating, that will be very good. Two councils in this State, the Balonne and the Paroo, have got to the blue-print stage in the matter. We will find them asking the Government to go out and do these things. What are the local authorities for? What functions have local authorities? Are not their functions to help and co-operate with the Government instead of asking for loans to enable them to carry out some wild scheme? The Government are accused of not doing anything. Members of the Opposition have supported very many Acts that were passed during the last couple of years, and the Government could not have been wrong all the time. Surely there would be once when they were right; and would you suggest that the only time they were right was when the Opposition voted with them? I do not believe members opposite would be presumptuous enough to contend that the only time anything sensible was done was when the Opposition supported it. There is no need for people to weep about the future of the Labour Party. It is well entrenched in Queensland.

At 3.9 p.m.,

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the chair.

**Mr. O'SHEA:** In 1892 the first Labour man came into this Assembly representing the electorate of Barcoo, and in 1915 Labour became the Government and has continued in office ever since with the exception of one disastrous period—and everyone talks about it as being a disastrous period—of three years.

I regret that you were away from the Chamber for a time, Mr. Speaker, because I desired to tell further stories about the conditions that obtained in Queensland, a part of Queensland with which you are well acquainted. When you were born at Augathella the clanking of the chains had not died that had been forged for the shackling of men who went on strike in 1891, when 14 men were confined in two cells, each 7 feet by 8 feet—seven in each cell—and seven on the veranda secured by a chain. The same thing is being used today and it makes us and everyone else who is our follower very suspicious.

I commiserate with rather than envy the Opposition. I do not think there is any likelihood that they will reach the Treasury benches of Queensland. If they want to be in the Government, I suggest they mend their ways politically.

**Hon. T. L. WILLIAMS** (Port Curtis—Secretary for Public Instruction) (3.11 p.m.): In common with other speakers from this side of the House, I desire to offer my congratulations to the Hon. F. A. Cooper, the Lieutenant-Governor, on his recent appointment to that very high and honourable position. I feel, Mr. Speaker, that in the opinion of many people in this State, altogether apart from members on this side, this appointment was a just one—a just reward and not a political reward, as many

Opposition members would have the public believe. I would say that the appointment was a reward for past services to Queensland, to Australia and in cause of Empire in many directions.

I congratulate Sir John Lavarack on being the first Queensland-born Governor to be appointed to that very high office in this State.

Of course, I congratulate the mover and seconder of this motion on the able manner in which they carried out their duties. I think, Mr. Speaker, you will agree that each made a very successful debut. Each certainly contributed to the "Hansard" records of this Parliament a very able speech.

Much criticism has emanated from hon. members opposite as to the Government's proposals for the State's future development, as outlined in detail in His Excellency's Speech. The case put forward by the Opposition in reply to the motion for the Address in Reply on behalf of the Government was weak. Evidently it contained too much meat for the kind of hamburger wrapping with which the Opposition would wish to encompass it. Labour makes no apology for the length of its programme of works for the benefit of this State.

Because of a busy fortnight, due first to the visit of Australasian inspectors and secondly, to the visit of the New Educational Fellowship delegates from overseas, I have heard few of the speeches here, but of those speeches I heard, I think that made by the hon. member for Fassifern was the most astounding. It could have been more astounding only if he had gone to the extreme of admitting that no other Government, that is, any Government opposed to Labour, had ever done anything for the primary producers and particularly the dairymen of this State.

