



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



Senate

Official Hansard

No. 12, 1969
Wednesday, 19 March 1969

TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT
SECOND SESSION—THIRD PERIOD

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH

TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT—SECOND SESSION: THIRD PERIOD

GOVERNOR-GENERAL

His Excellency the Right Honourable Richard Gardiner, Baron Casey, a Member of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Member of the Order of Companions of Honour, Companion of the Distinguished Service Order, upon whom has been conferred the Decoration of the Military Cross, Knight of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Commonwealth of Australia from 22 September 1965.

His Excellency the Right Honourable Sir Paul Meernaa Caedwalla Hasluck, a Member of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Commonwealth of Australia from 30 April 1969.

SECOND GORTON GOVERNMENT

(AS AT 13 FEBRUARY 1969)

Prime Minister	The Right Honourable John Grey Gorton
Minister for Trade and Industry	The Right Honourable John McEwen, C.H.
Treasurer	The Right Honourable William McMahon
Minister for Defence	The Honourable Allen Fairhall
Minister for Primary Industry	The Honourable John Douglas Anthony
Postmaster-General; and Vice-President of the Executive Council	The Honourable Alan Shallcross Hulme
Minister for National Development	The Honourable David Eric Fairbairn, D.F.C.
Minister for Labour and National Service ..	The Honourable Leslie Harry Ernest Bury
Minister for Shipping and Transport; and Minister assisting the Minister for Trade and Industry	The Honourable Ian McCahon Sinclair
Minister for Supply	Senator the Honourable Kenneth McColl Anderson
Minister for Education and Science	The Honourable John Malcolm Fraser
Minister for External Affairs	The Honourable Gordon Freeth
(The above Ministers constitute the Cabinet)	
Minister for External Territories	The Honourable Charles Edward Barnes
Minister for Civil Aviation; and Minister assisting the Treasurer	The Honourable Reginald William Colin Swartz, M.B.E., E.D.
Minister for Immigration	The Honourable Billy Mackie Snedden, Q.C.
Minister for Health	The Honourable Alexander James Forbes, M.C.
Minister for Repatriation	Senator the Honourable Gerald Colin McKellar
Minister for Housing	Senator the Honourable Dame Annabelle Jane Mary Rankin, D.B.E.
Attorney-General	The Honourable Nigel Hubert Bowen, Q.C.
Minister for the Navy	The Honourable Charles Robert Kelly
Minister for the Interior	The Honourable Peter James Nixon
Minister for the Army	The Honourable Phillip Reginald Lynch
Minister for Customs and Excise	Senator the Honourable Malcolm Fox Scott
Minister for Social Services; and Minister-in-Charge of Aboriginal Affairs	The Honourable William Charles Wentworth
Minister for Works; and, under the Minister for Trade and Industry, Minister-in-Charge of Tourist Activities	Senator the Honourable Reginald Charles Wright
Minister for Air	The Honourable George Dudley Erwin

THE MEMBERS OF THE SENATE

TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT—SECOND SESSION: THIRD PERIOD

President—Senator the Honourable Sir Alister Maxwell McMullin, K.C.M.G.

Leader of the Government in the Senate—Senator the Honourable Kenneth McColl Anderson

Chairman of Committees—Senator Thomas Charles Drake-Brockman, D.F.C.

Temporary Chairmen of Committees—Senators Thomas Louis Bull, O.B.E., Condon Bryan Byrne, Magnus Cameron Cormack, Joseph Francis Fitzgerald, Hon. Patrick John Kennelly, Condor Louis Laucke, Keith Alexander Laught, Albert George Poke, Clement Frank Ridley, Dame Ivy Evelyn Wedgwood, D.B.E., and Ian Alexander Christie Wood

Leader of the Opposition—Senator Lionel Keith Murphy, Q.C.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition—Senator Samuel Herbert Cohen, Q.C.

Leader of the Australian Democratic Labor Party—Senator the Honourable Vincent Clair Gair

Deputy Leader of the Australian Democratic Labor Party—Senator Francis Patrick McManus

Anderson, Hon. Kenneth McColl (N.S.W.)†

Bishop, Reginald (S.A.)‡

Branson, George Howard (W.A.)†

Bull, Thomas Louis, O.B.E. (N.S.W.)†

Buttfield, Nancy Eileen (S.A.)‡

Byrne, Condon Bryan (Qld)‡

(1) Cameron, Martin Bruce (S.A.)

Cant, Hartley Gordon James (W.A.)†

Cavanagh, James Luke (S.A.)‡

Cohen, Samuel Herbert, Q.C. (Vic.)‡

Cormack, Magnus Cameron (Vic.)‡

Cotton, Robert Carrington (N.S.W.)‡

Davidson, Gordon Sinclair (S.A.)†

Devitt, Donald Michael (Tas.)†

Dittmer, Felix (Qld)†

Drake-Brockman, Thomas Charles, D.F.C. (W.A.)†

Drury, Arnold Joseph (S.A.)†

Fitzgerald, Joseph Francis (N.S.W.)‡

Gair, Hon. Vincent Clair (Qld)†

Georges, George (Qld)‡

(2) Greenwood, Ivor John (Vic.)

Hendrickson, Albion (Vic.)†

Keeffe, James Bernard (Qld)†

Kennelly, Hon. Patrick John (Vic.)†

Lacey, Robert Herbert (Tas.)†

Laucke, Condor Louis (S.A.)‡

(3) Laught, Keith Alexander (S.A.)

Lawrie, Alexander Greig Ellis (Qld)†

Lillico, Alexander Elliot Davidson (Tas.)†

Little, John Albert (Vic.)‡

McClelland, Douglas (N.S.W.)‡

McKellar, Hon. Gerald Colin (N.S.W.)‡

McManus, Francis Patrick (Vic.)†

Mcmullin, Hon. Sir Alister Maxwell (N.S.W.)†

Marriott, John Edward (Tas.)†

Maunsell, Charles Ronald (Qld)‡

Milliner, Bertie Richard (Qld)‡

Mulvihill, James Anthony (N.S.W.)†

Murphy, Lionel Keith, Q.C. (N.S.W.)‡

O'Byrne, Justin (Tas.)†

Ormonde, James Patrick (N.S.W.)†

Poke, Albert George (Tas.)‡

Poyser, Arthur George (Vic.)‡

Prowse, Edgar Wylie (W.A.)‡

Rae, Peter Elliot (Tas.)‡

Rankin, Hon. Dame Annabelle Jane Mary, D.B.E.

(Qld)‡

Ridley, Clement Frank (S.A.)†

Scott, Hon. Malcolm Fox (W.A.)†

Sim, John Peter (W.A.)‡

Toohay, James Philip (S.A.)†

Turnbull, Reginald John David (Tas.)†

Webster, James Joseph (Vic.)‡

Wedgwood, Dame Ivy Evelyn, D.B.E. (Vic.)†

Wheeldon, John Murray (W.A.)†

Wilkinson, Lawrence Degenhardt (W.A.)‡

Wilsesee, Donald Robert (W.A.)‡

Withers, Reginald Greive (W.A.)‡

Wood, Ian Alexander Christie (Qld)†

Wriedt, Kenneth Shaw (Tas.)‡

Wright, Hon. Reginald Charles (Tas.)‡

Young, Harold William (S.A.)‡

Dates of retirement of senators—† 30 June 1971. ‡ 30 June 1974.

(1) Filling casual vacancy. Sworn 27 May 1969.

(2) Filling casual vacancy.

(3) Death reported 13 May 1969.

THE COMMITTEES OF THE SESSION

(SECOND SESSION: THIRD PERIOD)

STANDING COMMITTEES

DISPUTED RETURNS AND QUALIFICATIONS—Senator Cant, Senator Drury, Senator Lillico, Senator Rae, Senator Ridley, Senator Sim, Senator Webster.

HOUSE—The President, Senator Buttfield, Senator Maunsell, Senator O'Byrne, Senator Ormonde, Senator Toohey, Senator Withers.

LIBRARY—The President, Senator Bishop, Senator Davidson, Senator Gair, Senator Lawrie, Senator Mulvihill, Senator Withers.

PRINTING—Senator Cant, Senator Davidson, Senator Marriott, Senator Maunsell, Senator Ridley, Senator Wheeldon, Senator Young.

PRIVILEGES—Senator Branson, Senator Cant, Senator Drake-Brockman, Senator Greenwood, Senator Poke, Senator Rae, Senator Wheeldon.

REGULATIONS AND ORDINANCES—Senator Wood (*Chairman*), Senator Bishop, Senator Cavanagh, Senator Davidson, Senator Devitt, Senator Greenwood, Senator Lawrie.

STANDING ORDERS—The President (*Chairman*), the Chairman of Committees, the Leader of the Government in the Senate, the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate (as from 21 May 1969), Senator Cavanagh, Senator Cormack, Senator Cotton, Senator Lacey, Senator Wright.

JOINT STATUTORY COMMITTEES

BROADCASTING OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS—Mr Speaker (*Chairman*), The President, Senator McClelland, Senator Sim, and Mr Arthur, Miss Brownbill, Mr Costa, Mr Luchetti, Mr Turnbull.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS—Mr Cleaver (*Chairman*), Senator Fitzgerald, Senator Webster, Senator Dame Ivy Wedgwood, and Mr Collard, Mr Cope, Mr Dobie, Mr Fox (to 26 February 1969), Mr Jessop (from 26 February 1969), Mr Peters, Mr Robinson.

PUBLIC WORKS—Mr Chaney (*Chairman*), Senator Branson, Senator Dittmer, Senator Prowse, and Mr Bosman, Mr Fulton, Mr Holten, Mr James, Mr O'Connor.

JOINT COMMITTEES

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY—Senator Marriott (*Chairman*), Senator Devitt, Senator Maunsell, Senator Toohey, Senator Withers, and Mr Daly, Mr England, Mr Fox, Mr J. R. Fraser.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—Senator Cormack (*Chairman*), Senator Bull, Senator Buttfield, Senator Drury, Senator Laught (to 13 May 1969), Senator McManus, Senator Mulvihill, Senator Sim (from 21 May 1969), Senator Willesee, and Mr Ian Allan (to 30 April 1969), Mr Armstrong, Mr Barnard, Mr Beazley, Mr Calder (from 3 June 1969), Mr Costa, Mr Cross, Mr Davies, Mr Giles, Mr Hughes, Mr Jess, Mr Killen, Mr Peacock, Mr Turner.

NEW AND PERMANENT PARLIAMENT HOUSE—The President (*Chairman*), Mr Speaker (*Deputy Chairman*), the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Government in the Senate (from 18 March 1969), the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate (from 18 March 1969), the Leader of the Australian Democratic Labor Party (from 18 March 1969), the Leader of the Country Party in the House of Representatives (in absence, Mr Nixon), the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives, Senators Devitt, Drake-Brockman, McClelland, Dame Ivy Wedgwood, and Mr Barnard, Mr Birrell, Mr Bryant, Mr Drury, Mr Duthie, Mr Erwin, Mr Fox (from 18 March 1969), Mr Giles, Mr Luchetti.

SELECT COMMITTEES

AIR POLLUTION—Senator Branson (*Chairman*), Senator Georges, Senator Lacey, Senator Laucke, Senator Lawrie, Senator Little.

MEDICAL AND HOSPITAL COSTS—Senator Dame Ivy Wedgwood (*Chairman*), Senator Bull, Senator Dittmer, Senator McClelland, Senator Sim, Senator Turnbull.

OFF-SHORE PETROLEUM RESOURCES—Senator Cotton (*Chairman*), Senator Cant, Senator Gair, Senator Greenwood, Senator Keeffe, Senator O'Byrne, Senator Webster, Senator Young.

WATER POLLUTION—Senator Davidson (*Chairman*), Senator Byrne, Senator Mulvihill, Senator Prowse, Senator Rae, Senator Ridley.

PARLIAMENTARY DEPARTMENTS

SENATE

Clerk—J. R. Odgers, C.B.E.

Deputy Clerk—R. E. Bullock

Clerk-Assistant—K. O. Bradshaw

Principal Parliamentary Officer—A. R. Cumming Thom

Usher of the Black Rod—H. C. Nicholls

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Clerk—A. G. Turner, C.B.E.

Deputy Clerk—N. J. Parkes, O.B.E.

Clerk-Assistant—J. A. Pettifer

Principal Parliamentary Officer—D. M. Blake, V.R.D.

Serjeant-at-Arms—A. R. Browning

PARLIAMENTARY REPORTING STAFF

Principal Parliamentary Reporter—W. J. Bridgman

Second Reporter—K. R. Ingram

Third Reporter—G. R. Fraser

LIBRARY

Librarian—A. P. Fleming, O.B.E.

JOINT HOUSE

Secretary—R. W. Hillyer

THE ACTS OF THE SESSION

(SECOND SESSION: THIRD PERIOD)

Appropriation Act (No. 3) 1968-69 (Act No. 27 of 1969)—

An Act to appropriate a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, additional to the sum appropriated by the *Appropriation Act* (No. 1) 1968-69, for the service of the year ending on the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and sixty-nine.

Appropriation Act (No. 4) 1968-69 (Act No. 28 of 1969)—

An Act to appropriate a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, additional to the sum appropriated by the *Appropriation Act* (No. 2) 1968-69, for certain expenditure in respect of the year ending on the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and sixty-nine.

Audit Act 1969 (Act No. 20 of 1969)—

An Act relating to the Audit of Public Moneys and the Protection of Public Property.

Australian Capital Territory Stamp Duty Act 1969 (Act No. 48 of 1969)—

An Act relating to the Imposition of Stamp Duty on certain Instruments having a connexion with the Australian Capital Territory.

Australian Capital Territory Taxation (Administration) Act 1969— (Act No. 42 of 1969)—

An Act relating to the Assessment, Payment and Collection of Australian Capital Territory Stamp Duty and Tax.

Australian Capital Territory Tax (Cheques) Act 1969 (Act No. 43 of 1969)—

An Act relating to the Imposition of Tax on certain Cheque Forms supplied or used by Authorized Bankers in the Australian Capital Territory.

Australian Capital Territory Tax (Hire-purchase Business) Act 1969 (Act No. 44 of 1969)—

An Act relating to the Imposition of Tax in respect of certain Hire-purchase Agreements executed in the Australian Capital Territory.

Australian Capital Territory Tax (Insurance Business) Act 1969 (Act No. 45 of 1969)—

An Act relating to the Imposition of Tax on Premiums received in respect of certain Insurance Business having a connexion with the Australian Capital Territory.

Australian Capital Territory Tax (Purchases of Marketable Securities) Act 1969 (Act No. 47 of 1969)—

An Act relating to the Imposition of Tax in respect of certain Purchases of Marketable Securities made through Brokers in the Australian Capital Territory.

Australian Capital Territory Tax (Sales of Marketable Securities) Act 1969 (Act No. 46 of 1969)—

An Act relating to the Imposition of Tax in respect of certain Sales of Marketable Securities made through Brokers in the Australian Capital Territory.

Australian Coastal Shipping Commission Act 1969 (Act No. 55 of 1969)—

An Act relating to the Powers of the Australian Coastal Shipping Commission.

Broadcasting and Television Act 1969 (Act No. 21 of 1969)—

An Act relating to Broadcasting and Television.

Broadcasting and Television Act (No. 2) 1969 (Act No. 31 of 1969)—

An Act relating to Broadcasting and Television.

Chicken Meat Research Act 1969 (Act No. 35 of 1969)—

An Act to establish a Chicken Meat Research Trust Account, and for purposes connected therewith.

Citizenship Act 1969 (Act No. 22 of 1969)—

An Act relating to Australian Citizenship and the Status of British Subject.

Commonwealth Aid Roads Act 1969 (Act No. 41 of 1969)—

An Act to Grant Financial Assistance to the States in relation to Roads.

Commonwealth Employees' Compensation Act 1969 (Act No. 11 of 1969)—

An Act to amend the law relating to Compensation payable to, and in respect of, Employees of the Commonwealth in relation to Determinations made under the *Public Service Arbitration Act* 1920-1969.

Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1969 (Act No. 12 of 1969)—

An Act to amend the *Conciliation and Arbitration Act* 1904-1968.

Conciliation and Arbitration Act (No. 2) 1969 (Act No. 15 of 1969)—

An Act to Increase by one the Maximum Number of Judges of the Commonwealth Industrial Court.

Currency Act 1969 (Act No. 4 of 1969)—

An Act to amend the *Currency Act* 1965.

Customs Tariff 1969 (Act No. 8 of 1969)—

An Act relating to Duties of Customs.

Customs Tariff (No. 2) 1969 (Act No. 32 of 1969)—

An Act relating to Duties of Customs.

Decimal Currency Board (Abolition) Act 1969 (Act No. 25 of 1969)—

An Act to abolish the Decimal Currency Board and for purposes connected therewith.

Excise Tariff 1969 (Act No. 5 of 1969)—

An Act to amend the *Excise Tariff* 1921-1968.

Excise Tariff (No. 2) 1969 (Act No. 33 of 1969)—

An Act to reduce the Rates of Excise Duty on Canned Fruit.

Income Tax Assessment Act 1969 (Act No. 18 of 1969)—

An Act to amend sections 23C and 160AC of the *Income Tax Assessment Act* 1936-1968 and to make certain consequential provisions.

Income Tax (International Agreements) Act 1969 (Act No. 24 of 1969)—

An Act to amend the *Income Tax (International Agreements) Act* 1953-1968.

Independent Schools (Loans Guarantee) Act 1969 (Act No. 23 of 1969)—

An Act to authorize the giving of Guarantees on behalf of the Commonwealth in respect of certain Loans made to Independent Schools in the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory of Australia, and for purposes related thereto.

International Sugar Agreement Act 1969 (Act No. 9 of 1969)—

An Act to approve the Ratification by Australia of the International Sugar Agreement.

Judges' Remuneration Act 1969 (Act No. 40 of 1969)—

An Act relating to the Remuneration of the Judges of Courts created by the Parliament, of the Presidential Members of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission and of the Members of the Trade Practices Tribunal.

Judiciary Act 1969 (Act No. 39 of 1969)—

An Act relating to the Remuneration of the Justices of the High Court.

Loan (Supplementary Borrowing) Act 1969 (Act No. 3 of 1969)—

An Act to authorize the Raising and Expending of certain Moneys.

Meat Chicken Levy Act 1969 (Act No. 36 of 1969)—

An Act to Levy Moneys in respect of Meat Chickens.

Meat Chicken Levy Collection Act 1969 (Act No. 37 of 1969)—

An Act relating to the Collection of Levy under the *Meat Chicken Levy Act* 1969.

New South Wales Grant (Gwydir River Dam) Act 1969 (Act No. 53 of 1969)—

An Act to grant Financial Assistance to the State of New South Wales in connexion with the construction of a Dam on the Gwydir River near Copeton in that State.

Officers' Rights Declaration Act 1969 (Act No. 13 of 1969)—

An Act relating to the Rights of a Person appointed to the Office of Public Service Arbitrator or to an Office of Deputy Public Service Arbitrator.

Patents Act 1969 (Act No. 34 of 1969)—

An Act to amend the *Patents Act* 1952-1966

Pay-roll Tax Assessment Act 1969 (Act No. 19 of 1969)—

An Act to amend the *Pay-roll Tax Assessment Act* 1941-1968 in relation to Rebates of Tax allowable to Producers of Gold.

Petroleum Search Subsidy Act 1969 (Act No. 38 of 1969)

An Act to amend the *Petroleum Search Subsidy Act* 1959-1967.

Public Service Arbitration Act 1969 (Act No. 10 of 1969)—

An Act relating to the Settlement of Matters arising out of Employment in the Public Service.

Quarantine Act 1969 (Act No. 1 of 1969)—

An Act to amend the *Quarantine Act* 1908-1966.

Raw Cotton Bounty Act 1969 (Act No. 16 of 1969)—

An Act to amend the *Raw Cotton Bounty Act* 1963-1968.

Scholarships Act 1969 (Act No. 17 of 1969)—

An Act relating to Commonwealth Scholarships and Post-graduate Awards.

South Australia Grant (Tailem Bend to Keith Pipeline) Act 1969 (Act No. 52 of 1969)—

An Act to grant Financial Assistance to the State of South Australia in connexion with the construction of a Pipeline from Tailem Bend to Keith and of certain associated works.

Spirits Act 1969 (Act No. 6 of 1969)—

An Act to amend section 3 of the *Spirits Act 1906-1968*.

States Grants (Home Care) Act 1969 (Act No. 49 of 1969)—

An Act to grant Financial Assistance to the States in relation to the provision of certain Home Care and other Welfare Services by States, Local Governing Bodies and Community Welfare Organizations.

States Grants (Nursing Homes) Act 1969 (Act No. 51 of 1969)—

An Act to grant Financial Assistance to the States in relation to Nursing Homes for Aged Persons.

States Grants (Paramedical Services) Act 1969 (Act No. 50 of 1969)—

An Act to grant Financial Assistance to the States in relation to the provision of Paramedical Services for Aged Persons.

States Grants (Special Financial Assistance) Act 1969 (Act No. 56 of 1969)—

An Act to provide for the payment of certain sums to the States by way of Special Financial Assistance.

Superannuation Act 1969 (Act No. 14 of 1969)—

An Act to amend the law relating to Superannuation in relation to Determinations made under the *Public Service Arbitration Act 1920-1969*.

Superannuation Act (No. 2) 1969 (Act No. 26 of 1969)—

An Act relating to Superannuation.

Supply Act (No. 1) 1969-70 (Act No. 29 of 1969)—

An Act to make interim provision for the appropriation of moneys out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the service of the year ending on the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and seventy.

Supply Act (No. 2) 1969-70 (Act No. 30 of 1969)—

An Act to make interim provision for the appropriation of moneys out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for certain expenditure in respect of the year ending on the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and seventy.

Universities (Financial Assistance) Act 1969 (Act No. 7 of 1969)—

An Act to amend section 11 of the *Universities (Financial Assistance) Act 1966-1968*.

Victoria Grant (King River Dam) Act 1969 (Act No. 54 of 1969)—

An Act to grant Financial Assistance to the State of Victoria in connexion with the construction of a Dam on the King River south of Cheshunt in that State.

Wine Grapes Charges Act 1969 (Act No. 2 of 1969)—

An Act to amend section 3 of the *Wine Grapes Charges Act 1929-1966*.

THE BILLS OF THE SESSION

(SECOND SESSION: THIRD PERIOD)

Commonwealth Electoral Bill 1968—

Initiated in the Senate. Second reading.

Constitutional Alteration (Democratic Election of the House of Representatives) Bill 1968—

Initiated in the Senate. Second reading.

Constitutional Alteration (Democratic Election of State Parliaments) Bill 1968—

Initiated in the Senate. Second reading.

Independent Schools (Financial Assistance) Bill 1968—

Initiated in the Senate. Second reading.

Marriage Bill 1968—

Initiated in the Senate. Second reading

National Service Bill 1969—

Initiated in the Senate. First reading.

Public Works Committee Bill 1969—

Passed by the House of Representatives. Committee.

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Wednesday, 19 March 1969

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. Sir Alister McMullin) took the chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

EDUCATION

Petition

Senator FITZGERALD presented a petition from certain citizens of Australia showing that there is a crisis in education in Australia; that a transformation of the classroom situation is necessary, where children will have reasonable freedom to develop as self-reliant, independent individuals and where they can learn to function as members of a democratic community; that proper preparation for school and thorough guidance there, by qualified teachers, are crucial to a proper education for Australia's children; that the present rate of teaching training is far below the requirement determined by the Martin report which shows that 75% additional teachers in government schools will be required by 1975 compared with those in service in 1963; that to obtain maximum benefit from the education system, preschool facilities should be available to all children; that insufficient State or Federal assistance has been made available to meet these requirements; that adequate finance to meet these requirements can only be provided by the Commonwealth Government; that there is an urgent need for a national inquiry into all aspects of Australian education. The petitioners pray that the Senate and the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled will give earnest consideration, during Human Rights Year, to this most vital matter.

Petition received and read.

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE

Senator MURPHY—My question is directed to the Minister for Customs and Excise. I refer to another house search by customs officers several months ago in Newcastle. I shall not refer to the name of the person, but the Minister will be aware of this from representations made to him by Mr Charles Jones, MP. Will the Minister tell the Senate now, or will he undertake to tell the Senate, why this search of

a private home was conducted at night, why it was proceeded with in the absence of the householder to the distress of his wife and a sick child, the only people in the house, although the customs officers had been correctly informed that the husband would be home within a short time? Will he explain why the officers refused to give a receipt for two walkie-talkie radios taken from the house and why that property has been retained although no charges have been laid against the householder or in regard to the radios?

Senator SCOTT—Information was received that four named wharf labourers were illegally removing cargo and selling it. Four homes were raided on 23rd October 1968 and pillaged cargo was found in two of them. The search was made in the evening at 7 o'clock. In one house there was an epileptic child who slept throughout the investigation. She was a niece of Mrs Weaver, who was at home, and who assisted the officer in the investigations.

Senator Murphy—Will you answer what I asked?

Senator SCOTT—if the honourable senator desires any further information I ask that he place his question on notice.

Senator MAUNSELL—I direct a question to the Minister for Customs and Excise. What precautions have been taken by the Minister to ensure that only responsible officers of the Department of Customs and Excise are issued with warrants entitling them to enter and search private homes? Has he taken steps to make certain that officers in possession of these warrants fully understand their responsibilities not only to the Department of Customs and Excise but also to the general public?

Senator SCOTT—The warrants to which the honourable senator refers are issued only to a relatively small number of experienced officers in each State. However, because of recent incidents, I have directed that a critical review be made of the number of warrants on issue and the qualifications of the officers who hold them. When officers are issued with these warrants they are carefully instructed in their use and their responsibilities. I have also directed that further instructions regarding the use of warrants be issued reminding officers

of their important responsibilities in this regard. Sometimes, of course, with the best of precautions, errors do occur. The Collector of Customs for Queensland has already apologised to Miss Mayo for the incident and I should like to add my own apology for the inconveniences caused.

BANKING

Senator DEVITT—I address a question to the Minister representing the Treasurer. Is the Minister aware that the services provided in several departments of the Commonwealth Bank are inferior to those offered by private banks? Is this situation brought about by the failure of the Commonwealth Bank Board to ensure that the Bank at least matches the facilities available in other banks in Australia? Is the Government content to permit this situation to continue? Would it not be realistic, in the light of the events of history, to assert that the Commonwealth Bank, as a national institution, could and should outmatch its competitors in service to the community? Why does not the Government take immediate steps to see that the Commonwealth Bank fulfils the function for which it was established and to replace the Board with one alive to the great benefits which would flow from a removal of the fetters which now bind the Bank's activities?

Senator ANDERSON—It would be very difficult to make any comment with relation to conditions that might apply in a certain branch of the Commonwealth Bank at a certain location. I suppose, in reality, there would be circumstances where the facilities offered by the Commonwealth Bank in one area would be inferior to those offered by another bank. Conversely, I personally know, as I am sure we all do, of instances where the facilities offered by the Commonwealth Bank are superior to those offered by some of the private banks. The facilities offered at the various branches and the banking conditions provided are the responsibility of the Commonwealth Bank Board. I shall certainly ask the Treasurer whether he will bring the honourable senator's comments to the notice of the Board.

DROUGHT

Senator LAWRIE—I address a question to the Minister representing the Minister for the Army. In view of the severe drought

which persists in much of Queensland, would the Department of the Army make the Shoalwater Bay training area north of Rockhampton available for temporary agistment purposes for large numbers of starving cattle?

Senator McKELLAR—I am not in a position to say whether the Department of the Army would be prepared to do that, but I shall convey the honourable senator's suggestion to the Minister for the Army in the hope that it will be sympathetically received.

MR G. C. HOFFMANN

Senator O'BYRNE—I ask the Minister for Customs and Excise whether he has seen a statement made by Gerard Hoffmann, and I quote:

This whole mishandling of the case by the Department of Customs and Excise has successfully blackened my reputation and has ruined my career in the Public Service, in which I had excellent prospects.

Does this statement not belie the charge that the Opposition was crucifying Mr Hoffmann?

Senator SCOTT—I regret that I have not seen the article as mentioned by the honourable senator. But I would say that if any person's character has been blackened by anybody in Australia it has been done by the left wing of the Australian Labor Party in this Senate.

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE

Senator MILLINER—I ask the Minister for Customs and Excise a question. In reply to a question asked by Senator Gair yesterday, the Minister said:

As to that part of his question which relates to the precautions Customs officers take before they search a House, I point out that in Queensland—

The PRESIDENT—Order! I ask the honourable senator to frame his question.

Senator MILLINER—I preface my question by saying that it relates to a reply given to Senator Gair yesterday. I now ask:
 1. Are preventative officers issued with a warrant which lasts for a period of 6 months or does each raid require a warrant for the specific case? 2. How many warrants are current in Queensland at the

present time? 3. Is it a fact that preventative officers may search premises as they did in the recent case of Miss Mayo without reference to higher authority? 4. Is it a fact that Mr Reid, the Queensland Collector, had no prior knowledge on the raid on Miss Mayo's home? 5. Will the Minister table a copy of the warrant issued to customs officers?

Senator SCOTT—A lot of the questions that the honourable senator now asks are answered in a reply to a question that I propose to give to Senator Gair at a later hour this day. I would ask the honourable senator to note the replies that I give to Senator Gair and put on notice for further attention any of his questions that are not answered at the time.

SUGAR

Senator LAUCKE—I ask a question of the Minister representing the Minister for Trade and Industry. What are the cost implications to the Australian fruit juice, fruit canning and jam making industries arising from the new International Sugar Agreement? Will these industries be subject to higher sugar prices and, if so, what steps will be taken to protect the viability of these industries?

Senator ANDERSON—I am informed from the Department of Trade and Industry and by the Minister for Trade and Industry that there are no direct cost implications for the domestic processing industries mentioned by the honourable senator arising from the new International Sugar Agreement. These industries will continue to obtain their supplies of sugar from domestic sources in Australia at the domestic price and, as appropriate, will continue to receive the special rebates provided for under the Sugar Agreement between the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments.

AUSTRALIAN AIRCRAFT MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

Senator BISHOP—My question is directed to the Minister for Supply and it concerns the Australian aircraft manufacturing industry. What is the current position relating to ministerial comments during 1968 about rationalisation and/or mergers affecting the Government Aircraft Factories and the Commonwealth Aircraft Corpora-

tion? What are the facts about an Australian-British feasibility study to manufacture jointly within Australia a supersonic trainer aircraft which could be used in a strike capacity also? Finally, are these proposals, or any other project, likely to revive the Australian aircraft manufacturing industry during 1969?

Senator ANDERSON—The honourable senator has asked me a fairly comprehensive series of questions. In brief the answer is that there has been an exchange of views between the Government, myself as Minister for Supply and the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation which, as honourable senator know, has a board which came into existence during the critical years of the last war, on this possibility of some rationale or some amalgamation. An exchange of letters has taken place. As I have indicated here before, it is not something that can be resolved easily as a level must be found at which even exploratory discussions may begin. I cannot give any further information at this point in time. However I will be happy to keep the Senate informed if any developments emerge.

The feasibility study that is going on with the British Aircraft Corporation goes back for some considerable time. It is a study on the possibility of producing an advanced trainer. It must always be remembered that our Service requirements would not be sufficient to warrant launching the manufacture of a single type of aircraft, but it is felt that not only could there be a requirement in the future for it but also that there is a possibility in the order book for an aircraft of this type being required by other middle level nations as distinct perhaps from the big or leading nations. The Commonwealth joined with BAC in a feasibility study for this purpose and certain Commonwealth funds have been put to it. Discussions are taking place with BAC following my visit overseas when this matter was first discussed in the United Kingdom. I am not in a position to say anything more at this time other than that discussions are at a very critical stage.

As to what the building of this type of aircraft would mean to the air service industry or our own aircraft factories, it would be understood that this would be a joint project with certain work being done in

Australia and certain work being done overseas. The work would be helpful to the industry here. All honourable senators no doubt have heard me say on other occasions that we are looking for every opportunity to provide work for the work force in the Australian aircraft industry.

PUBLIC SERVICE

Senator GREENWOOD—My question to the Leader of the Government in the Senate follows Senator O'Byrne's question to him. I ask the Minister whether he has seen a statement reported in the 'Age' of 12th March 1969 by Mrs Hoffmann in which she said:

Someone—and it was certainly neither Gerard nor I—plotted to misuse knowledge they had gained to create a political storm.

If he has seen the statement I ask: Does he consider that the Labor Party has occupied the time of the Parliament for the last 3 weeks for that reason rather than because of any suggested and subsequently proved unsustained allegations against the Department of Customs and Excise?

Senator ANDERSON—I must admit that I did not see the statement mentioned. I have no doubt that it was made. The views I have expressed on this matter—it seems for an interminable time—have been clearly along the lines that this affair has become a political issue. Frankly, I am hoping that we have reached the time when we can get on with the business of government and can put this behind us. I am sure that the people of Australia expect the Senate to get on with the business of government.

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE

Senator McCLELLAND—In directing my question to the Minister for Customs and Excise I refer to his answer to me yesterday in which he said that duty amounting to \$808,000 was shortpaid in respect of cigars, that duty amounting to \$1,165,000 was shortpaid in respect of cigarettes, and that the Attorney-General's Department was examining evidence in relation to other possible offences involving further short-payments of \$1,165,000. When did this information first come to the Minister's knowledge? Did not he or his Department

think that it was advisable to make a ministerial statement to the House at that time rather than to have the information probed out of him at question time?

Senator SCOTT—I advise the honourable senator and the Senate that these investigations began back in 1967. They are the result of new methods adopted by the Department of Customs and Excise which have enabled the Department to find certain instances of evasions of duty. I think that the honourable senator, instead of criticising the Department, should congratulate it because we are stopping the leaks which have occurred in previous years.

TOURIST INDUSTRY

Senator RAE—Did the Minister-in-Charge of Tourist Activities see in a newspaper published today a report of a statement by Captain Birch, the marketing manager of Qantas Airways Ltd, criticising tourist facilities and attitudes of Australians to tourists? If so, will the Minister comment on the matter, indicating whether he believes that the criticisms are well founded? Will he indicate what increase there has been in recent years in good standard accommodation available in Australia? Will he indicate whether he believes that Australians generally are rude to tourists?

Senator WRIGHT—In answering the honourable senator's question let me abstain at once, on the basis of either experience or theory, from being a critic of rudeness. I did see the article on the statement made by Captain Birch. I suppose that everybody would agree that a critical element in this area is very good. But because of the way that that article has been displayed, it undoubtedly lays undue emphasis upon some adverse aspects of the industry. With regard to the attitude of Australians to visitors, it should be remembered that we have received fairly high commendation for the welcoming attitude and courtesy with which visitors are greeted when they come to this country. That is illustrated by a recent assembly of a no less authoritative association in this area than the Pacific Association of Travel Agents.

In the tourist industry there are areas of accommodation that are sadly disappointing. But, on the other hand, we should be encouraged by the improvement being made.

As reported in the 'Canberra Times' today, a visiting delegation was complimentary of the general standard of accommodation. In reply to Senator Rae's inquiry, I am happy to inform him that the effort that is being made to extend the accommodation facilities can be illustrated by one or two figures which I have obtained. An amount of \$200m has been spent in this country on new hotels in the last 5 years. Our own State of Tasmania has added no fewer than 3,500 motel units in the last 5 years. Queensland has no fewer than 500 motels either operating or in the course of construction. Perth has plans for another eighteen hotels and motels costing \$25m and representing an addition of 2,000 rooms to the accommodation available at present. I believe that to people interested in the tourist industry these figures are quite encouraging.

REPATRIATION CANTEENS

Senator McMANUS—I direct a question to the Minister for Repatriation. Who operates the canteens at repatriation establishments? Does the Repatriation Department exercise any supervision over the prices charged to patients by such canteens?

Senator McKELLAR—To the best of my knowledge the position with regard to canteens at repatriation establishments is that they are operated by people in the employ of the Repatriation Department. The information that has been given to me when I have inquired regarding prices is that they are at a reasonable level and that the profits usually go to some of the activities connected with the staff of the Repatriation Department or activities connected with the patients while they are at the establishments.

TOURIST INDUSTRY

Senator BUTTFIELD—I ask the Minister-in-Charge of Tourist Activities a question which is supplementary to the question asked by Senator Rae. Did the Minister also see in the Press report of the statement by Captain Birch that that gentleman complained about an inability to understand Australian guides? Is it a fact that Japanese people are being employed as guides in some firms in Australia because they can enunciate the Australian language better

than Australians can? Will the Minister agree that in our schools children should be taught to enunciate a little more clearly?

Senator WRIGHT—Again I am naturally reticent about posing as anything of an authority on enunciation. I have no knowledge of the employment of Japanese personnel as travel guides in Australia. However, if that is the case I would not think it is of any significance as to the numbers or instances. Although some guides are not impressive, there are many travel guides of whom one has had recent experience and to whom one feels a particular debt. I believe that as the tourist industry comes to realise itself as an entity, educational processes will gradually build up a level of expertise that will make the services of travel guides much more attractive than at present.

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE

Senator KENNELLY—Will the Minister for Customs and Excise explain to the Senate why no mention at all was made in his Department's latest annual report of the fact that twenty-four officers were charged with offences relating to cigars and cigarettes, involving evasion of duty of nearly \$2m? Was the Department concealing this information from Parliament in the hope that maladministration would be concealed? What is the use of having annual reports by departments to Parliament when such reports do not supply members with information, whether unfortunate or otherwise?

Senator SCOTT—Firstly, I would like to refute any suggestion that there was mal-administration of the Department of Customs and Excise. I would like to say right here and now that the reason why we found there was evasion of duty was because of a change in the systems brought in by the Department of Customs and Excise whereby this type of procedure could be located. Having located it, we then took the necessary action and charged the officers concerned. Having charged the officers concerned we are now taking to court the people who were evading the duty. I ask the honourable senator to put on the notice paper the part of his question relating to the reason why the details were not included in the Department's annual report, and I will obtain an answer for him.

MERINO RAMS

Senator YOUNG—I direct my question to the Minister representing the Minister for Primary Industry. Has not the Australian Wool Industry Conference, which is representative of the whole of the Australian wool industry, recommended to the Federal Government that the ban on the export of merino rams should be lifted subject to certain conditions? Is this recommendation being considered by the Government? If so, when are the results likely to be made known?

Senator McKELLAR—Yes, as I indicated earlier, the Australian Wool Industry Conference did make the recommendation outlined by the honourable senator. The matter is under consideration, or is about to be considered, by the Government. I cannot say at this stage when a decision will be reached.

TOURIST INDUSTRY

Senator MARRIOTT—I address my question to the Minister-in-Charge of Tourist Activities. Does he feel that any action should be taken to suggest to Qantas and to the Australian Tourist Commission that because Canberra is a great tourist attraction—and it must continue to be—this city, the national capital, rates for a fairer deal in the allotment of time spent here by such important tourist promotion travel agents as the group from the United Kingdom which yesterday spent here only 4 hours out of the total of 10 days for their Australian visit, which has been arranged by Qantas and the Australian Tourist Commission?

Senator WRIGHT—This matter was featured in that sense in today's 'Canberra Times' with a statement headlined 'Canberra: 4 hours out of 240'. The fact is that this group of visitors had only 10 days in Australia. They expressed a wish to spend 3 days in Sydney. Taking account of internal travelling time and some rest time, the programme had to be limited in other places. For example, 1½ days were allotted in respect of the whole of Western Australia.

The Australian Tourist Commission and Qantas take proper regard, I would think, of the essentially high quality tourist attraction that Canberra offers. Recently, in arranging with Pan-American Airways for

a travel film costing some \$100,000, it was decided that Canberra is to feature quite significantly. When one takes into account the generality of visits by travel agents, it could not be said that any lack of appreciation is accorded to Canberra. Mr President, to show the degree to which these visitations take place, I mention that in the next 6 months eighty travel agents and writers from eleven different countries will be visiting Australia.

PUBLIC SERVICE

Senator COHEN—I direct a question to the Minister for Customs and Excise. I refer to an answer by the Minister earlier today to another honourable senator concerning a statement by Mr Gerard Hoffmann that 'This whole mishandling of the case by the Department has successfully blackened my reputation and has ruined my career in the Public Service', and to the Minister's suggestion that this had happened because of action taken in this session of Parliament by Opposition senators and members in another place. I ask this question of the Minister: Was that statement not made by Mr Hoffmann on 12th October 1968, months before any question was asked in this Parliament?