I want to put the whole position as I know it. The Secretary for Agriculture and Stock had already spoken before the hon. member for Fassifern made his speech, and as a former holder of that portfolio I feel that I, next to the hon. member for Cook, should be able to give some figures to the House, and more important still, to the people of this State, to indicate just where the hon. member for Fassifern made the mistakes that are so frequently to be found in his utterances. First I propose reading an extract from a letter recently received from the Federal Minister for Agriculture and Stock, Mr. Scully, under date 8 August, 1946, in which he says—

"Under the Dairying Industries Assistance Act the following amounts have been distributed through factories in Queensland to dairy farmers:—

	£
1942-43 .. ..	1,186,306
1943-44 .. ..	7,346,120
1944-45 .. ..	6,812,197
1945-46 .. ..	6,373,511
	<hr/>
	£21,718,134"

**Mr. Macdonald:** Where are you getting it from?

**Mr. WILLIAMS:** The truth always hurts. The letter goes on to say—

“As you are no doubt aware, the subsidy is being distributed on behalf of the Commonwealth Government by the Commonwealth Dairy Produce Equalisation Committee, and during the subsidy year 1946-47, which commenced on 1 April, 1946, the Government will provide the Equalisation Committee with such funds as are necessary to bring each factory's financial returns covering both realisations and subsidy to the figure of 200s. 8d. per cwt. for butter and 118s. 1½d. per cwt. for cheese. The figures are calculated to give an average return of 1s. 7¾d. per lb. commercial butter to the producer at the factory platform.

“On the basis of the interim realisation established by the Equalisation Committee, the payment being made by the Commonwealth Government is 31s. 8d. per cwt. butter and 16s. 7¾d. per cwt. cheese.”

I quote those figures in reply to the statement made by an hon. member who is a leader in dairy thought and a leader in dairy-factory work, an hon. member who in this House, in reply to an interjection, says that

the Federal Government's subsidy to the dairymen in effect was not worth two hoots to the individual dairyman.

**Mr. Muller:** They have not given them anything at all. Nothing was paid to them.

**Mr. WILLIAMS:** I have just quoted figures, and I shall read another table that will show where the hon. member is all at sea. I have not had time to collect all the figures relating to all the Queensland dairy factories, but those I have compiled contradict the hon. member's statement completely and turn the tables on the hon. member himself. As I said a moment ago, he is a leader in dairying activities and dairying thought, and one wonders—

**Mr. Muller:** He is selected by the dairy farmers, too.

**Mr. WILLIAMS:** He is a leader, it does not matter who selects him. I am wondering what his associates think of him. The hon. member said that the subsidy was not worth anything to the dairymen, that nothing was paid to them. I now quote a table showing the official total subsidy payments made to North Coast dairy factories for distribution to their suppliers. They are—

—	1942-43.		1943-44.		1944-45.		Totals.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Caboilture .. .. .	31,572	10 8	104,854	1 5	106,687	5 8	243,113	17 9
Maleny .. .. .	13,479	11 10	40,473	19 4	47,827	14 2	101,781	5 4
Maryborough .. .. .	62,765	19 7	217,819	2 0	210,418	11 10	491,003	13 5
South Burnett .. .. .	22,102	6 6	79,923	7 3	75,787	1 6	177,812	15 3
Stanley River .. .. .	5,084	6 8	28,575	2 1	27,856	12 1	61,516	0 10
Wide Bay .. .. .	45,217	12 4	156,928	16 10	152,898	8 9	355,044	17 11

**Mr. Muller:** Whose figures are they?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. WILLIAMS:** They were obtained from official sources and the hon. member should have them in his possession.

**Mr. Muller** interjected.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member for Fassifern will have to obey my call to order. Otherwise I shall have to deal with him.

**Mr. WILLIAMS:** I now give details of subsidy payments that have been made to individual suppliers of butter factories:—