Senator SCOTT—I do not know what date a statement was made by Mr Hoffmann but I would like to advise the honourable senator and the Senate that following questions this afternoon about this particular subject I have now received through my office a telephone call from Mrs Hoffmann. I will read the message for honourable senators:

Mrs Hoffmann just phoned from Sydney. She has been listening to radio. A Labor senator referred to a statement by Mr Hoffmann. Mrs Hoffmann says her husband has made no statement except the one on TV where he dissociates the Department with ASIO. He is very grateful to Senator Scott and has no criticism of the Department or of the Minister.

BANKING

Senator YOUNG—I direct a question to the Leader of the Government in the Senate with relation to the statement to the Press of the recently held executive meeting of the Australian Labor Party attacking the merger of two commercial trading banks. Does this now mean that the Australian

Labor Party no longer has bank nationalisation as one of the planks of its Party platform, or is it still just keeping quiet on this socialistic policy?

Senator ANDERSON—It is very difficult to know what the policy of the Australian Labor Party would be in an election year.

Senator Wheeldon—I take a point of order. I am not endeavouring to silence the Minister because I am afraid of what he is about to say. During the last sessional period, I think it was, I asked a question of the Minister for Repatriation concerning the policy of the Australian Country Party and I was ruled out of order on the ground that this was not a matter that fell within the ambit of his ministerial duties. My point of order is that if that was the case on that occasion the Leader of the Government is in no better position to comment on the policy of the Australian Labor Party.

The PRESIDENT—The point of order is not upheld.

Senator ANDERSON—I have given my answer.

MERINO RAMS

Senator O'BYRNE—I direct a question to the Minister representing the Minister for Primary Industry. I refer to an article in the official organ of the New South Wales Graziers Association, 'Muster', of 12th March, in which the Minister is accused of sidestepping the question of the lifting of the export ban on merino rams. Does the Minister recall telling Senator Cotton on 27th February that the Minister for Primary Industry had already made a statement on the subject? Was this statement in fact made by the Minister? Does the Minister also recall having told Senator Poyser on 6th March that he thought he had answered the question the previous week, and telling me that he would endeavour to get further information for me? Is it the intention of the Minister to sidestep the question further, or will he make an unambiguous and unequivocal statement on whether or not the ban on merino rams for export is to be lifted?

Senator McKELLAR—The only conclusion that I can reach after listening to the question is that Senator O'Byrne was not

here when I answered a question a few moments ago. I do not mind repeating the answer. In reply to a question asked by Senator Young regarding the lifting of the embargo on the export of merino rams I said that this was under consideration by the Government but I was not in a position to say when a decision is to be made. Is that clear enough?

OVERSEAS INVESTMENT IN AUSTRALIA

Senator FITZGERALD—I direct a question to the Minister representing the Prime Minister. In view of the great concern of all Australians about foreign interests taking over Australian companies, will the Minister advise what the Government means when it talks of having in mind foreign interests taking over 60% of an inefficient Australian company to put it on the right road, but it will not have foreigners moving to take over an efficient company? Who decides whether a particular company is efficient or inefficient? As foreigners are not crazy, foreign capitalists are even less so. Who is to say to a company: 'You are inefficient, you can have help', or: 'You are efficient, you cannot have help'?

Senator ANDERSON—Quite obviously the honourable senator's question does not lend itself to a response at question time. It is true that the Prime Minister and the Treasurer have made statements in another place and, indeed, at various forums about Australia's regard for overseas investment. They have made it abundantly clear that Australia needs overseas investment. Australia, with a population of 12 million, cannot service out of its own resources the amount of capital needed for the development of the country at the rate presently being enjoyed. Indeed, if we are to continue a migration programme, diversification of our industries and a full employment programme for our people, and if we are to be able to give our people more and more of the necessities of life and the advantages of our economy, we will need overseas investment. But that does not mean that we do not need to have some reservations about overseas investment. In all the circumstances and in view of the comprehensive nature of the question asked by

Senator Fitzgerald, I think it would be wise to put the question on notice and I shall obtain a comprehensive answer. I finish on the note that, although Australia's future probably is greater than the future of any country in the world, we still need overseas investment to help us in the work that we are doing for ourselves and for our future.

COMMONWEALTH-STATE RELATIONS

Senator COTTON—Will the Minister representing the Treasurer ask the Treasurer to give urgent consideration to any claim for Commonwealth assistance for the imaginative plan announced yesterday by the New South Wales State Government for the development of Botany Bay as a new port and industrial estate?

Senator ANDERSON—I read with interest, as did other honourable senators, the proposals by the New South Wales Government for the establishment of a second port facility on Botany Bay and for the containerisation provisions implicit in it. I am sure that the Senate will appreciate that Commonwealth and State relations are dealt with at Prime Minister-Premier level in the first instance and that through that avenue financial matters are placed before the Treasurer. I assume that if New South Wales or Victoria were to seek assistance for certain projects it would make the approach through the proper channel to the Prime Minister and to the Commonwealth Government, and it would be considered in that context.

SLATER WALKER SECURITIES (AUST.) LTD

Senator GEORGES—After listening to the reply that the Leader of the Government gave to Senator Fitzgerald I am tempted—

The PRESIDENT—Order! The honourable senator will ask his question. He may not make a statement.

Senator GEORGES—I direct a question to the Minister representing the Attorney-General. Is the Minister aware of the activities of a firm known as Slater Walker Securities (Aust.) Ltd? Is this the firm that was responsible for the breakup of Thomas Brown & Sons Ltd? Is this the firm that

has now taken over Drug Houses of Australia Ltd? Is this the firm that is now threatening the firm of Paterson, Reid and Bruce Ltd? Has the Attorney-General any powers to prevent the dismembering of established Australian firms? If so, will he intercede to protect the interests of the many Australian employees concerned?

Senator WRIGHT—In answer to the question as to whether I am aware of the firm referred to, the answer is no. As to whether I am aware of certain predatory activities attributed to the firm, the answer is no. As to whether the Attorney-General has certain powers, I advise the honourable senator that the Attorney-General has limited powers only but that the Attorneys-General of the States have more significant powers under their relevant companies legislation. The Commonwealth Attorney-General has certain powers under the Trade Practices Act. I shall ask him to take note of the honourable senator's question.

IMMIGRATION

Senator BUTTFIELD—My question is directed to the Minister representing the Minister for Immigration. Has the Minister's attention been drawn to the publicised views of Professor Hoyle relating to Australia's immigration policy in which he advocated a cessation of our active immigration policy in order to consolidate our population at the present level of about 12 million people? Is the Minister aware that one of the reasons given by Professor Hoyle for his view is that there is at present an undue pressure on housing and other services in Australia? Does the Minister agree that the recent Labor Government in South Australia put a halt to migration into that State, with an immediate adverse effect on the homebuilding industry and other related industries which has taken until now to be reversed and which has been achieved because of the successful efforts of the present Liberal Government? Will the Minister in her capacity as Minister for Housing indicate her attitude to Professor Hoyle's views? Can she indicate also the attitude of the Minister for Immigration?

The PRESIDENT—I think this is a political question, but I shall allow it to go to the Minister to see whether she will reply.

Senator Dame ANNABELLE RANKIN

—I think I should reply to the honourable senator in this way: I was asked first of all whether I had seen certain reports in the Press regarding the number of migrants coming into Australia. I have seen these reports and I am quite certain that the Minister for Immigration also has seen them. The honourable senator then commented on housing accommodation for migrants coming to Australia. This matter relates jointly to immigration and housing. I inform the Senate that we are making available flats for migrants in which they can live for up to 6 months. This is transitory accommodation which they may occupy while they find other accommodation. This is proving to be a very satisfactory arrangement in assisting migrants to settle happily in this country. It has been found that they have been able to obtain housing accommodation within this period of 6 months. The next point that I mention relates to the overall picture of housing. Last year we had a record number of approvals, commencements and completions, and these figures show that there should continue to be a healthy trend in housing.

POATINA-LONGFORD IRRIGATION SCHEME

Senator RAE—Can the Minister representing the Minister for National Development inform the Senate when the people of Tasmania may expect to hear whether funds will be made available for the Poatina-Longford irrigation scheme or some other irrigation scheme in Tasmania?

Senator SCOTT—There have been considerable problems with the national water resources development programme, because it is a national programme. The Commonwealth's idea has been not simply to divide the money available for this purpose between the various States but to donate it to the project or projects which it is believed will achieve the greatest results in improving agricultural production in Australia. The Australian Water Resources Council is carefully examining all aspects of the various projects, including the one mentioned by the honourable senator, and I understand that the Government may be able to make further decisions on the programme in the near future.

AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY PARTY

Senator WHEELDON—I address a question to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Has the Minister seen a statement authorised by the Victorian Branch of the Australian Country Party in this week's Melbourne Press complaining about the fact that the Australian Labor Party has declined in future to give its preferences to the Country Party and urging that the Australian Labor Party and the Country Party work together in Victoria for the defeat of the Liberal Party? Would the Leader of the Government inform the Senate whether this indicates a change of policy by the Country Party resulting from the dissatisfaction of the Country Party with the present administration by Liberal Party Ministers in the Commonwealth and in the States?

Senator ANDERSON—The answer is no, I have not seen the article in question.

DROUGHT BONDS

Senator MAUNSELL—Will the Minister representing the Treasurer indicate when the drought bond scheme for primary producers is likely to be implemented?

Senator ANDERSON—I understand that the interdepartmental committee recently completed its report. This will be considered by the Government in the very near future. That is the only information I have.

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE

Senator CAVANAGH—I address a question to the Minister for Customs and Excise. As Mrs Hoffmann's concluding article in the Press makes a plea for the Minister to table in the Parliament the whole file relating to the termination of her husband's services with the Department of Customs and Excise, and in view of the phone call this afternoon in which Mrs Hoffmann claimed false statements are being made in the Senate, will the Minister clear the matter up to the satisfaction of the Senate and Mrs Hoffmann by complying with Mrs Hoffmann's request and tabling all relevant documents?

Senator SCOTT—The honourable senator knows full well that previous questions have been asked of Ministers in this

chamber on this subject and I would like to say that the answer to his question on this occasion is the same as the one given by the Leader of the Government recently and on other occasions.

NATIONAL SERVICE

Senator GREENWOOD—I direct a question to the Minister representing the Minister for Labour and National Service. Has the Minister's attention been drawn to reported statements made by persons that they will not register for national service as required by the National Service Act? If he has, then I ask: In view of the fact that the vast majority of young people obliged to register accept their lawful obligations as Australian citizens, what action has been taken, and what action will be taken, to prosecute persons who, by design, seek to gain political capital by putting themselves above the law?

Senator WRIGHT—I have not seen any specific statement, but I have seen statements of the character that the honourable senator refers to. All I wish to say is that the honourable senator can be sure that the Department of Labour and National Service, in co-operation with the Attorney-General's Department, gives pursuing attention to these matters, each according to its merits. But it has always to be borne in mind that a statement, to be the subject of any law enforcement action, must be clearly established as a statement in the first place, and the degree to which it contravenes the law must clearly appear before it is made the subject of action. Whilst we have a system in which there is a relatively free interplay of opinion as a matter of right of each individual, it is always to be recognised that that right to express opinion and engage in discussion will be curtailed only by the application of the letter and the spirit of the law.

UNITED NATIONS DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

Senator COHEN—I address a question to the Leader of the Government in the Senate as Minister representing the Prime Minister. Has the attention of the Minister been drawn to reports of a statement sent by the President of the United States of America to the United Nations Disarmament Conference yesterday listing United

States priorities for the current session of the Conference? Mr Nixon, amongst other things, called for an international agreement banning the emplacement of nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction on the seabed and for the exploration of any proposals or ideas which would contribute to an effective control of chemical and biological weapons. In view of the great importance of both these questions to Australia, will the Government respond quickly and affirmatively to the message sent to the Conference by the President of the United States of America?

Senator ANDERSON—I have not been informed of the message to which the honourable senator refers. I will seek information from the Prime Minister's Department and reply as quickly as I can to the submissions of the honourable senator. As to the last part of his question in which the honourable senator seeks a declaration by the Commonwealth on the basis of something that he has read in the Press I am sure that he is too mature really to expect that such would be forthcoming. Any proposals that were between government and government would be matters for serious and careful deliberation at the very highest level between those governments. Nevertheless, I think that the first thing is to get some facts about the matter. I will try to do that as quickly as I can.

ADELAIDE AIRPORT

Senator YOUNG—Can the Minister for Works say when the terminal at the Adelaide Airport will be completed as the great numbers of people coming to Adelaide and passing through the airport are being inconvenienced terribly because of the over-taxation of the facilities there at the present time?

Senator WRIGHT—I regret that I have not any specific date in mind for the completion of those works. The honourable senator is well aware of when the works commenced, their dimension and the point to which they have progressed. For myself, having seen them recently, I estimate that completion of the terminal would a matter of a few months only. The inconvenience, of course, is acknowledged, but I do not think that anybody would suggest that undue delay has occurred in connection with the works. I will note the sense

of the honourable senator's question and ask the Department of Works to ensure that the Adelaide Airport works are completed with all proper despatch.

COMMONWEALTH CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION COMMISSION

Senator KENNELLY—I ask the Minister representing the Attorney-General in the first instance whether he read in the Melbourne 'Sun' of yesterday where Sir Richard Kirby warned the unions of their greed—

Senator Wright—Where was this?

Senator KENNELLY—It appeared in yesterday's Melbourne 'Sun'. The passage reads:

If inflation was to be curbed, the Australian Council of Trade Unions and employers would have to persuade certain unions not to be so greedy and graspy, Sir Richard Kirby said.

As both sides of the Senate support the principle of conciliation and arbitration I ask the Minister or the Department to which the learned judge is responsible at least to request that the learned judge be more careful with his remarks and not show his bias against the unions. Is it not interesting that in the speech there is no mention of the price rises about which the unions are concerned? How can anyone in this Parliament or elsewhere expect industrial peace while Sir Richard Kirby retains his present position?

Senator WRIGHT—I wish I had risen to object to the word 'bias' in the context of a reference to any judge. I thought I would only have to mention the matter in a quiet atmosphere and it would have the immediate result of reminding even the honourable senator that it was quite improper. I will not enter into any debate on a question based upon such a suggestion. With regard to the other matter, both Senator Kennelly and I can share a pursuing concern in the matter of wage justice and the competition to which wages are subjected by the urgings of cost rises; but I would not attempt to give an answer which would be useful or pertinent to the matter. This is a subject for debate, if it is a matter of parliamentary reference at all.

AVIATION

Senator BULL—My question is directed to the Minister representing the Minister for Civil Aviation. In view of the fact that the New South Wales Government has expressed its intention to develop fully Botany Bay as a major shipping port and in view of the proximity of Botany Bay to Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport, which would aggravate road congestion in the area, will the Government give early consideration to establishing an airport of international standard west of the Blue Mountains or in some other suitable inland area in New South Wales?

Senator SCOTT—The Minister for Civil Aviation is very conscious of the need to develop existing airports and to provide additional airports to cater not only for overseas passengers but for interstate passengers as well. At present he is looking at places throughout Australia which could be used in that way. In view of the honourable senator's interest in this subject I ask him to place his question on notice. I will then take it up with the Minister concerned.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Senator McMANUS—Has the Minister representing the Minister for External Affairs received from those in left wing trade unions, universities and semi-political and political bodies who were so active in condemning the bombing of North Vietnam, and who succeeded in bringing about its curtailment, any protest at the present murderous shelling of the civilian population of South Vietnam's cities? Can we conclude that their philanthropic indignation is only for people under Communist rule?

Senator ANDERSON—It is true that the elements to which the honourable senator has referred were very vociferous in relation to operations in Vietnam, particularly the bombing of North Vietnam. I have yet to see or be informed of any significant protestation in relation to the cruel and wicked bombing that is being inflicted on civilians in South Vietnam.

AVIATION

Senator WEBSTER—My question is addressed to the Minister representing the Minister for Civil Aviation. Has concern been expressed regarding the ability of Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport to expand satisfactorily, and that road and port access may bring further problems? Will the Government consider making Tullamarine the No. 1 international airport in Australia?

Senator SCOTT—This is a very important political question. If the Government made Tullamarine the major international airport in Australia a lot of people would be marching on Canberra from Sydney. The Government's intention is to try to develop airports to service the two major cities in Australia on an equal footing.

US NAVIGATIONAL SYSTEM STATION

Senator RAE—Yesterday I inquired whether the Leader of the Government in the Senate could tell me the stage which had been reached in negotiations for the building by the United States of America of a navigational system station in Australia. I asked also whether the Minister could confirm that this station would be situated in Tasmania and, if so, where in Tasmania it would be situated and when building would commence. Is he now in a position to supply this information?

Senator ANDERSON—Yesterday the honourable senator asked me a question in my capacity as Minister for Supply. I feel bound to say that I was left flatfooted because I was not aware of the matter having any relationship to my Department, but I promised to seek information. It is now to hand. I am informed that a group of United States Government officials visited Australia in 1967 and explained the operation and advantages of a worldwide navigational system known as Omega. In 1968 a United States team conducted a survey, without commitment, of possible sites. Subsequently an inter-departmental committee was established to consider the system in detail. However this committee found that it could not proceed until a technical assessment of the system and its expected performance had been made.

A technical working party was established late last year and is at present preparing a

detailed report on the system, but this is not expected to be ready until about mid April. It is then expected that the inter-departmental committee will meet again. It is expected also that further informal talks will take place with the Americans at about that time. It is possible that those talks could result in a formal approach being made by the United States Government regarding the establishment of a station in Australia. As no formal request that such a station should be established in Australia has been received at this stage, no decision has been reached on whether a station will be established in Tasmania or anywhere else in Australia.

WEST IRIAN

Senator GEORGES—I refer to previous questions to the Leader of the Government in the Senate and now ask him: What finally happened to the eight West Irians who drifted by raft to Australia?

Senator ANDERSON—The last time the honourable senator posed this question to me I gave an answer which, as I recall it, was to the effect that a decision had to be made and that pending that decision the West Irians were being accommodated reasonably. I do not know what has happened since then. I will get the information for the honourable senator as soon as I can.

PUBLIC SERVICE

Senator O'BYRNE—Has the Minister for Customs and Excise seen a copy of the 'lost' letter hand written by Mrs Hoffmann on 29th October 1968 to the Prime Minister, Mr Gorton? If he has not, would he like to have a photostat copy so that his file and the records of this affair can be as complete as is possible? I ask for leave to lay on the table of the Senate a copy of the letter.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT—Order! Is leave granted? There being no objection, leave is granted.

Senator SCOTT—I had not seen this letter prior to the honourable senator tabling it in the Senate. I can assure him that I will read it with great interest.

CUSTOMS DUTIES

Senator McCLELLAND—I direct a question to the Minister for Customs and Excise. I refer again to the answer he gave me yesterday regarding the short payment of duty in respect of cigars and cigarettes. Is the Minister aware that the report of the Auditor-General for the last financial year, at page 55, pointed out large short payments of duty and stated: 'Administrative and legal action has not yet been finalised'? Bearing in mind that this is 9 months later and also the astronomical amount involved, can the Minister explain the reason for the delay in determining whether additional proceedings will be taken in the future in connection with further possible offences? Can he state how long the matter has been with the Attorney-General's Department? Has any amount been recovered to date in respect of both the cigars and the cigarettes? If so, what amount has been recovered?

Senator SCOTT—I have the report of the Auditor-General here. I have read page 55 of it. I note with interest the comments made by the honourable senator. On the specific points that he raises, as to how much we have collected, how much we are going to collect and when action will be taken, all I can say is that at the present time the matter is before the courts. As to the other parts of his question in which he is seeking information, I ask him to place his question on the notice paper.

MARRIAGE

Senator GEORGES—I direct a question to the Minister representing the Attorney-General. On 11th October 1968 the Attorney-General undertook to consult the registrars-general of the various States in order to obtain their views in relation to the appointment of secular marriage celebrants under section 39 of the Marriage Act 1961-1966. What progress has the Attorney-General made on this matter?

Senator WRIGHT—I shall obtain the information required and advise the honourable senator.

TELEPHONE SERVICES

Senator MARRIOTT—Is the Minister representing the Postmaster-General able to tell the Senate what action is being taken

to improve the hitherto efficient but now seemingly overcrowded subscriber trunk dialling telephone system between Tasmania and other Australian States?

Senator Dame ANNABELLE RANKIN—Senator Marriott asked me a question concerning this matter yesterday. I promised him that I would seek information from the Postmaster-General. I have done that. I believe that the following information will answer the questions he has raised:

Regular checks on the STD service have not revealed any evidence of congestion occurring on calls between Tasmania and the mainland States in general, other than the normal occasional congestion which occurs during particularly pronounced peak traffic periods.

The microwave radio system across Bass Strait, which provides STD and operator controlled trunk circuits, has adequate capacity for several years ahead. A close oversight is kept on demand and channels are added periodically as they are required.

I understand, though, that some difficulties have been encountered in calling Tasmania by STD from Canberra. This is due to a deficiency in a particular section of the Canberra local network, and urgent attention is being given to overcoming this problem.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Senator MULVIHILL—I direct a question to you, Mr Deputy President, for the purpose of obtaining guidance. I hasten to add that I do so on a very comradely basis. I concede the right of leaders to ask the first question each day and of all other senators to ask at least one question each day. I know that there has been a change in the occupant of the chair from the President to yourself. Do you operate on a clockwise or anti-clockwise system? I appreciate that the present system keeps a person's calf and thigh muscles in good condition, but at times Opposition senators on the perimeter miss out on getting the call.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT—This is a difficult question for me to answer. I know that there are some complaints. But the President has made a list of the senators who have risen in their places. When I take over the Chair it is my job to call those on that list. When I have completed the list I call senators from each side of the Chamber alternately, as they rise and bearing in mind whether they have asked a

question before. Senator Kennelly rose when I had the list of other names before me, and I called him because he had not asked a question this afternoon.

TELEPHONE SERVICES

Senator O'BYRNE—My question, which is directed to the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, is supplementary and similar to the one asked by Senator Marriott. Will the Postmaster-General direct the attention of his technical staff to the situation in which the subscriber trunk dialling service from Parliament House operates only intermittently and a voice on the line states continually that the lines are overcrowded? In view of the increases in postage and telephone charges and the reduction of mail deliveries, which are supposed to balance the sums invested in microwave telecommunications equipment, could the Postmaster-General arrange for the simple STD service to be available to the Commonwealth Parliament when it is in session?

Senator Dame ANNABELLE RANKIN—I believe that the answer I gave to Senator Marriott answers the question asked by Senator O'Byrne. That answer was that urgent attention is being given to a deficiency in a particular section of the Canberra local network.

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE

Senator McCLELLAND—My question again is directed to the Minister for Customs and Excise. Bearing in mind his answer earlier today on the issuing of warrants, in which he said that the system is to be critically reviewed and that search warrants will be issued only to people with certain qualifications, I ask: What are the qualifications now to be required of officers who are to be issued with customs search warrants in the future?

Senator SCOTT—The qualifications that I would hope are necessary are those that will not allow a set of circumstances to operate such as operated against Miss Mayo.

Senator CAVANAGH—I ask the Minister for Customs and Excise a question that arises out of the answer he just gave

to Senator McClelland. Was the mixup that occurred over the invasion of Miss Mayo's home the result of the qualifications of the customs officials or, as we were told yesterday, false information?

Senator SCOTT—It was false information, as I said yesterday, but other circumstances have been involved where searches have been made. Firstly, it has been thought that we will tighten up considerably on the number of people who will be given these warrants. Secondly, we intend to talk to the people and to endeavour to instruct them so that this type of procedure will not happen again.

POSTAL DEPARTMENT

(Question No. 842)

Senator POYSER asked the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, upon notice:

1. Has the Postmaster-General's Department refused permission to the Victorian Branch of the Australian Labour Party to frank envelopes with the slogan 'Release Postman Zarb'?
2. If so, does this mean that the Postmaster-General's Department has set up its own censorship on what can and cannot be printed or embossed on envelopes going through the mail?
3. Will this censorship ensure that material likely to be embarrassing to the present Government will not be permitted to be printed or embossed on envelopes by organisations or private citizens?

Senator Dame ANNABELLE RANKIN

—The Postmaster-General has supplied the following answer to the honourable senator's question:

1. Yes.
- 2 and 3. Slogans for use in conjunction with franking machines are subject to approval to ensure that, as far as practicable, they do not offend any section of the community or the recipients of the postal articles on which they appear.

AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING COMMISSION

(Question No. 846)

Senator ORMONDE asked the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, upon notice:

1. Has the Australian Broadcasting Commission's action in reforming its Talks Department by placing talks under the supervision of a Director

of Current Affairs been for the purpose of reducing the possible sources of contentious radio and television discussion?

2. Is it a fact that the usually uncensored controversial sessions such as 'This Day Tonight', 'Four Corners' and the radio features 'A.M.' and 'Tonight' will now be responsible to the Director of Television Programmes and the Deputy Director of Radio Programmes?

Senator Dame ANNABELLE RANKIN—The Postmaster-General has supplied the following answer to the honourable senator's question:

1. No. A new department of current affairs programmes has been established with responsibility for all ABC current affairs programmes—both radio and television.

2. No. These programmes are the responsibility of the Director of Current Affairs Programmes.

WOOL

(Question No. 848)

Senator ORMONDE asked the Minister representing the Minister for Primary Industry, upon notice:

1. Has the Minister seen reports in the Press that international wool buyers are showing a preference for merino wool rather than the wool of mixed breeds?

2. If these reports are correct, would the decision of the Australian Wool Industry Conference, recommending the lifting of the ban on the export of merino rams, be against the best interests of the Australian wool industry?

3. Is it the Government's intention to lift the ban on the export of merino rams?

Senator McKELLAR—The following information has been supplied by the Minister for Primary Industry in answer to the honourable senator's question:

1. I am aware that there is a tendency for merino wool, especially the finer varieties, to command a relatively wide price premium over crossbred wools. This tendency has been in evidence over the past two seasons or so but prior to that there was a long period of years when the margin between the prices of merino and crossbred wools was relatively narrow. Statistics show that during the last four decades this margin has fluctuated over periods of varying length.

2. As the relativity of prices paid for different varieties of wool can change from time to time, it seems that the soundness or otherwise of the recommendation made by the Australian Wool Industry Conference cannot be judged solely in terms of the present relationship between merino and crossbred wool prices.

3. This is a matter which is now receiving the consideration of the Government.

IMMIGRATION

(Question No. 862)

Senator ORMONDE asked the Minister representing the Minister for Immigration, upon notice:

With reference to the recent appointment of a panel of experts to examine the qualifications of migrants to enter Australian professions and skilled trades, has the Minister considered having union representation on this panel of experts?

Senator Dame ANNABELLE RANKIN

—The Minister for Immigration has supplied the following answer to the honourable senator's question:

There is no intention that the Committee, the proposed formation of which was announced by me on 12th February, should examine the qualifications of migrants entering the skilled trades. This committee will concern itself with the professions, and, accordingly, will not have union representation.

A special mission which included a number of union representatives and which was led by Mr B. H. Tregillis of the Department of Labour and National Service, has spent the last 5 months in Europe examining trade training and the comparability with Australian trade training, with a view to ensuring that the trade qualifications of suitably trained migrants are recognised.

NATURALISATIONS

(Question No. 863)

Senator McCLELLAND asked the Minister representing the Minister for Immigration, upon notice:

1. How many persons were refused naturalisation on security grounds during the financial years 1966-67 and 1967-68?

2. How many applications were deferred (a) owing to the inability of the applicant to satisfy language requirements, and (b) because it was considered that the applicant did not have an adequate knowledge of the responsibilities and privileges of Australian citizenship?

3. Are persons so rejected informed of the real reason for their inability to become naturalised?

4. Have persons, who are refused naturalisation, the right of appeal to any judicial body in Australia?

Senator Dame ANNABELLE RANKIN

—The Minister for Immigration has provided the following answer to the honourable senator's question:

1. Fifteen persons were refused naturalisation on security grounds during the financial year 1966-67 and sixty for the same reason during 1967-68.

2. The numbers of applications deferred during the financial years 1966-67 and 1967-68 owing to the inability of the applicant to satisfy language

requirements were 60 and 187 respectively. No applications were deferred either in 1966-67 or 1967-68 solely because it was considered that the applicant did not have an adequate knowledge of the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship. Generally speaking, applicants who cannot satisfy the language requirement are also unable to demonstrate an adequate knowledge of the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship.

3. An applicant for the grant of citizenship who is unable to meet the residence requirement, or who cannot demonstrate an adequate knowledge of English or of the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship, is informed of the reason if the application is refused or deferred. It is not the practice to provide reasons when applications are refused or deferred on other grounds.

4. No. Suggestions that provision should be made for such a right of appeal have been made from time to time and considered by the Government but have not been adopted.

TELEVISION

(Question No. 864)

Senator McCLELLAND asked the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, upon notice:

When is it expected that the national television service will be able to be extended to the towns of Nyngan, Cobar, Bourke and Brewarrina in New South Wales.

Senator Dame ANNABELLE RANKIN—The Postmaster-General has supplied the following answer to the honourable senator's question:

It is expected that the Nyngan and Cobar services will be provided in approximately 2 years and the Bourke-Brewarrina service in approximately 3 years.

AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING COMMISSION

(Question No. 875)

Senator ORMONDE asked the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, upon notice:

In an effort to make more widely known the candidates, apart from the leaders, who will be contesting the next federal election, will the Postmaster-General consider suggesting to the Australian Broadcasting Commission that a 'Meet the Candidates' feature be reinstated as part of its service to all political parties in the coming federal election?

Senator Dame ANNABELLE RANKIN—The Postmaster-General has supplied the following answer to the honourable senator's question:

In terms of section 116 of the Boradcasting and Television Act 1942-1968 the Australian Broadcasting Commission may determine to what

extent and in what manner political matter or controversial matter will be broadcast or televised by the Commission. I shall therefore refer your suggestion to the Chairman of the ABC, Sir Robert Madgwick, for the Commission's consideration.

AVIATION

(Question No. 882)

Senator LAWRIE asked the Minister for Civil Aviation, upon notice:

In view of the fact that some air services to western Queensland are now operated by Twin Otter aircraft and that no meals or refreshments are available on these planes, especially on some long flights, will the Minister give consideration to introducing economy class fares on these flights?

Senator SCOTT—The Minister for Civil Aviation has supplied the following answer to the honourable senator's question:

The fares on the services in western Queensland operated by Twin Otter aircraft have been fixed having regard to the standard of service provided and the cost of operation. At the present fares the services are uneconomic, and considerable subsidy support is required for the developmental services on which the aircraft are employed. It is not practicable to offer dual class travel in the Twin Otter aircraft and thus any reduction of the fare would apply to all the traffic carried. This would result in reduced revenue which would have to be met by increased subsidy and this could not be justified.

COLOUR TELEVISION

(Question No. 888)

Senator LAUCKE asked the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, upon notice:

With reference to a statement in the 'Australian' of 27th February 1969 relating to the intended introduction of colour television in about 19 months time, will such introduction in any way prejudice the extension of standard TV services to areas now seeking this facility?

Senator Dame ANNABELLE RANKIN—The Postmaster-General has provided the following answer:

The honourable senator will be aware that a statement was made on behalf of the Postmaster-General in the Senate on 27th February concerning the colour television system to be used when colour television is introduced into Australia. The statement made it clear however that the Government has made no decision as to a time of introduction of colour television and that the statement of 27th February was not to be construed in any way as an indication that the inauguration of colour transmissions is imminent. The statement repeated an earlier undertaking which the Postmaster-General gave that when the Government reached a firm decision about the introduction of colour television it would give 18 months clear notice

so that receiver manufacturers and others would have time to prepare. In reference to the honourable senator's question, I have previously stated that the eventual introduction of colour television will in no way impinge on the efforts which are being made to extend black and white television facilities as widely as possible.

POSTMASTERS

(Question No. 904)

Senator MULVIHILL asked the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, upon notice:

1. How many non-official postmasters operate in New South Wales?
2. How many operate non-official post offices in the electorate of Macarthur?
3. What is the formula under which their remuneration is calculated?

Senator Dame ANNABELLE RANKIN—The Postmaster-General has provided the following answers:

1. There are 1,809 non-official postmasters in New South Wales.
2. Of these 96 are located in the electorate of Macarthur.
3. Non-official postmasters are remunerated according to an arbitration determination which prescribes:
 - (a) An annual rate of pay based on the volume of indoor work, which is measured in work units, performed at the office;
 - (b) that annual allowances be paid for additional work such as letter deliveries, telegram deliveries, and telephone operating and other activities performed outside normal office hours; and
 - (c) annual allowances for the provision of accommodation, lighting, heating and for cleaning.

With regard to the annual rate of payment, mentioned in (a) above, the determination provides for non-official post offices to be classified according to the volume of business they transact. There are two groups, namely, full time service, and scale rate offices.

An office is classified as full time service when the number of work units earned annually exceeds 100,000—i.e., when the time occupied on post office work is estimated to be approximately 80% of a full-time employee. The annual payment for non-official postmasters at these offices is determined from a scale of payment where the minimum is \$2,650 and the maximum is \$4,249. An office is classified as scale rate when the number of work units earned annually is less than 100,000. In these instances, the annual rate of pay is a direct proportion of the time occupied on post office work in relation to the minimum annual rate of pay for non-official postmasters at a full time service office.

POST OFFICES

(Question No. 937)

Senator FITZGERALD asked the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, upon notice:

When will the Postmaster-General announce a further list of post offices which are to close on Saturday mornings because of insufficient business?

Senator Dame ANNABELLE RANKIN—The Postmaster-General has provided the following answer:

Significant changes to Saturday trading arrangements at post offices were made on 26th October 1968, when 32 post offices were closed at 10.30 a.m. bringing the total closed at this hour on Saturdays to 108; and 88 were closed completely, bringing the total closed on Saturdays to 213. From that date also, all other post offices were closed at 11 a.m., with the exception of mainland General Post Offices which still observe 12 noon closing on Saturdays. It is not proposed, at this stage, to alter the present arrangements.

PUBLIC SERVICE

(Question No. 938)

Senator FITZGERALD asked the Minister representing the Treasurer, upon notice:

Will the Government allow deductions to be made from Commonwealth public servants' salaries of union fees and staff association fees, similar to deductions made in respect of life assurance and hospital and medical fund contributions, and at the same rate of collection as is charged the assurance and medical funds?

Senator ANDERSON—The Treasurer has provided the following answer to the honourable senator's question:

Consideration is being given to this matter as part of a general review of arrangements for the making of deductions from Commonwealth public servants' salaries.

AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING COMMISSION

(Question No. 950)

Senator O'BRYNE asked the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, upon notice:

1. Is it a fact that about thirty senior journalists, including employees of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, have been rejected for appointment to the vacant position of Canberra commentator for the top rated Australian Broadcasting Commission's programme 'This Day Tonight'?
2. Is it a fact that since the departure last year of Mr Michael Willessee from this position, the post has been empty and vital political issues have failed to reach the million-strong audience which regularly watches this programme?

3. Will the Postmaster-General ask the Australian Broadcasting Commission to appoint immediately an unbiased political commentator in Canberra and to stop attempting to reduce the status of the position by having an infrequent Canberra coverage using temporary journalists?

Senator Dame ANNABELLE RANKIN—The Postmaster-General has provided the following answers:

1. No.

2. No.

3. The Chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Commission has informed me that one of the Australian Broadcasting Commission's most experienced journalists has been appointed as head of its Current Affairs Bureau in Canberra. He is expected to take up his duties shortly.

PUBLIC SERVICE

(Question No. 956)

Senator CAVANAGH asked the Minister representing the Minister for Trade and Industry the following question, upon notice:

As a report of the interrogation of Mr James Francis O'Brien by Commonwealth Police last November was made to the Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry, will the Minister advise the Senate of the nature of the report and whether any breaches of the Public Service Act were indicated?

Senator ANDERSON—The Minister for Trade and Industry has provided the following answer to the honourable senator's question:

The Secretary, Department of Trade and Industry, has informed me that the Commonwealth Police reported the results of their investigations to the Secretary, Department of Trade and Industry, on 14th October 1968. The report confirmed that some of Mr O'Brien's hotel expenses had been paid by persons or firms to whom he had given advice or assistance. As Mr O'Brien had resigned from the Public Service and no charge under the Public Service Act could therefore be laid, the question of whether he had committed breaches of the Public Service Act was not pursued.

PUBLIC SERVICE

(Question No. 959)

Senator KEEFFE asked the Minister representing the Minister for Trade and Industry the following question, upon notice:

1. Is James Francis O'Brien, who resigned as an officer of the Department of Trade and Industry, now engaged as a publicity promotions organiser or in some similar position with a

chain of New South Wales south coast newspapers?

2. Will the Minister inform the Parliament if Mr O'Brien was given assistance in obtaining this position by the Minister for Trade and Industry in the same way as Mr G. C. Hoffmann was assisted by the Minister for Customs and Excise?

3. Is the Minister aware of the details of management and ownership of the newspaper chain referred to?

Senator ANDERSON—The Minister for Trade and Industry has provided the following answer to the honourable senator's question:

I do not know where or by whom Mr O'Brien has been employed since his resignation. I did not assist Mr O'Brien to obtain any employment. I am informed by the Secretary, Department of Trade and Industry, that he did not assist him to get employment. The Senate has already been informed by the Minister for Customs and Excise that he did not assist Mr Hoffmann to obtain his employment.

PUBLIC SERVICE

(Question No. 962)

Senator CAVANAGH asked the Minister representing the Minister for Trade and Industry the following question, upon notice:

In the investigation of the activities of Mr J. F. O'Brien, an officer of the Department of Trade and Industry, was another officer, a Mr Frank Anderson, interviewed by Mr Weston—

I think that should be Sir Alan Westerman. transferred, against his will, to New Zealand and told that he would receive no future promotion in that Department? If so, of what was Mr Anderson accused?

Senator ANDERSON—The Minister for Trade and Industry has provided me with the following information in answer to the honourable senator's question:

No. I am informed by the Secretary, Department of Trade and Industry, that no-one, including Mr Anderson, knows who Mr Weston is; that Mr Anderson's posting to New Zealand was not against his will and that he was not told that he would receive no future promotion. Indeed the New Zealand appointment was to a position of higher status and salary than his former position.

TULLAMARINE AIRPORT

(Question No. 964)

Senator POYSER asked the Minister representing the Minister for Civil Aviation, upon notice:

What has been done to provide passenger conveyor belts or vehicles as suggested by Senator

Bishop in the Senate last year at Tullamarine Airport between the domestic and international sections which are separated by long distances?

Senator SCOTT—The Minister for Civil Aviation has provided the following answer to the honourable senator's question:

The question asked by Senator Bishop last year was answered by Senator Wright. Senator Wright said that no provision had been made in the present design for either the international or the domestic concourses at Tullamarine for moving walkways but the international concourses had been designed with sufficient height to permit this to be done, as required, at a later date. There is no intention at this time to provide moving walkways at Tullamarine although, as stated by Senator Wright, consideration may be given to this at some time in the future.

The international and domestic terminals are housed in a single terminal complex providing a minimum distance between the domestic and international sections. The distance between international and domestic sections is approximately 600 feet and the average normal walking distance in the domestic concourses would be 600 feet and in the international concourses 700 feet. Walkways are not considered necessary for dimensions such as these.

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE

(Question No. 977)

Senator O'BYRNE asked the Minister for Customs and Excise, upon notice:

1. Does the Minister not view the visit of a group of investigators to the home of an innocent person as a very serious transgression of human rights?

2. Was the person who supplied to customs officers the incorrect address of Miss Daphne Mayo of Brisbane a member of the staff of the Department of Customs and Excise? If so, was he given the option of resigning or was he dismissed?

3. If the person was not a member of the staff, does the Department of Customs and Excise act on information supplied by pimps and informers without thorough investigation?

4. What precautions has the Department taken to ensure that this type of trespass on a private person does not happen again?

Senator SCOTT—The answers to the honourable senator's questions are as follows:

1. Officers of the Department of Customs and Excise are instructed that they are not permitted to carry out investigations at private houses unless they have reasonable evidence that important breaches of the Customs Act have occurred.

2. The informant was not an officer of the Department of Customs and Excise.

3. All law enforcement organisations use information supplied by informers. The task of detecting prohibited imports would be made

extremely difficult if information from such sources was ignored. Officers are instructed not to rely on this information without substantiating evidence. Despite these precautions, sometimes the information is not correct.

4. I have taken steps to emphasise to officers concerned the instructions set out in 3.

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE

(Question No. 983)

Senator GAIR asked the Minister for Customs and Excise, upon notice:

1. With reference to the recent case in Brisbane where customs officers acted in a most aggressive manner in seeking entry into the home of Miss Daphne Mayo, following a tip-off, from an anonymous citizen, that pornographic material would be found at that address, to what extent do customs officers check that houses they are about to raid are houses which might possibly contain illegally imported items, and what precautions do they take to ensure they are not victims of practical jokes?