—	No. of Suppliers.	1942-43.		1943-44.		1944-45.	
		£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
WIDE BAY ASSOCIATION.							
Gympie and Cooroy Factories .. .. .	1,380	32 15	3½	113 14	3½	110 15	10½
SOUTH BURNETT.							
Murgon, Proston, and Goomeri Factories .. .	760	29 1	8	105 3	3	99 14	5
CABOILTURE CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION.							
Caboilture Factory .. .. .	621	25 11	6	87 6	4	90 2	2½
Pomona Factory .. .. .	217	23 14	3½	78 16	4	79 5	11½
Eumundi Factory .. .. .	383	27 19	3½	88 17	4	90 4	7½
MALENY ASSOCIATION.							
Maleny Factory .. .. .	331	40 14	5½	122 5	7	144 9	10
STANLEY RIVER ASSOCIATION.							
Woodford Factory .. .. .	265	19 3	8½	39 2	8½	127 0	10½
MARYBOROUGH.							
Maryborough Factory .. .. .	404	26 3	3	70 15	4	87 12	2
Biggenden Factory .. .. .	375	20 17	3½	83 19	4	80 1	11½
Kingaroy Factory .. .. .	732	23 15	7½	99 2	1	77 14	6
Mundubbera Factory .. .. .	461	27 14	2	94 10	1½	90 17	3½
Wondai Factory .. .. .	483	25 19	11½	92 16	7	87 19	4
Tansley Factory .. .. .	55	28 10	6	99 0	4	95 16	11½

So much for the hon. member's statement.

**Mr. Muller:** It is no wonder that they are all broke.

**Mr. WILLIAMS:** It is not all rubbish.

**Mr. Muller:** I said no wonder they are all broke.

**Mr. WILLIAMS:** They are not all broke. The hon. member had the effrontery and the hide to say that what the Commonwealth Government have done for the dairying industry is not worth two hoots. The Commonwealth Auditor-General, in his report for the year ended June, 1945, says that the primary producers of Australia since 1942 have received no less than £15,344,623 in total subsidy payments. It is also officially stated that as far back as 1944 mortgages and bank overdrafts of primary producers throughout the Commonwealth were reduced by not less than £60,000,000, and at the present time the rural products of Australia were being subsidised by an amount of £50,000,000 annually. Mr. Scully, the Federal Minister for Agriculture and Commerce, states that for the 1945-46 year the suppliers to dairy factories were paid an additional £6,373,511, making a grand total of £21,718,134 in four years.

Another important fact is that as a result of the fixation of prices and the economic security afforded to primary producers by Government bounties, there are now 240,000 Australian farmers with incomes ranging from £250 to £5,000 a year as against 94,900 in 1939-40. These figures, taken from the Commonwealth Auditor-General's recent report, go to show conclusively that the primary producer under the present Commonwealth Labour Government has not suffered to the extent that hon. members want the people to believe.

**Mr. Macdonald:** Is that from the report of the Commonwealth Auditor-General?

**Mr. WILLIAMS:** I said the Federal Auditor-General's report.

**Mr. Macdonald:** Is that the report that refers to Mr. Rosevear's travelling expenses?

**Mr. WILLIAMS:** I am not concerned with Mr. Rosevear's travelling expenses. I am dealing with the dairying industry of the State.

Two messages recently appeared in the daily Press, one from Canberra and the other from Brisbane, indicating that the primary producers have not suffered under Labour's administration in the Federal sphere. The first message, that from Canberra, says—

“The indebtedness of primary producers to banks, trustee and pastoral companies declined from £300,000,000 in 1939 to £240,000,000 in 1945.

“During this period £65,000,000 was paid out in subsidy to primary industries, in addition to £12,000,000 paid for potato and whole milk production.”

The Prime Minister, Mr. Chifley, revealed this recently in the House of Representatives in reply to a question by Mr. Fraser (Labour, New South Wales).

The next extract from a newspaper I wish to read is headed “Milk Subsidy,” and reads—

“‘Since May 1943, the Prices Branch have paid £567,373 in subsidy to milk-producers,’ said the Deputy Prices Commissioner (Mr. Lindsey) today.

“He gave this figure as a reply to a statement in the ‘Telegraph’ on Thursday by the organising secretary of the Country Milk Association (Mr. A. C. Vores) that the Prices Branch was unsympathetic towards milk-producers. That subsidy was in addition to the indirect subsidies paid on fertilisers to grow fodder, said Mr. Lindsey.”