2. Is it a fact that, having obtained entry to Miss Mayo's house, customs officers found absolutely no evidence of pornographic material?

3. Is the Miss Mayo who was the subject of this raid the same Miss Mayo who (a) is an M.B.E.; (b) is a trustee of the Queensland Art Gallery; (c) made one of the big pairs of bronze entrance doors to the Mitchell Library in Sydney, and (d) was a joint founder of the Queensland Art Fund?

Senator SCOTT—The answers to the honourable senator's questions are as follows:

1. The customs officers concerned in this investigation did not act in an aggressive manner. After they had identified themselves and a member of the Queensland police licensing squad, they sought permission to enter the house. The information was not received from an anonymous citizen. It was given by an informer who produced examples of the prohibited imports which he alleged could be found in the house whose address he furnished. Officers are instructed not to rely on information from informers without substantiating evidence. In the present case, the information appeared to be reliable. However, this was found not to be so.

2. Yes.

3. Yes, with the exception that I understand that Miss Mayo is a former trustee of the Queensland Art Gallery.

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE

(Question No. 986)

Senator McCLELLAND asked the Minister for Customs and Excise, upon notice:

1. Is the Minister aware that on 21st March 1968 a highly reputable business firm, carrying

on business in the Sydney suburb of Campsie, was raided by a number of customs officers, some from the Customs Investigation Branch and some from the Prevention and Detection Section, notwithstanding the fact that the company had a ministerial determination to import certain goods duty free?

2. Is it a fact that nothing whatsoever of an illegal nature was found on these business premises?

3. Is it also a fact that, notwithstanding this fruitless search, a senior officer of his Department then ordered the removal of records and documents from the business premises under section 214 of the Customs Act for further investigation and that again nothing against the firm was found?

4. Was any apology tendered to the firm on that occasion by the Collector of Customs, as apparently was done in Queensland in the case of Miss Mayo?

5. Will the Minister demand of his Department that in the future officers thoroughly check on the authenticity or accuracy of the information supplied by their informants before they hound and invade the privacy of completely innocent people?

Senator SCOTT—The answer to the honourable senator's questions are as follows:

1. Yes. An investigation was made into the importation of goods by Geophysical Service International to the value of over \$2m. Evidence in the possession of the Collector of Customs, Sydney, suggested that goods had been imported by the company free of duty under the authority of a by-law determination, whereas in fact the goods were not covered by the determination. The investigation disclosed that goods had been imported which it had not been intended should be covered by the determination. Subsequently, after an examination of the appropriate documents, it was decided to permit the by-law admission of this extra equipment.

2. See answer to 1.

3. See answer to 1.

4. No.

5. See answer to 1.

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE

(Question No. 987)

Senator DITTMER asked the Minister for Customs and Excise, upon notice:

1. In what form and by whom was the authority issued which authorised the raid on Miss Daphne Mayo of Brisbane?

2. Does the Minister approve of this raid, at the hour of 10 p.m., on a respected elderly lady and does he agree with the words 'I'll smash the door in' alleged to have been used by one of his officers?

3. In the light of the many irregularities in his Department—

And they are becoming more and more evident—

. . . will the Minister have a thorough inquiry made and take steps to regularise the conduct of officers of his Department?

Senator SCOTT—The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

1. The authority was in accordance with Schedule IV to the Customs Act, issued by the Collector of Customs for Queensland under the powers of Section 199 of the Customs Act.

2. Prohibited imports, such as narcotics, pornographic materials, etc., have been found in houses occupied by all types of people, at all hours of the day and night.

Under normal circumstances, I would not necessarily disapprove of an investigation being made at 10 o'clock in the evening.

I am advised that the officers involved have stated emphatically that they did not use any words such as those suggested in the question.

3. I do not agree that there are many irregularities in the Department of Customs and Excise. Although I have already stated that I regret the inconvenience inadvertently caused to the householder in this instance, I can understand that a mistake of this nature can occur in isolated instances.

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE

(Question No. 993)

Senator CAVANAGH asked the Minister for Customs and Excise, upon notice:

1. Did Mr Hoffmann, in his position of advising the Minister on the issuing of regulations under the Customs Act, advise the issue of a by-law in respect to turtle skins?

2. Was it the intention of such by-law to permit entry of the commodity at a lesser rate than previously applied?

3. Has such a by-law since been issued?

Senator SCOTT—The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

1. At the time in question, Mr Hoffmann was concerned with examining by-law applications and making recommendations to those officers who had authority to issue by-law determinations as delegates of the Minister for Customs and Excise. He had no authority to act as a delegate of the Minister or to approve by-law determinations. In fact, in his area of responsibility, he was not concerned with applications for by-law admission of turtle skins.

2. All by-law determinations permit the importation of the relevant goods at rates of duty less than the normal rates.

3. No.

PUBLIC SERVICE

(Question No. 1000)

Senator CAVANAGH asked the Minister representing the Prime Minister, upon notice:

Did any person approach the Chairman of the Public Service appeal tribunal and threaten that unless Mr Hoffmann was permitted to resign he would disclose the activities of Mrs Hoffmann while employed at the Japanese Embassy; if so, what was the name of the person?

Senator ANDERSON—The Prime Minister has provided me with the following answer to the honourable senator's question:

I am advised by the Public Service Board which has consulted the Chairman of the Public Service Appeal Board that there was no such approach.

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE

(Question No. 1002)

Senator GEORGES asked the Minister for Customs and Excise, upon notice:

1. Was the information received in relation to Miss Mayo, of Brisbane, anonymous in origin?

2. Was the warrant used issued for the particular raid in question?

3. Was the Collector in Queensland aware of the intention to raid before it took place; if not, what type of warrant was issued to the sixteen men in Queensland referred to by the Minister in answer to a previous question?

Senator SCOTT—The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

1. No. The information was given by an informer, who actually produced examples of the prohibited imports which he alleged could be found in the house whose address he furnished. These examples were seized.

2. No. The warrant was issued to the officer concerned in accordance with schedule IV to the Customs Act to be used as required by this officer in investigations relating to illegal importation of goods.

3. No. The information was such that there was no opportunity to advise the Collector of Customs. At that date, there were nineteen officers in Brisbane involved in numerous law enforcement activities, to whom the warrants described in 2. had been issued.

IMPORTS

Senator ANDERSON—On 20th November 1968, Senator Fitzgerald asked me a question without notice concerning the difficulties being experienced by Kodiak Packaging Materials Co. of North Ryde,

due to large scale imports of pressure sensitive adhesive materials and gummed materials and whether immediate action could be taken to assist the company.

The Minister for Trade and Industry has provided me with the following reply:

Kodiak Packaging Materials Co. has applied to the Department of Trade and Industry for urgent action against imports of pressure sensitive and gummed tapes and pressure sensitive label paper, some of which have a synthetic resin base and others a paper base. The company contended that a temporary duty was necessary to protect it from serious damage until the Tariff Board reported on these materials.

The Tariff Board is currently conducting an inquiry into products made from synthetic resin. On the types of adhesive tapes covered by this inquiry, the major Australian manufacturers have made a request to the Tariff Board for increased duties. However, these companies have indicated to the Department of Trade and Industry that at their present levels of production, sales and profits on the range of products made by Kodiak Packaging Materials Co., they could not establish the need for temporary protection. The companies, therefore, whilst not objecting to the Kodiak application, do not intend to support the request for temporary protection.

In this situation, when the question of serious damage must be related to the industry as a whole, and those constituting the greater part of the industry do not submit data sufficient to establish that the industry is being seriously damaged or under a threat of serious damage because of imports, temporary protection is not appropriate. For this reason, I have been unable to give favourable consideration to Kodiak's request on products covered by the synthetic resin inquiry.

Concurrently, consideration is being given to a Tariff Board inquiry on pressure sensitive materials made on a paper base. Most of these items are produced by the major Australian manufacturers previously referred to, and the same considerations precluding emergency protection in respect of synthetic resin based pressure sensitive tapes apply to most paper-based items.

There may, however, be some areas of production, not served by these major firms, in which Kodiak and any other local producers may be able to establish a case of serious damage from imports. One such area is in the production of pressure sensitive label papers. The major producer of this item has recently submitted to the Department of Trade and Industry a request for temporary protection in support of the Kodiak application. You may be assured that this request is being processed without undue delay.

SPACE SEARCH FACILITY

Senator ANDERSON—On 25th February in response to a question concerning the Joint Defence Space Research Facility at Pine Gap asked by Senator McClelland I undertook to obtain further information from the Minister for Defence.

The Minister has provided the following information:

I refer the honourable senator to my reply on 26th February 1969 to a question without notice by Dr J. F. Cairns in which I reiterated that the station is a space research facility operated jointly by the United States of America and Australia. I draw his attention also to article 3 of the Government to Government Agreement for the project (Treaty Series, 1966, No. 17) which states that the facility shall be established, maintained and operated by the co-operating agencies of the two governments.

My reply also indicated that if the Government were to disclose any more than that the station is to carry out space research, this could be of assistance to this country's potential enemies. For that reason the project is covered by security, and no further information will be given.

COLOUR TELEVISION

Senator Dame ANNABELLE RANKIN
—On 27th February, Senator Maunsell asked me the following question:

In view of the future introduction of colour television into this country, will the Postmaster-General give some indication of when television, in colour or black and white, will be introduced to western Queensland, particularly in those areas which have been under investigation?

The Postmaster-General has now furnished me with the following reply:

There are difficult economic and technical problems associated with the provision of television service to relatively remote and sparsely populated areas such as western Queensland. Nevertheless, the Australian Broadcasting Control Board has the matter of the possibilities of the further extension of the television services under constant review and I have received a report from the Board concerning the extension of television to a number of remote parts, including western Queensland. After I have had an opportunity of studying the report, the matter will be submitted for the Government's consideration. I am unable to make any comments on the prospects of provision of television to centres in western Queensland until the Board's report has been fully considered especially in view of the difficulties about the matter and the fact that other areas throughout the Commonwealth also have to receive consideration.

COLOUR TELEVISION

Senator Dame ANNABELLE RANKIN
—On 4th March, Senator Young asked me the following question:

Can the Minister representing the Postmaster-General say how long it will be before colour television is introduced into Australia? Is the Minister aware of the great concern by many country people, such as those of upper Eyre Peninsula in South Australia, that the introduction of colour television will delay the establishment of television in further country areas? Can the Minister give an assurance that this will not be so?

The Postmaster-General has now furnished me with the following information in reply:

The honourable senator will be aware that a statement was made on behalf of the Postmaster-General in the Senate on 27th February concerning the colour television system to be used when colour television is introduced into Australia. The statement made it clear however that the Government has made no decision as to a time of introduction of colour television and that the statement of 27th February was not to be construed in any way as an indication that the inauguration of colour transmissions is imminent.

I have previously stated that the eventual introduction of colour television will in no way impinge on the efforts which are being made to extend black and white television facilities as widely as possible.

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Senator Dame ANNABELLE RANKIN
—Last night during the adjournment debate Senator Fitzgerald referred to a question which he had asked of me, as the representative of the Minister for Social Services, on 13th November 1968. It was question No. 775 on the notice paper. He said that he had not received an answer. He asked why it had been removed from the notice paper. I inform the honourable senator that the question was answered by me, on behalf of the Minister for Social Services, on 28th November 1968. It will be found in Hansard of that date at page 2596. The question was removed from the notice paper because it had been answered.

NORFOLK ISLAND IMMIGRATION ORDINANCE 1968

Ministerial Statement

Senator ANDERSON (New South Wales—Minister for Supply)—by leave—On 13th November 1968 the Immigration Ordinance of Norfolk Island was tabled in the Senate pursuant to section 17 of the Norfolk Island Act. This Ordinance relates to immigration into and deportation from the Territory of Norfolk Island. The Ordinance has been discussed by the Minister for External Territories (Mr Barnes) and the Minister for Works (Senator Wright) with the Senate Standing Committee on Regulations and Ordinances and the Committee has suggested that in view of its importance the attention of honourable senators should be drawn to its provisions. I ask leave to move a motion to take note of the Ordinance.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT—There being no objection, leave is granted.

Senator ANDERSON—I move:

That the Senate take note of Norfolk Island Ordinance No. 7 of 1968, being the Immigration Ordinance 1968.

Debate (on motion by Senator Bishop) adjourned.

WOOMERA

Ministerial Statement

Senator ANDERSON (New South Wales—Minister for Supply)—by leave—In May 1968, following the conclusion of negotiations with the United Kingdom Government for the continued operation of the joint UK-Australia project at Woomera until 1972 I advised the Senate on the programme of work at the Woomera range for the next 2 to 3 years and subsequently, from time to time, I have made other statements concerning future work prospects at Woomera. I am now pleased to be able to inform the Senate that discussions just concluded between officials of the United Kingdom and Australian governments have confirmed a trend that has been becoming apparent for some months indicating that the work load at Woomera up to 1972 will significantly exceed our expectations of the likely load at the time of the joint project renegotiations last year. Employment opportunities will therefore continue to be available at Woomera for at least the next 3 years.

AMENDMENT TO THE BROADCASTING AND TELEVISION ACT

Ministerial Statement

Senator Dame ANNABELLE RANKIN (Queensland—Minister for Housing)—by leave—In the course of recent consideration of the provisions of the Broadcasting and Television Act relating to ownership and control of television stations, a shortcoming in the provisions of section 92B—the provision that defines what is meant by control of a company for the purposes of this part of the Act—has come to notice.

Section 92B (1) (a), in dealing with control of television stations through voting rights, treats a person who is in a position to exercise control of more than 15% of the maximum number of votes that could be cast on a poll at, or arising out of, a general meeting of the company holding the licence, as being in a position to exercise control

of that company. The limitation of this provision to the company holding the licence means that control based purely on more than 15% of voting rights cannot be traced through a series of companies. This limitation was unintentional. In most cases, the defect would not matter in practice, as other provisions of section 92B would operate to enable control to be traced through shareholding interests, irrespective of voting power. However, the Commonwealth's legal advisers have advised that it may be possible to avoid these other provisions by the interposition of companies that do not have a share capital but are limited by guarantee.

The Government has decided that these loopholes should be closed and appropriate amendments will be brought down in the course of the current session of Parliament to give effect to this decision. The legislation will be given retrospective operation to the date of this announcement so that any arrangements made after the announcement that seek to take advantage of the loopholes will be caught.

DEFENCE

Ministerial Statement

Debate resumed from 6 March (vide page 373), on motion by Senator Anderson:

That the Senate take note of the following paper: Defence—Ministerial Statement, 25 February 1969.

Senator WILLESEE (Western Australia) [5.2]—When this debate was adjourned on Thursday, 6th March, I had just started on my remarks about the defence statement by the Prime Minister (Mr Gorton). I had tried to make the point that I agreed with Senator Cormack that it was true that defence was the servant of foreign policy. The foreign policy of this Government since 1950 has given top priority to one thing, almost to the exclusion of everything else. I refer to the American alliance and the endeavour to have the United States of America committed in the Pacific area. I had mentioned that this was basically the desire that had brought about the treaty between Australia, New Zealand and the United States which is known as ANZUS. I was issuing a note of warning. I want now to continue in that vein because I feel that in what this Government is doing there is great danger at the present time. It builds up public opinion to a certain point

and then does something such as it did in committing 1,200 troops into Asia. The Government does this as though this is the be all and end all of foreign policy and defence. It gives the impression that as long as we maintain some friendship with the Americans everything will be all right from now until the end of time. This is a dangerous attitude to leave with the Australian people, and it is one which is never critically examined by the Government and its supporters.

As important as it is to have America committed in this area, and as important as it is to have the mighty United States of America on friendly terms with us, it is certainly not the be all and end all of defence. I remind the Senate that the ANZUS pact is a very loosely drawn treaty, that it applies only a moral and psychological pressure on the three constituent bodies, New Zealand, the United States and Australia. It does not really define what is the Pacific area. Its whole value is that it makes America acknowledge that it has responsibilities in this area. But as I pointed out on the last occasion, the United States has treaties with forty other countries. If there were to be simultaneous conflagrations throughout the world, Australians and New Zealanders should not have the idea that we would have some prior right over the forty other countries to armed intervention by the Americans. I do not imagine a situation arising in the Pacific area in which America was committed but would not come, even if the pact were not in existence. I imagine that in a situation where we were going to war, using armed intervention or defence at any point in the Pacific area, America would be there whether there was an ANZUS pact or not. Nevertheless, the pact does have its value. It is of help to a government that wants to move into an area in that it is a peg on which to hang its hat.

It would have been easier for us if we had had such a treaty when America came into the last war. Because no pact was in existence the American public had to be brought in slowly. I do not criticise that. The pact has value. I merely make the point, in relation to the attitude that because we have some friendship with America everything is all right, that it must be realised that defence shadows fall differently

from whatever part of the world one is viewing the situation. Whereas in Australia South East Asia is a by-word, northern Asia is more the by-word in America. (Quorum formed.) In Australia we hear the names Singapore, Malaya and Indonesia almost as part of the daily language. They are very common names and countries which are talked about in Australia. But to the American people, places like Japan, Okinawa and the Philippines are far more important.

To be realistic, although it is of tremendous importance that we have goodwill from America, because of the things that our Government has purposely done over the last 20 years there is no guarantee that we will be accorded pre-eminence by America. The United States has a democratic government and governments can change. A change could bring about an entirely different attitude to the value of Australia to American commitments in this area or to the value of any utterances or actions of Australian forces over a period of time. It becomes tremendously important, because of the fact that the Government has now decided to station troops in the Pacific area, to examine what power America has and how we are automatically linked in whatever she does. I think it fair to say that the main reason, if not the sole reason, for our having troops in Vietnam is the very thing that I am talking about—our alliance with America and our desire to have goodwill with America. For that reason we have to trail along and accept the determinations that America has made in Vietnam.

Although we have been critical of bombing, we have stayed with her. When she decided to escalate and pour in more troops, we did so. We have followed America to such an extent that, as I said on the previous occasion, we were caught short when, on the night of the announcement by President Johnson that he would not stand for re-election and that America had decided to stop the bombing, the Australian Government was still insisting that bombing should take place. What I am saying is not so much a criticism that liaison between Australia and the American Government is bad but that we were pulled along by America. Take West Irian. We had to stop short and do an about face when the Americans decided that West Irian had to

go to the Indonesians. I am not arguing as to whether it is right or wrong. I am merely saying that Australia had made a stand. When the Americans made a decision, Australia had to fall in with them. We did that in the Malaysian crisis with Britain. I think there is an interesting lesson here. In our childhood days, because of our attachment to Britain, we used to live in an aura in which we believed that no matter what happened the British Navy would get us out of our troubles. In actual fact, when the crunch did come the British Navy was not able to do as much as it wanted to do, because we had on our hands a war that was unprecedented in size and ferocity, a war such as it was impossible to predict in earlier years.

I feel that we are now moving from that aura, that we are now transforming the concept of reliance on the British fleet to one of reliance on America, in that we are beginning to adopt the attitude that so long as we are friendly with America we shall be all right. Let me be fair in my analysis of the position. I am not saying whether our troops ought to be in South East Asia or whether it is good or bad to have them there. I take the attitude that we are committed to this area, and I am trying to analyse the situation as I see it. I am trying to issue the warnings that I think ought to go out to the Australian people. I am trying to point out that greater publicity with relation to our problems ought to go from this Government to the Australian people.

The Government has broken away from American policy in one respect in this area. I speak of trade with Communist China. Whereas the Americans have refused to trade with Communist China, the Australian Government is trading with her. To that extent, this Government has broken away from American policy. In spite of what the Prime Minister has said, we are now committed to what might be termed forward defence, and I should like now to examine the advantages of this. I suppose those advantages are as outlined by the Prime Minister in his statement. We have the approval of the governments concerned. It is traditional to have troops in these countries. I think everybody is basically conservative. People do not want to move away from what has become traditional. They are hesitant about taking up a radical stand. It is claimed that having

troops in the area will give us a stronger voice in the region, but I have my doubts as to that when I read this in the Prime Minister's statement:

While there they are not intended for use, and will not be used, for the maintenance of internal civil law and order which is the responsibility of the government concerned.

He is speaking of the troops to be stationed at Singapore. He went on:

Their presence, and their military co-operation with Malaysia and Singapore, are not directed against any other country in the region, and this we believe is well understood and accepted.

If they are not there to deal with internal subversion, if they are not there to be used against any other government, one might well ask why they are there at all. The Prime Minister's own words would seem to belie the very things I am saying with relation to advantages to be derived from having troops there.

Of course, there are also some obvious disadvantages. The most obvious one is that of our position in connection with internal insurrections, which are always imminent in the countries of this region. The position can best be described, in my view, by what I saw depicted in a Press cartoon. This cartoon depicted a struggling mass of little Asian men with a big Australian in uniform standing over them. He had grabbed a little fellow by the throat and was looking at him and saying: 'Are you Nationalist or Communist?' and dropping him back on the pile. This is an excellent illustration of the problem with which we shall be faced. At what stage is an insurrection nationalist or Communist inspired—the result of outside influence? I do not think it matters much to the government concerned whether it is a Communist inspired insurrection or any other type if it is being directed from the outside and is a threat to that government. But at what point will we be able to say that our troops shall be used in such a situation to protect the government or that it is an internal insurrection and we should not be having anything to do with it?

It seems to me that in those circumstances we are virtually chartering troops to the government of the day of another country. After all, governments in these countries do not change as governments do in Western countries. Democracy is not a universal system. A change of government in these countries generally takes place either after

a certain amount of bloodshed or as a result of a bloodless coup overnight, and the government to which we have chartered our troops is not going to be happy if a change of government suddenly takes place under those circumstances. I can see all sorts of problems bedevilling us with our troops there.

Let us examine the situation in the countries in the region. Already there have been cross words between Malaysia and Singapore. Already there have been cross words between the Philippines and Malaysia over Sabah. So it seems to me that we are going into an area where there are already problems, and it would seem from what the Prime Minister has said, that if things did erupt there, our troops obviously would not be of much use.

Another disadvantage has to do with the United States of America. We have moved into this region without knowing what the deployment of American troops will be in the future. It would seem to me that we are in a somewhat peculiar position. If America does station troops there then it is obvious we will have to do whatever those troops do. If a certain situation arises there, if, for instance, an insurrection occurs and the Americans already have troops based on land there and those troops are engaged, say, in putting down an insurrection or perhaps in stopping an invasion from another country, I cannot imagine that the Australian Government would say: 'No, we do not think we ought to be in this'. Conversely, if the Australian Government said: 'Yes, we are going to commit troops to intervene in this particular situation', and the Americans said: 'We do not think it is serious enough', a peculiar situation arises once more. This is one of the great disadvantages I see there.

Let me now consider the situation with relation to China which, in effect, is as a sword of Damocles hanging over this area. If China should decide to try to expand, certain complications could arise. For instance, Tunku Abdul Rahman has said: 'If China attacked Malaysia, I am going to be a realist about it. I am not going to put up a fight, because there are no medals for pure heroism when you have no chance of even stalling them off for a few days.' I suggest that this attitude also places Australia in a very strange sort of predicament.

We have a very wide credibility gap between what the Prime Minister has said over a period of time and what has actually taken place. Unfortunately the new Minister for External Affairs (Mr Freeth) said that he was in favour of having Australia as a sort of police force in these areas. In my view, that is a tremendously unfortunate term. After all, what does a police force do? It defends its own government. It defends the written law of that government. If somebody breaks that written law the police go out, apprehend the person concerned, bring him before a court of justice and have something done about the matter. But how can troops sent to a foreign country carry out these duties? What they will be doing in the area will not be police work. They will not be stationed there to protect their own government, except only in an indirect manner. They will not be there trying to uphold some written law. They do not even know that the government of the day of the country concerned is going to be stable.

I come now to the term 'Fortress Australia'. Senator Cormack said he first used the words some time ago. I suggest that they were first given real publicity by the Prime Minister himself, and nobody else. It is an unfortunate phrase because, as Senator Cormack rightly pointed out the other night, it gives the impression of being holed up in some concrete base. It gives the impression that our policy will be that when we are attacked we shall hole up in a concrete base, that we shall not be worrying about anybody else. It contradicts what the Australian Government has been doing in attempting to hold the interest of the Americans. It also connotes that we shall not be worrying about anybody else, that we shall be holing up in some base and shall not be worrying about whether we have friends, that we shall be worrying only about attacks, from wherever they might be coming. The use of the term has been most unfortunate and, to be fair, I do not think it has been the guiding principle with those who are examining our foreign policy today.

The word isolationism has been bandied about. The Australian Labor Party has been accused of isolationism because, both prior to and since the stationing of troops in the area, some of our speakers have criticised

this policy. Isolationism is not a physical thing; it is a state of mind. After all, Australian troops went to Europe twice to assist Britain. On both occasions it was a mental decision that was made to send them. It was not necessary for Australian troops to be based on the Isle of Man, or the Isle of Wight or in the south or north of England over a period of years to ensure that they would come to the aid of England. It was known always that in those circumstances Australia would come to Britain's assistance, as it did, at the drop of a hat. To talk about isolationism because of where our troops may be stationed to me is not worthy of credence and has no validity at all. It is a question of a state of mind. It is unfortunate and unfair to use that argument of isolationism.

As I say, quite a credibility gap exists between what the Prime Minister was saying prior to the production of this defence statement and what actually appeared in his defence statement. Honourable senators will remember that he was talking about the fortress Australia, an Israeli type army, the independent fort from the United States of America, and that type of thing. But, in the final statement, we come back at last to a degree to the traditional role of having Western troops in this part of South East Asia. Although it has always been denied that Australia wants to fill the vacuum which will be caused in South East Asia by the withdrawal of British forces, to some degree our troops will be there to do that. We will carry on in South East Asia after the British have gone.

I think that the statement should have been far more analytical. After all, this was the watershed. This was a period when, as I said at the beginning of my speech the other day, we became sick and tired of picking up newspapers and reading that Cabinet was meeting and was considering the defence statement that was to be brought down. I do not think that nearly enough analysis is to be found in the defence statement. To me, it is putting out the theory: 'Ah, now we have established a line. The Americans will be pleased about this. We do not need to do much about it any more. Everything will be all right'. This is not so. The British withdrawal east of Suez is to be a complete withdrawal. The British cancelled their order for the F111

not because they knew enough about the dangers of the plane at that stage but because they believed that from this period onwards their troops would be withdrawn east of Suez in accordance with their policy. Therefore, they no longer needed these planes for those areas. There was talk of the British establishing a base in Australia. We do not hear that talk now. No question arises of putting the Polaris submarines in the Indian Ocean. The question of a mobile force has gone.

The ironical thing about this state of affairs is that we know precisely what the British are to do. But they are the least important in our considerations. The most important people in our calculations are the Americans. But we have not the faintest idea what they will do. A fair amount of disillusionment exists in America because of what is happening in Vietnam. We can assume, seeing what the Americans are doing in relation to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and the Eastern European countries, that the Americans want to move out from those countries. There is a withdrawal to the American mainland. There is a realisation that no matter what the strength of the forces is that are put in to various countries little sway is held over the political positions in them. Even though this may happen, the Americans have commitments and interests in countries like Korea, Taiwan and the Philippines. Whether the Americans will go to those bases, whether they will withdraw their forces back to the American continent or whether they will stay in the South East Asia zone are things that we do not know.

The big question mark about American thinking is in relation to Thailand. I have read a number of writers who say that the Americans are so far committed in Thailand already that even at this point their forces will be used in Thailand which will be a second Vietnam. The writers say that the Americans cannot get out of this commitment. Whether or not the writers are right, I do not know. All I am saying is that these matters are of tremendous importance to Australia. These changes in Asia, which have not yet finished, will be the most interesting factor in the decision that we have made.

We talk about stable governments. What we mean, I think, is that we want in these

areas stable governments that are committed to our way of thinking. There could be stable governments that a lot of people would not like. A dictatorship, even a Communist dictatorship, would be a stable government. That is not the type of government that we would want to see or would want to live under. What we mean by a stable government is that we want Western oriented or very friendly stable governments in these countries. If we look at Burma, Laos, Vietnam, Indonesia and Malaya, we see that all of these countries have at least an incipient revolutionary problem. This incipience of course plays up as we have seen in many of the African countries and, indeed, in some of the Asian countries. The situation may be that a friendly government that we want to see in an area may not survive. These are the problems which Australia may need to face up to over the next few years.

The whole question of China itself must be considered. Today, the potential of China to expand is greatly reduced, firstly, by its own internal problems, secondly, by the fact that the United States of America has troops strewn around the Asian area and, thirdly, by its own lack of transport. It is very doubtful whether China could invade other countries and at the same time carry on and hold its long lines of communication. But, 10 years from now, it is a very fair bet that that situation will be altered. I cannot foresee what the situation will be in 10 years and neither can anybody else. These things may have altered. The United States troops may have gone. China's transport position may be better and her internal problems may be solved. On the other hand, China may be a vastly different country from what it is today. Certainly its present leaders are very old men and they will not be in power in 10 years time. New leadership, as we have seen in other Communist countries, particularly Russia, can bring about quite a change of tune. It may be that in 10 years' time the leaders of China will be saying that, instead of frightening those people on its borders and taking the inexplicably aggressive attitude that it adopts today to countries throughout the world, China will be a far more friendly country. We do not know whether this will be so. But it is certain that in 10 years' time the amount of change will be terrific.

Even if all these changes take place, this does not spell the end of Australia's involvement. Australia is an island country. We are a country that is largely uninfluenced by the type of change that we have seen in other countries of the world. Australia is a democracy. It is a stable and basically educated country. The traumas that wave through some other countries do not affect Australia. We would be interested in trade also. Even if we visualised the situation that I am trying to draw a picture of now with a complete change, with insurrection taking over and with governments that, while they may be stable, are not Western oriented and are not friendly to us, nevertheless I think that we have plenty of precedent for trading with countries with whose form of government we do not agree. I refer mainly to Communist China and Communist Russia. We are trading with these countries. We still carry on our trade with them and, I presume, would want to continue that trade with them at this future time.

We must realise that the experience of the United States and Australia in Vietnam show that it does not matter how many troops are committed or how much treasure is poured into these countries, in the final analysis these things will have very little influence at all in the type of government that these countries will have. So, whatever the advantages may be of having 1,200 Australian troops stationed in this area, we should not think that because of this we automatically ensure two things: First, American friendship and, second, that we will see in these countries the type of government that we want to see established there.

Now that this decision has been made, the timing of it is tremendously important. In all these things, we can never overlook the tremendous importance of Indonesia. In terms of population, Indonesia is the fifth largest country in the world. It is one of the most naturally wealthy countries in the world and it is our neighbour. It is trite to say that the difference between Britain, America and Australia is one thing. The British are going. They are as good as gone. Very probably, the Americans will do the same thing. There is no question that we will not be going out of the area because geographically we must

stay in the area. So, I make the point that the changes are not finished. We will continue to live in this area where tremendous changes will take place. Where the American pigeons roost after Vietnam will be of tremendous importance in the future.

The defence of Papua and New Guinea seems to me to be completely neglected till now because of all of these other considerations. But we will need to face up to this problem. It is amazing that we have not had more troubles there already. Australia will be the last of the colonial powers. We are inextricably bound to a situation in which border problems will arise. They may not be military ones but they certainly will be diplomatic problems with another nation. Mr Acting Deputy President, as I understand it, in spite of you criticising the question of mobile defence in your speech recently, when you made the point that this was the difficult thing, you yourself achieved it, Sir, 25 years ago, so I take it that it is not impossible. I do not think that any Australians can wipe off or completely ignore the question of mobile defence. Our country is so vast and our commitments to Papua and New Guinea are such that we have to look at some form of mobile defence. Further, the whole question of South East Asia makes mobile defence very important.

Because my time is rapidly running out—the Whip has been glaring at me and passing me notes—may I very quickly make one or two comments that I hope other speakers will take up? I pose this question: Are we close enough to New Zealand, our other ANZUS partner, in the matter of defence? The criticisms I am about to level are not new or original. The integration of the Navy, the Army and the Air Force in countries like Canada seems to be working admirably. Nothing on those lines has been done in Australia but over the past 20 years I have never heard a defence of our present set-up with three different administrations. I have never heard a condemnation of integration which has convinced me that we should not take a very close look at it. I think that a reorganisation is essential in these areas having regard to the changing times.

On many occasions we have used the expression that our defence policy is pursuant to our foreign policy. Those policies are acceptable to the Government and, as far as I can understand, to the Australian

Democratic Labor Party. The DLP is a sensitive nerve to the Government which, particularly in the field of foreign affairs, has never been backward in showing that the final calculation even in this important sphere is always electoral gain and how many seats it can win in the House of Representatives. This is not a healthy situation. My final thought is based on the following extract from the Defence Report 1967:

Australian defence policies, and the defence and assistance programmes that support them, derive basically from two central propositions.

I will ignore the first. The second is:

That a South East Asian region comprising free and independent states working effectively in a secure environment on economic, political and social advancement is essential to the prevention of the spread of hostile power, and to international order and progress.

I add to the criticisms I direct at the Government in relation to a reorganisation of our defence situation the fact that we should be making public our problems. We should be encouraging people in the Department of Defence and the Department of External Affairs, and people in universities who are undergoing full time studies, if not through the public media—we are doing something in that sphere—then through some form of committee system in this Parliament, to state their views so that we will have an enlightened mind in the Australian community and will not have to wait month after month for a statement on defence which is coming through a pretty narrow channel only to find it to be as disappointing as this one is.

I add to those criticisms this final one: I ask Government members, in particular, whether they are satisfied that their Government is doing enough to produce in those countries an environment of economic and social advancement which, if successful, would make very many fewer demands on our defence forces in the future.

Senator SIM (Western Australia) [5.34]—The defence statement we are debating and which outlines Australia's role in South East Asia beyond 1967 is an historic statement. Those are not my words; they are the words of many observers. For the first time Australia has assumed responsibilities abroad independently and without major power support. I thought it extraordinary that although the Senate had before it a statement of this importance neither the

Leader of the Opposition (Senator Murphy) nor the Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Senator Cohen) bothered to be in the Senate on the night of Thursday, 6th March, when Senator Mulvihill led for the Opposition.

Senator O'Byrne—The Senate was closed on Thursday night.

Senator SIM—That is right. I will correct myself and put the record straight by saying Thursday afternoon. Senator Cohen has made fleeting visits to the chamber today. I say again that it is extraordinary that in a debate of this kind neither the Leader of the Opposition nor the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has taken part to date. I am sorry if this is offending Senator Cohen, who is interjecting. I was interested to hear Senator Willesee speak. I always respect his views. Even if I do not agree with them they are always thoughtful and well considered. If he had remained Leader of the Opposition I have no doubt that he would have led for the Labor Party in this debate. Instead of that we have the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition absenting themselves from it. I hope that my remarks will bring them into it because I am interested to hear their views on this matter and to learn whether they will reveal the differences that exist within the Labor Party on the whole question of defence and foreign policy.

Senator Cavanagh—What differences?

Senator SIM—You should know them. Having said that and having directed attention to those facts which apparently, I repeat, hurt some people I now turn to the statement of the Prime Minister (Mr Gorton) and the implications involved in it. The statement acknowledged the end of an era and the beginning of a new era for Australia. It is well to note that the United Kingdom is not withdrawing from South East Asia because she was not wanted and was asked to withdraw. The United Kingdom is withdrawing, she believes, in her own interests for economic reasons. Indeed the governments of Malaysia and Singapore were desperately anxious for the British presence to be retained. I could not quite understand Senator Mulvihill, when he led for the Opposition, quoting Mr Denis Healey, Britain's Defence Minister, as saying something to the effect that you do

not stay where you are not wanted. I fail to see how that applies to the situation we are debating here, because the British were wanted.

If we look at the history of British presence in South East Asia it cannot be doubted that the British acted as a unifying force and a stabilising influence and, beyond that helped to secure the southern flank of Burma and Thailand. The basic problem posed by the British withdrawal is not purely a military one of preparing for possible military hostilities. It goes beyond that. The British acted as a guard against regional fragmentation — indeed against internal fragmentation — because of the unifying elements involved in their presence. Whenever I spoke to Asian leaders that was the one point that they stressed continually.

I think we should understand what we mean by Asia because it often is spoken of as some sort of single entity. In fact it consists of diverse cultures and religions, racial disharmony exists, and there are historical conflicts and fears as between peoples and nations. Despite that, of recent times there have been heartening signs of growing regional co-operation. There is no doubt that regional co-operation is developing, even though slowly. But it is too much to expect this to continue without problems and disputes. Senator Willesee referred to some of these problems. There is the recent and continuing dispute between Malaysia and the Philippines over Sabah. A short while ago there was the dispute between Malaysia and Indonesia. I believe that this is rather germane to this discussion, in which we are dealing with the question of mobile forces. But, even if we recognise these factors, the situation is improving slowly. These people realise that their future depends on co-operation between them and a lessening of the tensions that have existed between them, in some cases over long periods.

I come now to the question of Australia's role in Asia. In the other place Mr Whitlam referred to the Prime Minister's statement as a retreat from our responsibilities in Asia. Those were his words. There is one thing that we learn about Mr Whitlam. It is that he never learns.

Senator Georges—What a terrible thing to say.

Senator SIM—I would not expect the honourable senator to learn. Mr Whitlam has been away recently. One would have thought that he might have learnt something from discussions with the leaders of Asia. Clearly we have responsibilities to the region in which we live and of which geographically we are a part. Clearly the countries of the region want us to accept and to share with them responsibilities for the military security, political stability and economic development of the area. Clearly it is in our national interest that the region should be militarily secure, politically stable and economically viable. I believe that we have an additional responsibility both to ourselves and to the region, namely, to further develop and strengthen our own country so that it can play a bigger part in this partnership.

Great stress is laid upon economic development. No-one denies its importance. But it depends primarily upon the stability and confidence that exist in the area. It is not the Government that is retreating from its responsibilities in South East Asia. If I am correct in outlining our responsibilities—I believe I am—the Government understands our responsibilities and is accepting them. It is Mr Whitlam and the Labor Party who do not understand Australia's responsibilities and Australia's role. In fact, whichever way we look at it, we cannot escape saying that the real policy of the Labor Party, the policy that is being advocated by it—no doubt it is a sort of compromise policy—is one of isolationism, one of retreating behind our own borders. I know that there is vague talk of mobile forces. I put it to the Senate quite bluntly that a policy that is based upon mobile forces without, to quote Senator Cormack, a pre-positioning of logistic resources in the area has no military credibility whatever. The British, in withdrawing, have promised that a mobile force will be available.

Sitting suspended from 5.45 to 8 p.m.

Senator SIM—At the suspension of the sitting I was referring to the excuse for a defence policy posed by the Australian Labor Party of having mobile forces to transport to threatened areas. I had referred to the stated intention of the United Kingdom Government to provide such forces to move to the Malaysian region.

I repeat that such a policy has no military credibility because there are no bases or logistic resources in the region to support those troops. The Australian Labor Party puts this forward as a policy. Senator Cormack has reminded us that defence policy is an extension of foreign policy. As the Labor Party has no foreign policy we cannot reasonably expect it to have a defence policy. Its policy as outlined by honourable senators opposite completely lacks military credibility. It envisages the movement of mobile forces from Australia to threatened areas. It is planned that they will be dumped in an area without bases and without support. Troops cannot operate successfully under such conditions.

Presumably Senator Mulvihill is the authority on defence for the leaderless legion opposite. He said that a study of the defence policy of the United States Government showed that it had a highly developed procedure of moving troops quickly to West Germany and other areas. I think the honourable senator's authority for that statement is the magazine 'Newsweek'. Had he quoted his authority more fully he would have told us that in Germany and other parts of the world the United States Government has substantial forces already stationed. The mobile forces are merely to reinforce and support the forces that are already in the area. This is an entirely different proposition from that put forward by the Labor Party of moving troops to an area where we have no bases and no existing forces or logistic resources.

This can be illustrated in two ways. The action of the United Kingdom Government during the period of confrontation of Malaysia by Indonesia was effective only because substantial British forces were already on the ground in Malaysia, with support facilities available to them. Had those forces not been stationed in the region, British attempts to convince the Indonesians that confrontation would not pay would not have been successful. The British Government was in a position to move its mobile forces quickly to support the troops stationed in the region. We have military credibility in New Guinea only because we have bases there and logistic support for mobile forces if they are moved into the area. Without such bases and logistic support the policy has no military credibility whatsoever.