I am not concerned with the opinion of hon. members opposite on this matter; they can challenge my figures if I am wrong.

**Mr. Muller:** Someone else did.

**Mr. WILLIAMS:** Mr. Corser can answer all those statements relating to the butter factories I have mentioned if he so desires.

The hon. member for Enoggera saw fit to attack the State's education system and its activities and based his charge on an alleged remark at a welcome to visiting State school inspectors from all States in the Commonwealth and from New Zealand during their conference in Brisbane two weeks ago. I was present and tendered these delegates a welcome as Secretary for Public Instruction. A report appeared in the Press that Mr. Edwards had charged the teachers in this State with excluding the parents of children from the school precincts as they did not conduce to good order, or something to that effect.

**Mr. Morris:** I quoted the actual words as they appeared in the Press.

**Mr. WILLIAMS:** I am giving the House what was actually said. People interested in education in this and other countries agreed on the point indicated by Mr. Edwards. This is what Mr. Edwards said—

“Many teachers are prone to forget that parents of children attending their school want to be interested in their children and their school and educational facilities, in a measure beyond the comprehension of many of our teachers. That is to be regretted. If more teachers would realise this than is the case, the school, the teacher, and the education system would be all the better for it generally.”

What is wrong with that statement?

**Mr. Morris:** That amplifies a statement made in the Press.

**Mr. WILLIAMS:** That is not so. I have his words, which were taken down as they were spoken. I think everyone will agree that a parent, who is interested in his child in the family circle, should be interested in the child in school and in the State's activities. The hon. member will, I am sure, agree that there is something in what Mr. Edwards has said. Probably the Director-General took his cue from something I had to say just

a few minutes before when opening the conference. My remarks were not reported in the Press, but this is what I said—

“There is at the present time a marked upsurge among the parents of this State in the demand for more education for their children; this may be due in part to the effect of the world war, now happily ended in victory. At the same time there is an increased number of children requiring education; this is due to the cumulative effect of the increased birth-rate from 1939 onwards, I understand.

“A further effect is the demand of many parents that their children should commence school earlier and leave later.”

I dealt with what we are doing in this State by giving a greater measure of encouragement to parents to take an interest in the children attending various schools—their children in particular. I concluded by saying—

“The work of the parents who comprise the school committees, parents and citizen associations, and similar bodies, has been performed with the same enthusiasm that has always characterised their efforts. They are directly responsible for many amenities which could not otherwise be supplied in schools, and their help and interest in the welfare of their schools is a great and constant encouragement to the teachers.”

Those are my words, and I will stand by them. The Director-General of Education probably based his remarks on that hope of his Minister that some greater interest would be taken by parents in the work, and secondly that teachers would allow parents to have an interest in the work of the children. Those are the two points to which I wish to refer. I am sure the hon. member for Enoggera will realise that if a Press statement is not what he thinks it should be, there is always one source to which he can go to get a more correct perspective.

**Mr. MARRIOTT (Bulimba) (3.36 p.m.):**

At the outset I, like other hon. members, extend my congratulations to the Lieutenant-Governor, the Hon. F. A. Cooper, on his elevation to the highest position that could be offered to him at the moment in this State. Other speakers have already extolled his virtues and his good points; there is no need for me to repeat what they have said, but I might be pardoned for mentioning that included amongst his experiences prior to entering Parliament was that of trade-union secretary. Other hon. members and I have had a similar experience. I think the appointment was justified and that Mr. Cooper has filled the position with credit.

I also wish to express my appreciation and the appreciation of a large number of people, particularly in the Bulimba electorate, of the appointment of Sir John Lavarack, a distinguished soldier, to the position of Governor of this State. It is a splendid appointment, and we realise the distinction that has been bestowed on him and his family, some of whom live in Brisbane.