The defence policy put forward by the ALP is a crazy hotch-potch. I believe that it is completely unacceptable to the Australian people. There are risks involved in our defence policy. There are always risks in a forward defence posture. There are always risks in taking decisions of this kind, but they must be balanced against the advantages and our responsibilities. I think it was Mr Whitlam who tried to argue that our forces planned for the Malaysian region are small. We should not become bemused by the numbers game. The forces used by Israel in the Middle East were also small. The point to remember is that Australia is a credible military influence. Our military strength is greater than mere statistics would show. We are by no means a minor industrial power. We have a growing economic capacity and a homogeneous population. We have high standards of technical ability. Above all, Australia is accepted and trusted in this region because we have proved that we accept and honour our obligations.

I suggest quite seriously that the defence policy suggested by the Labor Party would destroy our reputation and credibility. Once destroyed they could never be regained. In addition, we are geographically part of the region. As such, we are expected to play our part in its defence. The primary task posed by the British withdrawal from South East Asia is not replacement of the British presence, because we are not strong enough for that. It is the provision of some equivalent military credibility. This is precisely the action we are taking.

Senator Poyser—What is the ratio of the equivalence?

Senator SIM—If the honourable senator had been in the chamber earlier he would have heard me give a warning not to become bemused by the numbers game.

Senator Poyser—But what is the ratio of equivalence?

Senator SIM—I repeat that it is possible to become bemused by numbers. Numbers did not matter much in the Middle East. The honourable senator should not be confused on that score. What is the threat? We have been told that there is no threat. There is, of course, an internal threat. There is always the danger of fragmentation in the area. I said earlier that the British

presence was acknowledged by South East Asian countries as being a stabilising and unifying factor. The leaders of those countries freely acknowledge and accept that the provision of a small Australian force—it has always been stressed that it is to be a small force—would also prove to be a unifying factor in their countries. Although our military presence there may be small we should not be bemused by numbers. It is nevertheless a credible influence.

The future of the countries in the Pacific region depends on the stability and strength of their governments. The acceptance of our forces and the knowledge that Australia is showing an interest and is willing to become involved in the area can only strengthen the confidence of the people and of the governments. The main threat is an external threat, of course. The question may be asked: Do the Red Chinese leaders mean what they say? It is beyond my competence to say whether they do, but I am sure that it would be the height of folly to ignore the implications of their statements. They make no secret of their encouragement and support for wars of so-called national liberation. Peking devotes an unusual amount of time and newspaper space to potential wars of national liberation. In Burma, Thailand, Laos, Malaysia and Indonesia insurgents are active. These so-called freedom groups are based on Peking and all the propaganda emanates from that source. It is at least imprudent for Australia to ignore China's expressed intention. The problem of South East Asia is not purely a military one but military credibility is the cement to provide a viable solution. I grant that the mere presence of Australian troops alone will not achieve long term stability. We acknowledge and recognise this point. But regional co-operation and defence capacity must be maintained and this cannot be achieved in a day. We must assist these countries in South East Asia to develop their own military capacity and provide the encouragement and confidence which will enable them to succeed.

I turn to the other vital factor and that is the economic development of these countries. I suggest seriously that the economic development of the Asian region and far beyond it will be encouraged by the decision of the Australian Government. We have

already heard the reaction of a most respected leader in Asia, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, the Prime Minister of Singapore. In welcoming the Australian Government's decision he referred to the fact that it will be an encouragement to foreign investors because it will give them confidence. Say what you like, forces based in Australia would not achieve this. Such a decision would throw grave doubts upon our sincerity and ability to assist these countries and would most certainly provoke feelings of insecurity. Referring again to the United Kingdom, I believe that the promise of mobile forces would not alter this fact because the credibility of the United Kingdom has been destroyed. United States credibility stops short of this region, of course, thus leaving Australia as the only credible military force in the region.

Senator Poyer—We are going to go it alone?

Senator SIM—The Labor Party has been advocating for years that Australia should take an independent line. When the Government does take such a line the Opposition criticises it. By inference, apparently the Opposition is suggesting that we should rely on somebody else. If necessary, we are prepared to take an independent line and act on our own. If Senator Poyer disagrees with this then I ask him on whom we should rely. I do not want to over-emphasise this point but I think it should be mentioned: We do have strong ties with great powers. These are ties of race, friendship and indeed emotion. This knowledge must be in the mind of any would be aggressor. Perhaps—I make it no more than that—if we do find ourselves in trouble then we may well find that we are not alone because of the ties that we have. After all, Asia today is the cockpit of the world. If there is a threat to world peace then we should remember that peace and war are not divisible. War affects the whole world.

The decision of the Australian Government has received support throughout South East Asia. It also has received support from the Labour Party in the United Kingdom and the Labor Party in New Zealand. Here tonight we have before us a party that preaches isolation yet on this issue it is isolated from the other Labor Parties that are concerned. Our objective is to build a partnership with the other countries of Asia.

The Australian Labor Party would destroy any possibility of co-operation and trust, and the political influence of Australia in this region would sink to negligible proportions.

To sum up, I believe that we must not expect development to continue without problems arising. I submit that the Australian commitment in South East Asia would assist in providing a climate of confidence. It encourages not only military and political stability but also economic development. The leaders in this region are seeking foreign investors in order to help develop the economies of their countries. Such investors will have greater confidence because Australia, a credible power in this area, is prepared to support these countries during this period. The Labor Party prefers to shut its eyes or else it does not understand the realities of South East Asia. Whereas the policy of the Government has been welcomed and accepted as giving confidence and a feeling of security in these people, the Labor Party policy would only lead to insecurity and despair.

I am sorry that Senator Mulvihill is not present in the chamber at the moment. Earlier he referred to the situation in India. He mentioned the political generalship and leadership of the late Lord Atlee and the independence of India. What this has to do with South East Asia I do not know but I think his remarks are worthy of comment. He said that the independence of India was achieved with little dislocation. I do not know what Senator Mulvihill regards as little dislocation. India was a very poor example to cite. If the slaughter of some 3½ million people that occurred at the time that India and Pakistan became independent, is included in the phrase 'little dislocation', then I suggest we want even less dislocation than that. The British had to leave India and Pakistan because they were not wanted. That situation is in direct contrast to the situation in South East Asia. There have been continual strain, stress and fighting, even open warfare, between India and Pakistan ever since the British presence was removed.

Mr Deputy President, the Prime Minister clearly stated and defined in his statement the role, committal and deployment of our forces. They are to provide a base should it be necessary to deploy other troops in South East Asia in order to meet a threat.

They will also provide a base and logistic support group for other friendly forces should it be found necessary to move them into the area. I referred to the Prime Minister's statement as being an historic statement. Australia has taken an independent line, as the Labor Party has always advocated. Australia has assumed new responsibilities to the region in which we live. I suggest, Mr Deputy President, that this will prove to be in the interests of Australia. The Leader and Deputy Leader of the Labor Party in the Senate—this leaderless legion—have taken no part in this debate. So far as I can ascertain, they do not intend to take any part.

Senator Ormonde—Neither has your leader.

Senator SIM—The Prime Minister made the statement. The Labor Party is attacking that statement but the attack is becoming a low level exercise because of the Labor Party's complete lack of interest in the subject. The Labor Party policy would be disastrous and damaging to Australia's interests. Therefore I have great pleasure in supporting the Prime Minister's defence statement. It is a courageous and bold statement of policy. Despite the dangers which are always inherent in any policy such as this, it will serve—and is indeed serving—the interests of Australia.

Senator FITZGERALD (New South Wales) [8.19]—I am pleased to be able to take part in this debate on the Australian Government's defence decision. It is years since a discussion of this nature has taken place in the Senate. It is true, I know, that foreign affairs debates have taken place in this chamber on numerous occasions but generally such debates are just an exercise. They take place when there appears to be no other business on the Senate notice paper or in the other place. Foreign affairs matters are then discussed at great length. It might be argued, of course, that there is not a great deal of business on the Senate notice paper at the present moment and that that is why this discussion has been continuing over a period of some weeks. I can agree with our friend—

Senator Cormack—The Opposition is taking up the time with—

Senator FITZGERALD — Senator Cormack talks about the delay and the time

taken up on certain other matters. The Government finds no difficulty in permitting the Senate to rise on Thursday afternoon each week even after a period of 4 or 5 months inactivity. If the Government has business to transact why cannot we continue to sit for the periods during which the Senate is scheduled to meet? I agree with Senator Sim on one point. He described the statement of the Prime Minister (Mr Gorton) as an historic statement. He went on to twit the Australian Labor Party on numerous issues and he asked why our leaders had not taken part in this debate. Let me say right now that the man who led for us in this debate, Senator Mulvihill, is Vice-Chairman of the Parliamentary Labor Party Defence and Foreign Affairs Committee. He is also on the Joint Foreign Affairs Committee. He was followed by Senator Willesee, who also occupies a position on the Joint Foreign Affairs Committee, which includes representatives of the Government Parties and our Party. So the position on our side is not dissimilar from the position on the Government side. Do not tell me that the Government has put up its top liners amongst the people it has introduced into this debate up to the present. It is true that the Leader of the Government in the Senate (Senator Anderson) read the Prime Minister's statement in this chamber, but the fact is that no other leading Minister—no Minister at all—is at present scheduled to speak in this debate. So on this matter to which Senator Sim refers, our point of view is no different from that of the Government.

In a debate of this nature I do not want to start scoring off this one or that. There is not a decent man in the whole of Australia who is not conscious of the importance of the defence of his country. We on this side do not take second place to anybody in our association with the defence of this nation of ours. The work of the Australian Labor Party in both World War I and World War II is too well known to the people of Australia for me to waste time in the half hour available to me talking about what was done by the Australian Labor Party, by John Curtin and the Labor Government in World War II. We recognise that in this huge continent, with an area of some 3 million square miles, 12,000 miles of coastline and a population of 12 million people, we have a heavy responsibility to

look after the wellbeing of our people. Everyone was most anxious to hear a considered statement at last from the Prime Minister on the question of defence. This was his third statement in almost as many months. He talked in the first place of Fortress Australia. Secondly, he talked of an Israeli-type army. When he was twitted by so many people outside the Parliament on the question of Vietnam and an Israeli-type army he changed his policy and has brought down this forward defence policy which is expressed in the statement that we have before us. I would not be surprised if, by the time this debate is finished, he goes somewhere else and makes another statement of a contradictory character.

It has been said by a number of speakers in the debate in the Senate and in the other place that this is a political policy and not a defence policy; it is a policy not to win or gain security for the wellbeing of our people but to win the election which is supposed to take place at some time this year. We know, of course, that Australia has several defence treaties. We have the ANZUS treaty and the SEATO treaty. It is stated that the arrangement we are considering is based on the Anglo-Malaysian Defence Agreement of 1957. In view of the fact that Britain will in the very near future sever its defence connections with Malaysia it is rightly said that this 1957 Anglo-Malaysian Defence Agreement is completely defunct.

The Prime Minister himself has said that there is no defence pact between Malaysia and Singapore. He said that quite recently in this session in another chamber. Under what agreement and arrangement and on what standard is Australia committing the limited forces that he talks about in this statement? He states that the forces to be retained in the area will consist of 2 squadrons of Mirage aircraft, totalling some 42 aircraft, stationed at Butterworth in Malaya, except for 1 section of 8 aircraft which will be stationed in Singapore. In addition, Australia and New Zealand will each maintain a naval ship in the area. Apart from this there will be 1,200 ground troops. We want to know what protection will be available for our frigate and for our troops in the absence of the negotiation of an agreement which does not operate at present. I assume, of course, that one will be signed.

I hope that before forces are committed this will be the case. But we are kidding nobody when we talk about a defence programme, how we are assisting and what we will do for the defence of this country and South East Asia.

Senator Sim said that this is the first time that Australia has taken a leading role in Asia without the great powers. That is the danger that operates at present. I am afraid that our intrusion in Asia when the major powers are talking about withdrawal constitutes a great danger to this nation of ours. I am not denying the importance to us of these close neighbours of Australia. I would be one of the last people in Australia to deny their great value. I was in both Malaysia and Singapore a little over 2 years ago at the time of the closing of the Causeway, when the Tunku and Lee Kuan Yew were having their disagreement, when people had to have a special pass to go across the Causeway—a bridge similar to those which join the two sides of Canberra. Nobody could cross without special permission. The two countries have a different currency. These developments have taken place since the two countries separated in 1965. So we have to be very careful when we talk about what we are going to do in both Singapore and Malaysia. We must be concerned as to the nature of the peace that might exist between these two neighbours. I would concur with the Prime Minister's statement that we are not be a police force in the region.

I was glad to hear the Prime Minister's reference to better living standards. He said:

Yet just as ultimate stability depends on progress and rising standards of living, so does the possibility of progress depend on maintaining immediate stability.

I was surprised when I read that statement, because it is not so long since the 'Sun' of 14th January 1969 reported a statement by him at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference under the heading 'We are Doing Enough', 'Gorton Rejects Plan for Fund'. The report reads:

London, Tuesday.—Australia yesterday refused to support a proposal for aid to under-developed Commonwealth countries. The plan was put to the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference by the Commonwealth Secretary-General. . . . The 'thumbs down' from the Australian Prime Minister, Mr Gorton, was comparatively strong.

So it is a case of glib talk, double standards and complete pretence. Unfortunately, the Government makes a play with words. It comes out with a change of policy which in effect means the same thing. I concur in the references to poverty. I recognise that, while poverty exists in any part of the world, the world in general is in great danger of facing another war.

In another place some 15 years ago I discussed Communism and its danger to the world. I quoted an extract from a newspaper of the time. I quoted a statement by the British Commissioner-General for South East Asia, Mr Malcolm MacDonald, in October of the previous year. This statement was made before the war in Vietnam began and was a warning of what was about to take place. The newspaper report stated:

The British Commissioner-General for South East Asia, Mr Malcolm MacDonald, has said at Washington that the most potent weapons for fighting Communism in Asia are good wages, adequate food, social security and personal liberty.

Mr MacDonald said that these essentials were more effective than guns and planes.

He added that the Communists could be stopped in South East Asia if the United States and Britain gave Asian Governments firm and sympathetic support in resisting either economic, political or military aggression.

He pointed out that Asian Communists were preparing for intensive political warfare which could be extremely dangerous to the security of the democratic nations.

Mr MacDonald added that the struggle between the Communist and anti-Communist forces in the area might alternate between armed hostilities and a bitter struggle on the economic and political fronts.

If that warning had been heeded by both Britain and America the situation in South East Asia today might not be so difficult. The situation not only in South East Asia but throughout the world might be different. On 20th February last the 'Mirror' stated that today some 300 million people are living in poverty. There can be no peace in the world while hunger and want are so apparent. Unless these evils are overcome I do not know what will become of us. The so-called advanced countries of the world—Australia, Britain, America and others—must play their role in accordance with the request made by Malcolm MacDonald, the son of a former Prime Minister of Great Britain. Had that warning

been heeded we might not be in such trouble today.

The Australian Labor Party is concerned about the lives and liberties of our fellow men, irrespective of where they might live. We co-operate with them in world trade union movements and in the Socialist International on which we, like most other countries, have national representatives. We must improve the working conditions and the standard of living of people everywhere. That is the situation which confronts the Australian Labor Party at present. We may be chided on the ground that we are opposed to war. Thomas Mann, the great Labor leader, who came here from Britain many years ago said: 'The world is my country; to do good is my religion.' That is the basic principle upon which Labor stands both in this Parliament and throughout the country. We have defended our country in two World Wars. We recognise that when war is inevitable and imminent the Australian people have to play their part. At heart some of us have the sentiments and feelings of the great American pacifist, Sergeant York, who was America's most highly decorated soldier in World War I. When asked by a leading pacifist why he killed in World War I, he said: 'I killed so that my people might live.' That is the feeling in the hearts of most members of the Australian Labor Party. It is a sentiment which is echoed and expressed by honourable senators on this side of the chamber. It has been expressed not only by us but also by the late President John Fitzgerald Kennedy in a book called 'Toward a World Without War'. President Kennedy made such great contributions to world affairs that had he lived, I am certain that the situation which confronts the world today would not be so difficult.

I have mentioned the part that Labor has played in both World Wars. In World War I Andrew Fisher was the guiding light. In World War II John Curtin played an important role. I recognise and revere the fact that some 60,000 Australian lives were lost in World War I and nearly 40,000 lives were lost and 210,000 casualties were suffered in World War II in defending this great continent. We of the Labor Party, together with all Australians, pay personal

tribute to the great sacrifice made by those men. Labor's policy on defence is very well known. A booklet outlining the policy can be purchased anywhere in the country. People are able to obtain this information, so it is not necessary in the short time available to me to repeat the policy. Time will not permit me to go through all the details, but I hope before I conclude to inform the Senate of our programme and of our policy.

We are concerned about the Government's policy. I think that the nation is as brittle today as it was at the beginning of World War II. At the commencement of World War II we were dependent completely upon Britain. Now we are even more dependent on the United States of America. We are not capable of acting independently anywhere without being within striking distance of American supplies. I emphasise that I speak on behalf of my colleagues. We are not anti-American, but we fear what would happen if Australia, under the leadership of this Government, were involved in war and the war-weary United States did not want or were unable to continue its aid. I have mentioned in Parliament the Auditor-General's report of 1967-68, which drew attention to our dependency upon the United States. That report referred to the fact that spare parts were not available, to the patent rights which the United States exercised in respect of the ships, guns and planes which we are purchasing. The patent rights are rights which the manufacturers demand unto themselves. We would not be able to secure spares if anything went wrong with our equipment. In Parliament on 26th February I asked a question of the Leader of the Government in the Senate about HMAS 'Melbourne'. I pointed out that some \$31m had been expended on the rebuilding of the 'Melbourne'. I asked what was happening about spares. The Minister claimed to be shocked because I had infringed security. I did not infringe security. I referred to a statement on the Sydney 'Sun-Herald' by a parliamentary journalist. The Leader of the Government said that if it was a statement from a journal I had no right to ask a question on it. Again I ask the Government to say what is taking place. The item to which I referred stated:

There is a crippling lag in the spare parts and maintenance back-up for the costly new aircraft which is slowing down the Nowra light training programme.

The article also stated:

The position is that sources of supply of these necessary adjuncts to training operations have virtually piled up in the United States.

The item listed the sources of supply. It continued:

The spares can only now be obtained by protracted negotiations and on a 'favour basis' from the American Services.

In short, the RAN is placed in a 'poor relation' position and will have to borrow or scrounge vital parts from the US Navy and US marines.

The article goes on to state:

This unsatisfactory method of obtaining vital requirements can only function when, and if, the 'Melbourne' is operating near American bases in the Philippines, Japan, the Hawaiian Islands or elsewhere.

But when operating anywhere in the vicinity of Australia's 12,000 miles of coastline, the 'Melbourne', unless the situation is rectified, could find herself in a difficult situation.

That applies not only to the 'Melbourne'; it applies to almost every piece of material or equipment that we have at present. I have no particular brief for statements made by Mr Santamaria, but he has challenged this Government on what is happening in regard to the French Mirage aircraft with its special equipment which is not being made in Australia. This is a vital situation which applies to the guns we use, the bullets we fire, our ships and our aircraft. This shows how vulnerable we are.

Senator Gair—Does the honourable senator think that Santamaria is right?

Senator FITZGERALD—I am not suggesting that he is wrong in this regard. I am suggesting that the same thing applies to the whole of our defence equipment and that this puts us in a brittle situation. I refer next to the F111 aircraft. Recently an article which appeared in the Press stated that we have been compromised on the F111. The Press article continues:

Representative Bertram Podell today warned that Australia's defence is in danger of being partially compromised because of difficulties with the F111 fighter-bomber.

He goes on to say what has happened in the last 12 months. This afternoon the Sydney 'Sun' carried a report under the heading 'Bomber scrapped' which stated:

The Nixon Administration has decided to scrap the bomber version of the F111 in favour of a more sophisticated missile-firing strategic bomber.

According to the Pentagon, Defence Secretary Mr Melvin Laird will announce the change tomorrow.

The new strategic bomber will differ only slightly from the F111s Australia has ordered.

This is the situation in which we now find ourselves. Recently we have been talking about a planned excavation by a nuclear device at Cape Keraudren Harbour in Western Australia. At the same time we have been advised by the Americans that unless we are prepared to sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons no nuclear device of the type required to carry out the works at Cape Keraudren will be available to us. This threat has been made by our friendly ally. I suggest that it is a disgrace and a shame to think that today we are so vulnerable when a threat of this nature is made.