I desire to congratulate the hon. member for East Toowoomba and the hon. member for Bremer, the mover and seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, on the excellent speeches they delivered and the sincere sentiments they expressed. I hope their experiences in this House will not sour them and cause them to develop into cynics.

The Lieutenant-Governor in his Speech indicated that the Government have been busy with works other than those involved in providing the housing that is so badly needed. He particularly mentioned that one of the works included in the works programme for the future, was that of providing additional badly needed hospital facilities. I hope the work of providing hospital facilities will be carried out very quickly. It has been my fortune or misfortune during the last few months to have had the experience of hospital treatment in the public wards of the Brisbane General Hospital.

There is nothing like personal experience to enable one to form an exact or proper opinion of what is occurring. I suggest to the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs that he suggest to the Brisbane and South Coast Hospitals Board that it prevail on some of its members to make personal investigations in the wards of the General Hospital, and see for themselves what is going on—the difficulties of administration and nursing, and the conditions that patients have to put up with. I urge them to make personal inspections as frequently as they can of the wards to see the difficulties the whole of the staff have to contend with. I noticed various things and I placed them before the manager. He thanked me for the suggestions and is endeavouring to put them into practice to overcome those difficulties and the handicaps patients and staff have to undergo.

It is admitted by all that there is an acute shortage of nurses and I understand that the Brisbane and South Coast Hospitals Board, in common with other hospital boards, is doing all it possibly can to get trainees to overcome it and to keep the staff up to the number that will be required in the future. If it were not for the fact that in these public wards patients who are able to get about and do something for themselves help patients who are bed-ridden the nursing staff could never cope with the situation. These people in misfortune help each other to the best of their ability and thus help also the staff, who are hard-pressed and pushed at all times.

I made it my business to pick at random a list of advertisements for nurses in the daily Press and the one I hold at the moment is taken from the Brisbane “Courier-Mail” of Thursday, 29 August. It is interesting to note in the column headed “Hospital Vacancies” the number of vacancies for trained nursing personnel in Queensland hospitals at the moment. Of course, these advertisements vary from day to day, but it might interest members to examine the list and so obtain an idea of the shortage. The

paper contains advertisements for the following:—

"Hospital.	Vacancies.
Mitchell .. .. .	Matron
Alpha .. .. .	D.C. Sister
Kilcoy .. .. .	Assistant in Nursing
Childers .. .. .	Matron
Dalby .. .. .	Relieving Matron
Atherton and Herberton	D.C. Sisters
Rockhampton .. .. .	D.C. Sister
Fermoy Private .. .. .	S.C. Sister
Gympie .. .. .	(Maternity Ward) D.C. Sisters
Gympie .. .. .	Obstetric Trainees
Rockhampton .. .. .	Midwifery Trainees
Sherwood Private .. .. .	Nurse
Berilda .. .. .	Two D.C. Obstetric Nurses and Experienced Nurse
Richmond .. .. .	Two D.C. Sisters, two S.C. Sisters, and two Nurses
Surat .. .. .	One D.C. Sister, two Trained Nurses, two Experienced Sisters."

The Turrawan Private Hospital requires a staff nurse and the Yeppoon Hospital a D.C. sister. There were also advertisements in the paper of that day from hospitals in other States, which shows that there is an acute shortage of trained nurses.

I might be asked what suggestion I put forward to overcome it. In answer let me say that I was interested to notice the following in Smith's Weekly of 31 August—

"Mental Nurses.

"The first group of 200 fully-qualified mental nurses recruited in Great Britain is expected to arrive in New Zealand in from six to eight weeks' time. They will assist greatly in relieving the shortage in the Dominion. It had been suggested at one time that the English nurses should be sent by air, but it had been found that surface transport was available, and in the long run would be more expedient. It appears likely that later New Zealand will recruit young women in Britain for other branches of the nursing service."

I commend that obvious suggestion to the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs so that he may take the matter up with the hospitals boards throughout the State, to see whether it is possible to acquire trained nursing personnel from Great Britain in order to overcome the present acute shortage.

I suggest also to the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs that it is urgently necessary to provide better facilities immediately for the observation of mental cases or patients who are suspected of developing mental tendencies. It can be understood that such a position is likely to develop in a general hospital in any of the wards at any time. Although the present staffing of wards at night may be standard hospital practice, in my opinion it is not satisfactory. In the public wards on the night watches there are a junior nurse and a senior nurse in charge of 50 patients, and they have to do the best they can. I admit that at odd times during the night a fully-qualified sister goes around the various wards and passes each bed with the nurses to see that the patients are all right, but I suggest that for 50 patients the present personnel is insufficient, especially where there are surgical cases. The matter

should be looked into, and even if that is the standard number of personnel it should be improved upon, and I am speaking now from my own experience in the Brisbane General Hospital.

Likewise, I hope that the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs and his colleagues in Cabinet will consider the need for establishing small hospitals in preference to erecting any more large ones similar to the Brisbane General Hospital. World-wide practice is coming down now to a maximum of 600 beds, and I hope that this will be considered by the Minister.

Another matter that interested me during the past week in particular, as a result of my keen observation of hospitals in the city of Brisbane, is the fact that in the public wards at the Brisbane General Hospital drugs are supplied free. It is not all of us who are able to go to the Brisbane General Hospital; some of us choose to go elsewhere. Some, in accident cases, are taken to the public wards of the Mater Hospital in South Brisbane.

That hospital does not provide drugs free of cost. As I understand the position, it is a private hospital with a public ward. I wish to deal with patients who are taken into the public ward—those who would desire to go into a private hospital or the intermediate section of that hospital but who have to go into the public ward because all other beds are fully occupied. I say that they receive excellent treatment in the public ward and I speak from observation and my experience in the public ward of the Mater Hospital some years ago. What I am leading up to is this: the hospital does not provide drugs free and a patient who has to receive penicillin injections has to pay the cost of it. I have in my hand a receipt for £2 16s. 8d., an amount that I personally paid when I took delivery at the Commonwealth Laboratories of one million units of penicillin to replenish stocks in the Mater public ward. That penicillin was required for a patient and had to be paid for before the patient could be discharged. Here is the irony of the position: if a person meets with an accident and is taken to the hospital that person has to pay for the cost of the penicillin used on him. We have in the streets of Brisbane, as elsewhere, the professional prostitute who has to submit to examination from time to time and if found suffering from venereal disease is taken to the lock hospital. Others who are not subject to rigid inspection but are found to be suffering from this disease are likewise taken to the lock hospital. My information is that these people, who become infected with venereal disease through their own fault, are treated with this wonderful drug and are not charged with the cost of it. I suggest that the Department of Health and Home Affairs might well look into that anomaly. There are pensioners and basic-wage-earners with perhaps large families who need penicillin treatment and have to pay the cost of it, which imposes distinct hardship on them. It is true, I understand, that some provision exists whereby after rigid police

investigation into the circumstances of the patient the department may defray the cost.

There is another matter that has struck me forcibly during the last few months, particularly in view of what has been said about what the Government are doing in regard to social services. Although it is now a Federal matter—I do not want to infringe your ruling, Mr. Speaker—I do want to point out—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I should like to point out to the hon. member that I have not ruled that on this debate hon. members cannot discuss Federal questions. I want to put the hon. member clear on that.

**Mr. MARRIOTT:** Thank you for the correction, Mr. Speaker. The system of unemployment sustenance previously carried out by the State Government is now administered by the Social Services Department of the Commonwealth Government, but it is not generally known by people who have every right to know that side by side with the unemployment benefit is also a sickness benefit. I suggest that the appropriate Minister should make a note of the fact and see that the people are apprised of this social service, which is there for their benefit. Frequently people sick in hospital or sick in their homes under treatment by doctors are losing income on that account and are not aware that they are entitled to a sickness benefit from the Federal Government. The people as a whole pay taxation, which is used in the maintenance of the fund for this social service, and so those who lose income through sickness or accident are entitled to get the benefits that are provided.

I may be pardoned if I point out for the benefit of all and sundry that the sickness benefits are as follows:—

	£	s.	d.	
Single man or woman				
over 21 years ..	1	5	0	a week
Man and wife ..	2	5	0	a week
Man, wife and one				
child ..	2	10	0	a week
Juniors—				
16 to 18 years ..	0	15	0	a week
18 to 21 years ..	1	0	0	a week

Of course, the claimant must prove that he is suffering a loss of income and cognisance is taken of the claim only from the date on which it is received at the office of the Social Service Department. There is no use in his coming along later and saying that he was not aware of the fact that he could get sickness payments and asking for retrospective payment. That will not do. The claim is valid only from the time it is lodged with the department. I sincerely hope that hon. members, the Press and anyone else interested will make it widely known that this sickness benefit is available for the people entitled to it.

During the debate stress was laid on the lack of housing in Queensland and at the risk of being accused of labouring the situation I want to have something to say. We were interested in the figures supplied by the

Premier this morning. I was not able to get them all down accurately but from the opening Speech delivered by the Lieutenant-Governor I know that for the year ended 3 June last 418 new houses had been built by the Queensland Housing Commission and that 665 were in the course of construction, many of them approaching completion.

The point I wish to make is: that rate of production does not and will not cope with the demand for houses for a number of years. We are told in this House that over 1,000 applications have been lodged with the Government for houses. They are not able to satisfy the demand.

It would appear that some hon. members are not prepared to admit the necessity for providing immediate housing accommodation for people. The Secretary for Public Works is reported in the Press frequently as having something to say about the demand for some of the ex-service buildings that the State Housing Commission has been making fit for temporary accommodation for people in need of homes. It appears that there is some misunderstanding amongst hon. members of the acute need for extra housing accommodation immediately. I do not blame the Minister, because I take it that his statements reflect the decision of Cabinet, and I further take it that that decision has been endorsed by the Parliamentary Labour Party. Therefore, hon. members on the Government side believe that the attitude ascribed to the Minister in the Press is the correct one and that there is no need to provide additional housing accommodation. I would, however, draw the Minister's attention to the fact that within one half mile's radius of his own house—a nice comfortable one at Morningside—I can show him at least 50 families who are living in perished military tents awaiting the opportunity to get better accommodation. I can show him within the same radius, too, a number of families who are living in military huts, some of which are built of three-ply. Some of these people live in one hut, some have two huts adjoining each other, and some three. One can multiply such cases by hundreds and get what is happening in and around the city, to say nothing about the provincial areas and other parts of the State. Within the same half-mile radius of the Minister's residence we can frequently find four and five families in the one house. In fact, one such case was brought home to my notice last week. It revealed how that family was breaking up through living under such conditions. Family squabbles have arisen. The dwelling consists of a bedroom, a living room, and a small veranda on the front. The bedroom is occupied by the mother and father, one end of the veranda by the married daughter and husband, a returned ex-Service man, and child, and the other end of the veranda by a single sister and a married friend from the country, with her six-year-old daughter, who came to the city to receive hospital treatment for her daughter. The married daughter has been told to get out because her two brothers in the services are returning and "we want somewhere to house them."

What do we find in the closer environs of the city, particularly South Brisbane? You know, Mr. Speaker, what is going on in these so-called flats where people are living under houses and on verandas, which consist of a few sheets of 3-ply. Those difficulties—family squabbles and families being broken up—exist all over the place, yet the Minister will not admit the necessity for providing additional temporary accommodation by using the military camps that are now going into discard and could quickly be put into service. There is an excellent Air Force camp at Sandgate that could be made into splendid cottages in which suitable families could be placed.

We find that in the Press there has been a dispute concerning delay in allotting flats that have been got ready at Rocklea. Who is responsible for that delay I do not know, but the State Housing Commission does admit that there has been some delay in the allotting of the flats already completed. The statement that the applicants are allowed one week in which to get ready to go into residence does not tally with the statement of the trade-union officials that some flats have been ready for occupation but unoccupied for over 10 weeks. I commend the suggestion to the Minister and the Government members that they examine this position face to face. Let them face up to the fact that people require shelter at the present time and that there are discarded military hutments available that can be made usable at small cost. The services, such as gas, light and water, are there; and something could be done. Let us get down from the dignified attitude that we do not want to establish slum conditions. The slum conditions are here already and we are simply conniving at their continuance and extension. I am suggesting that something should be done very quickly to overcome the position in the direction I have indicated. If any hon. member has any doubt about what I say I will readily take him on a tour about the city and suburbs so that he may see for himself what is going on. It is certainly no credit to a civilised community that these conditions should be allowed to continue.

I have had quite a deal to do during the last six or eight months with the officers controlling building materials. With other hon. members I have been surprised at the number of houses that have been built at seaside resorts. I have had a look at them. I know from Press statements that the officer in charge of the Building Control Department of the State is keeping close watch on the houses that are being built contrary to the regulations, that is, without permission or by the use of materials to which they are not entitled. I am perfectly satisfied that on the South Coast—of which I have personal knowledge—there are a large number of houses that have been built contrary to the regulations. I understand that by approaching the local authority controlling that area people can get permission to build a house as long as it does not exceed the prescribed limit of 1,250 square feet. But they have also to convince that local authority, I under-

stand, by statutory declaration that the house is to be permanently occupied throughout the year, that they are not building it for speculation or holiday purposes. Actually, the bulk of them are being built as holiday homes.

These people comply with the regulations but make profit out of the houses. The owners and their families use them for a holiday, but for the remainder of the year they are occupied by people who are able to pay the exorbitant rental demanded for them as a seaside holiday cottage. It is a wonderful speculation and when people are so short of homes in the metropolitan area I think that department should exercise greater care in seeing that the material used for building these homes at the seaside is diverted to the building of homes in the metropolitan and provincial areas.

It is certainly strange to see that an institution such as the Doomben racecourse could get galvanised iron in such large quantities as to build a fence to keep away the prying eyes of the public who would want to see the equine trials on the track. No questions apparently were asked. This organisation was able to get labour, material, timber, and galvanised iron to make a fence. Similarly, galvanised iron is available on the New Farm Wharf, and is being used to rerec the fence taken down when the naval and military authorities had the use of it. I shall be told in reply that these authorities had undertaken to put the property in the same condition as when they took it over, but when there is such a huge shortage of building materials, particularly roofing iron, it must be admitted some other provision could be made, that some of that barbed wire we hear so much about could have been used to erect a fence to keep people off the property, so that the galvanised iron and timber could be used for the dwellings that are so necessary.

I was particularly interested to hear the speech made by the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs on the coal-mining industry. I was particularly pleased that at last we have overcome that position in the industry that caused the miners for so many years to be averse to the mechanisation of the industry. It was a simple illustration of the fact that men are averse to being thrown on the industrial scrapheap. In the days to which I refer, prior to the war, miners got only part-time work in many mines, particularly in Queensland, and naturally were averse to the mechanisation of the industry, but conditions have tended to the introduction of up-to-date machinery. The extraordinary demand for fuel for industrial purposes will mean that in future this industry will be largely mechanised and the condition of the miners will thereby be largely improved. This is owing to the fact that industry has expanded and I trust that that expansion will continue and that the call for fuel, whether coal or electric power produced from coal or water, will continue.

Debate, on motion of Mr. Hayes, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 4.15 p.m.