Honourable senators opposite will probably ask: What is Labor's policy? Our policy has been pronounced and is quite specific. Labour's policy provides for a properly equipped defence force possessing modern weapons of war, being capable of great mobility within Australia and its own environs, having sufficient range and strike power to deter aggressors, and being capable of use as part of United Nations forces for the maintenance of peace. We will raise citizen military forces which can be rapidly mobilised in time of war. We will promote the Australian aircraft industry; use Australian shipyards to build and service naval and supply vessels; encourage the manufacture, in Australia, of modern, small, ordnance and mobile equipment, including light and medium armoured fighting vehicles; encourage Australian manufacturers to tender for defence equipment, particularly in the field of electronics; and provide equipment manufactured by Australian industries. We would be equipped to defend this country, irrespective of what danger might occur and irrespective of what problems might arise in getting spares from some other country to which we are tied for equipment at this moment. That we should be so tied is a great blight on the defence of our great nation.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN (Western Australia) [8.45]—The Senate is discussing a statement made by the Prime Minister (Mr Gorton) in another place a few weeks ago in regard to defence. The purpose of the statement was to inform the Parliament what the Australian Government is prepared to do militarily in the Malaysia and

Singapore area after the British withdrawal from that region. During the course of the debate in this place we have heard three speakers from the Opposition benches, none of whom, I believe, has dealt very fully with the statement made by the Prime Minister. The honourable senator who has just resumed his seat—

Senator O'Byrne—Does the honourable senator mean Senator Fitzgerald?

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN—Senator Fitzgerald, if Senator O'Byrne wants it that way, but I thought he was an honourable senator. Senator Fitzgerald spoke of the Australian Labor Party's policy to help the starving people of the world. I suggest that this policy would be adopted by all thinking people in this country. We all would like to see the end of wars. We all would like to spend on housing, hospital benefits and particularly, food for the people of the world, the money that we are now spending on arms, equipment and defence in general. The honourable senator made a passing reference to the F111 aircraft, and some caustic comments were passed by way of interjection about these machines. I well remember when, a few years ago in this place, the Government was under attack daily because we had no replacement for the Canberra bomber. Labor senators were continually asking what the Government intended to do. The Government has gone out and has sought a machine which I believe has no equal in the world, but this does not tie in with Labor's policy. I remember that one of my Senate colleagues from Western Australia made the point about 2 years ago during a Budget debate that the Government should order a bomber, that it did not matter how obsolete it was as long as it could go out off the coast of Australia and bomb landing barges. He said that that would be sufficient to defend Australia.

Senator O'Byrne—Whose landing barges?

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN—That is what I want to know. Let us return to the Prime Minister's statement, which I believe has a long term objective. Its objective is much greater than merely to send a force to the Malaysia and Singapore area; I believe that its objective is to ensure our own freedom through our own efforts and those of our allies. The possibility of Australia coming under some future attack is

not so remote as some, particularly members of the Labor Party, would have us believe. The danger of Communist expansion is ever present, as events in Vietnam, and now Laos, have shown. It was not so long ago that an attempt was made to overthrow the Government of Indonesia and to replace it with Communists who owed their allegiance to Communist China. When we look at the map we see that Indonesia is our closest neighbour, that it is closer to our shores than our sister dominion New Zealand. We have a wonderful country which geography has placed close to an area of turbulence and far from our natural allies. We cannot be indifferent to what is happening in Asia. There might have been a time when we could have shown some measure of indifference, but that time was when we had the security of our traditional alliance with the massive British power ready to come to our aid. Those days have gone.

I believe that the Government's greatest responsibility is to see that this nation is secure from outside danger and that economically it is strong and stable to enable all the responsibilities of government to be carried out. Our alliance with the United States, and our involvement in Vietnam with her, are part of our policy of seeing that small countries like Vietnam, and even like Australia, are preserved against aggression—

Senator Little—Australia is not a small country; it is a sparsely populated one.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN—If you like to say that, I will agree. This is part of our policy of seeing that small countries like Vietnam and even Australia are preserved against aggression and that we have a most powerful ally—America—to come to our aid in time of danger. It is my belief that currently the most tormenting and most important example of responsibility in government is the level of our safety. I recognise there are those who say that to attend to our security and our strength we must get on with great national development projects, that we have to populate the sparsely populated areas of this country, that to do this we have to spend great sums of money in bringing about these national projects and that we have to lift our immigration programme to probably double or three times its present rate. On the other

hand there are those who contend that if Australia is to be secure we must build up our fighting services and equip them with the necessary hardware and have them ready to move at a minute's notice and have small token forces stationed in neighbouring countries. Both these suggestions, I believe, are acceptable to the great majority of people in this country, but they call for huge expenditures of money—expenditures which will probably be to the detriment of other sections of the economy.

Undoubtedly the building up of our defence forces will call for universal training. I believe that the responsibilities of government call for a balanced judgment if we are to see the nation secure from outside dangers and economically strong and stable, with all the responsibilities of government being discharged. Here I believe that the Government has to make a responsible judgment, and I believe that it has made a responsible judgment in this case.

The decision to keep an Army battalion, some Air Force personnel and some naval units in the Malaysia-Singapore area after the British withdrawal is in my opinion a good decision and one that shows the world that we are prepared to help ourselves and to help our neighbours. I am not the only one saying this. I believe that the responsible Press of this nation in the west, in the east and in the south of the country have realised that the decision taken by Cabinet and the Prime Minister was a good one.

In recent weeks we have seen in this place a good deal of debate for which quotations from newspapers have formed much of the background. But during the present debate I have noticed a reluctance on the part of Opposition members to use quotations from newspapers. I am going to take this opportunity of giving the Senate a few of the quotations that I have picked up at random from the newspapers of this country. I begin with a quotation from an editorial of the 'West Australian' of 27th February 1969, 2 days after the Prime Minister had made his courageous statement. It reads:

Mr Gorton's announcement was couched in responsible and realistic terms. Moreover, the Government has taken a courageous course in deciding to stay in Asia without Britain in the background and without any firm definition of American policy in Vietnam.

There can be no doubt about this newspaper's assessment of the decision. The Government's decision, in fact, has been more than well received throughout the free world. As the 'West Australian' said further on in its editorial:

It is a tribute to this young nation—one of the few remaining colonial powers—that its servicemen should be so welcome in lands that only yesterday were colonial possessions.

This comment raises the question: And who invited Australia to remain in this area of South East Asia? The answer readily is: Of course, the two governments concerned—the Government of Malaysia and the Government of Singapore.

We are not in this region as an occupying power. On the contrary, we are there at the specific invitation of the two countries most concerned. I say quite categorically that a withdrawal as advocated by the Opposition, as expressed in another place by Labor's defence spokesman, in rejection of urgent pleas from Malaysia and Singapore, would have done these countries great and perhaps irreparable damage. To quote the 'West Australian' newspaper editorial:

The continuing presence of Australian troops in Singapore and Malaysia is tangible recognition that Australia's security cannot be divorced from the security of the region.

This is plain common sense. To do otherwise would mean that we were withdrawing our forces to the insecurity of the mainland of Australia. We must recognise our duty to co-operate with our Asian neighbours, especially as it is our decision to remain in the area at their invitation. This should dispose of Labor's talk—I might say loose talk—about giving offence to our Asian neighbours. That is not in accord with the facts.

As I have stated repeatedly, our presence has the full concurrence of the two governments. How can it be said that we are offending our Asian neighbours if we remain on their soil at their specific request? We will remain in Singapore and Malaysia, to quote the penetrating article in the 'West Australian' to which I have been referring:

To help them to gain a breathing space in which to improve their military resources and their economic and social conditions as the foundations of lasting stability.

This policy generally will do a great deal to strengthen Australia's position in South East Asia.

Senator Keeffe—What is the population of Malaysia?

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN — Find out. This policy will promote regional stability and no doubt will strengthen the Prime Minister's hand for his forthcoming meeting with President Nixon. No doubt it will illustrate to the President Australia's determination to pull its full weight as an ANZUS Pact partner. It will be an encouragement to our American partner to give full support to our decision.

I wish to quote an editorial of the Melbourne 'Age' of 26th February 1969, the day after the Prime Minister's announcement. The 'Age' said:

This is bold and intelligent policy making. The Government has chosen the course of honour, self-reliance and national interest.

This admirable editorial later stated:

The Anzac forces will be modest, but they will be sufficient to guarantee the defence of the region against outside aggression—if any should occur we will be able to call upon our larger allies for help.

Can any honourable senator in his real senses envisage the United States failing to come to our aid in such a circumstance? As I mentioned earlier, it should be regarded as proof of our determination to assist in the defence of this region, something to which the United States no doubt would give its wholehearted approval.

The 'Age' editorial in its summing up of the Prime Minister's statement added:

The issue has been taken out of the political bull-ring—there can be no cavilling at the final results. . . .

It is a truism, as the 'Sydney Morning Herald' said in a subsequent editorial, that:

The purpose of foreign military bases is not to fight wars but to deter them.

This is my answer to Senator Fitzgerald. The presence of our forces in Singapore and Malaysia provides a guarantee to these two countries and to their people that they will not be left in the lurch after this withdrawal. Finally, I quote the editorial from the Melbourne 'Age' of 1st March 1969 in which it stated:

The Opposition argument that the presence of a small contingent of land forces on the Asian mainland is in some way undesirable does not hold water when the Asians themselves anxiously desire them.

There would not be many people in high places in the Governments of Singapore and Malaysia who would agree with the honourable member for Bass in the other place, Mr Barnard, that Labor's policy did not represent a retreat to the concept of Fortress Australia. Of course we would be retreating to a Fortress Australia if we adopted Labor's policy. There is no denying the fact that such a policy, inconsistent as it is with the terms of the ANZUS Pact, would deal a shattering blow at our relationships with our great Pacific ally, the United States. We must demonstrate to our ally our determination to take our place in regional defence.

To accept Labor's policy would open ourselves to the American charge that we are not prepared to accept our responsibilities in this area. It would dishearten our friends in Malaysia and Singapore. It would have an adverse effect on the United States. We could not expect assistance from our other allies. We would become an isolationist country. We would be fair game for any major Asian power prepared to cast eyes in our direction. Mr Barnard says that: 'The Labor Party believes all ground forces should be withdrawn from Malaysia and Singapore.' I will go one further and say: By the time that the Federal Conference of the Australian Labor Party has its say in July, Labor's policy will be to withdraw all our forces—land, sea and air—from this area.

It is well to recall what the thirty-six members of the Labor Party Executive determined some years ago when the United States sought the permission of the Australian Government to build the naval communication centre on the north-west coast of Australia. The Parliamentary Labor Party was instructed by this outside body to oppose the establishment of the station. I am predicting tonight that it will instruct the Parliamentary Labor Party to support a policy of complete withdrawal of all of our forces in the Malaysia-Singapore area. Let Labor senators deny that such would not be a distinct possibility. As the Minister for Defence said in another place:

The Governments of the two countries concerned . . . support our policy . . . as well as the entire Press of Australia and the Returned Services League; and the majority of the Australian people disagree with the Opposition. Madam Acting Deputy President, I support the statement.

Senator GAIR (Queensland—Leader of the Australian Democratic Labor Party) [9.6]—Madam Acting Deputy President, as I sat in my place conjuring with my thoughts on this very important question of defence, I wondered just how important it was to the people of Australia. I looked around this chamber and I found not a great interest. I saw ten members on the Government side and considerably fewer on the Opposition side listening to this debate on a very important defence statement submitted to the Parliament of the Commonwealth by the Prime Minister (Mr Gorton) himself. I was consoled in the knowledge that there was an intelligent audience in the gallery who appeared to be interested on this all-important question, but who must have felt somewhat disappointed at the absence of senators while this important question is being debated.

Senator Ormonde—Those senators are listening in outside the chamber.

Senator GAIR—Yes, I am consoled by the knowledge that my speech is being broadcast and that anything that I have to say will reach those who are interested in the affairs of Australian politics.

Senator Little—They exhausted themselves about poor Mr Hoffmann.

Senator GAIR—We will deal with that. The Prime Minister's statement has been described by Senator Drake-Brockman as a courageous statement. Well, we will deal with that remark as we go along. On the other side of me, I had Senator Fitzgerald deplored the fact that this defence statement was merely made use of by the Government to fill in time because of lack of business. Never do I remember anything worse. The records of this Senate will show that since 25th February, when this statement was presented to the Parliament, discussion on it has been avoided by the Opposition.

Senator Georges—Nonsense.

Senator GAIR—The two full weeks in which this Parliament has sat were taken up with the discussion of matters considerably less important than the defence of Australia.

Senator Ormonde—That is not so.

Senator GAIR—On the last occasion when the proceedings of the Senate were being broadcast, our time was taken up by the discussion of a matter of urgency regarding exploration for oil on the Great Barrier Reef. This is indeed an important matter but not so urgent and not so important that it would take precedence over the matter of defence because, unless this country is properly defended, Madam Acting Deputy President—

Senator Georges—Does the honourable senator think—

Senator GAIR—The honourable senator is too insignificant for me to stop to argue with him. Unless this country is properly defended the Great Barrier Reef or any other reef will not matter much. The Opposition says that the Government is merely making use of this statement to fill in time but for the last fortnight the Opposition has been discussing the Hoffmann case.

Senator Ormonde—That was—

Senator GAIR—You cannot deny it. Unlimited time has been spent asking questions and arguing about the Hoffmann case. Defence has been avoided. The Opposition has stepped around it. The reason why the Australian Labor Party steps around the matter of defence is understandable to any thinking person. It is because Arthur Calwell speaks with one voice, Gough Whitlam speaks with another, Jim Cairns speaks with another and in divers tongues they talk about what they term defence, which means no defence for this country. That is what it amounts to.

Senator Mulvihill led the debate for the Opposition. Senator Fitzgerald told us tonight that the reason for that was that Senator Mulvihill is vice-president of the Labor Party's defence committee. Well, God help us if that is all the ALP can produce in determining and planning a defence policy for this country.

Senator McManus—He is defending the kangaroos.

Senator Cohen—Our policy—

Senator GAIR—We have heard your policy. Slimy Sam. Never worry about me.

Senator Cohen—Madam Chair, I ask for a withdrawal of that remark. It is completely offensive and unworthy of any senator.

Senator GAIR—I withdraw, Madam Chair. I thought he had become accustomed to it by now and I did not think he would mind.

Senator Cohen—That is about as low as you can get.

Senator GAIR—If you give it you will get it. However, I will not pull up to argue with every dog that barks at my caravan. I go on. I was saying that Senator Mulvihill led the debate for the Opposition on the defence statement. What a pathetic performance. Who have we heard since from the Opposition? No-one of any account.

Senator Cohen—Senator Willesee and Senator Fitzgerald.

Senator GAIR—Senator Fitzgerald spoke tonight and argued for and against the withdrawal of troops. He argued for and against all the policies of the ALP, and they are various. I appreciate his position and can be sympathetic towards him because God knows—no-one else would know—where any member of the Australian Labor Party stands on the matter of defence. None of them knows where he is going because the policy is changed, at every federal conference. Let me deal with the statement. There are several favourable features of this defence statement which lead me to believe—

Senator Georges—You are flat out finding them.

Senator GAIR—If you would only listen and learn you might gain something, but the way you are going on now you will gain nothing. I was about to say, when I was rudely interrupted, that the statement on defence by the Prime Minister—I am conscious of the fact that it deals only with a phase of Australia's defence, namely the South East Asian sector—leads me to believe that the waffle, the thinking aloud, the off the cuff statements and the indecision displayed by the Prime Minister in his first 15 months of office have been moderated.

Senator Keeffe—Just as well he is not here. You would have had to withdraw that.

Senator GAIR—I would not withdraw it because it is a statement of fact and I tell the truth without difficulty. Some do not

tell the truth even by accident. Having said that, I go on to say that the Prime Minister's statement is really only a return to the position obtaining when Mr Gorton succeeded the late Harold Holt. Therefore, far from being satisfied or happy with this recent statement the Australian Democratic Labor Party believes that the Gorton defence policy is just as inadequate for Australia's needs in the matter of defence as were the policies of Sir Robert Menzies and Mr Holt.

Senator Cant—But your Party supported both of them.

Senator GAIR—What option did we have? We had no option. The alternative was to support a Communist-riddled Australian Labor Party.

Senator Cant—Where are the Communists in the Australian Labor Party? You were in it for many years. Perhaps that is why you were expelled.

Senator GAIR—I got out. Now I have disturbed honourable senators opposite. I have thrown a rock amongst the pigeons. In 1966 I stated in my policy speech that as far as the Democratic Labor Party was concerned it was the substance that mattered, not the shadow. Mr Gorton has returned to the shadows thrown by the Menzies and Holt defence policies. The substance remains virtually unaltered. The Party which I am privileged to lead in this Senate always will be vitally concerned about the substance of Australia's defence role because, as I stated in 1966, all social and domestic policies, no matter how just or how progressive they may be, are not worth the paper on which they are written unless Australia has adequate defences and is guided by a realistic foreign policy. Fortress Australia was not a realistic policy at any time. It was a small minded policy, restrictive, defeatist and totally irrelevant to our needs and requirements. I cannot let pass my amazement at Mr Gorton's suggestion that the Fortress Australia concept was an ALP idea only.

Senator Ormonde—Do not lay that on us.

Senator GAIR—He suggested that neither he nor his colleagues ever shared in that idea. I think that was the most unfair part of his defence statement because indisputably and undeniably Prime

Minister Gorton for the past 15 months has entertained and nurtured the idea of Fortress Australia. His policy was indistinguishable from that propounded by Dr Cairns and the leaders of the left wing in the Australian Labor Party.

Senator Dittmer—How many troops would you have overseas?

Senator GAIR—I will answer that in my own time if you will only listen.

Senator Dittmer—I am listening.

Senator GAIR—When you were prepared to listen you did make some progress but you have not made sense since. Mr Gorton is prepared to think that if he says the opposite of the real situation people eventually will believe, and history will record, the opposite as being the truth. Certainly there are people and editorial writers who will believe anything the Prime Minister says but their credulity must have limitations. The fact is that Mr Gorton was flirting with the Fortress Australia concept and all that it implies during the latter half of 1968 and the first month and a half of this year. I have absolutely no doubt that that was the case. In fact I received a very strong indication of it from Mr Gorton himself at the time. Mr Gorton's indecision and off the cuff statements prompted my Party late last year to review our policy on the allocation of preferences. The review was also prompted by talk of an early Federal election. Our opposition to an early election and the announcement of DLP concern at the Prime Minister's defence thinking were largely responsible for the jettisoning of the early election plans. I believe that our stand then prevented one of the greatest debacles of recent political history, because the Prime Minister was blind to the apprehension and concern felt by many sections of the electorate about his defence indecision or his lack of defence policy.

The defence statement does not satisfy the DLP by a long shot. Whereas in the past we were concerned about the indecision, we are now equally concerned about the failure of the Government to give some substance to its defence policies. The substance we desire must include such things as acceptance of the overall objective of self-reliance in defence; universal national service for all males between the ages of 20 and 25 years; increased land forces; the

establishment of sufficient naval and air bases on our western coastline; the acquisition or leasing of aircraft carriers and support ships—

Senator Georges—You may as well declare war.

Senator GAIR—I read of Job in Bible history; but by God he had nothing on me when I have to put up with you. You are hard enough to understand with your hand away from your mouth, but when you try to interject with your hand halfway down your throat you are impossible to understand.

Senator Keeffe—You must admit that he beat you that time.

Senator GAIR—Yes, I am prepared to admit that.

The ACTING DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Senator Dame Ivy Wedgwood)—Order! I ask the honourable senator to address the Chair.

Senator GAIR—I will do so. I will look at the Chair. It is much more pleasant. Our defence policy must include the acquisition or leasing of aircraft carriers and support ships; increased rocket development at Woomera—if Senator Cavanagh were here he would know where that was; a ground to air missile system and radar warning system; the development of high level munitions production in Australia and an aircraft industry; and the taking of the initiative in the formation of a confederation of free neighbouring Asian nations. That is something the DLP advocated 10 or more years ago. We were laughed at and ridiculed by our opponents and by editorial writers and others. But today they are talking about that idea.

Senator Keeffe—You are getting carried away now.

Senator GAIR—They are carried away with the idea now. They believe that it is a great idea to get the anti-Communist countries in South East Asia together and working in harmony to the mutual good, socially, economically, militarily and in every other way. It is a good idea today, but it was no good when the DLP first suggested it. It is like so many other things that have been stolen from our policy and put into the policies of other parties.

Finally, our defence policy must include the development of an Australian nuclear capacity. The DLP will not be satisfied until it obtains firm indications that the Government accepts the need for these policies to be implemented. These are the things we want. These are the things Australia wants. These are the things Australia must have if she is to claim to be self-reliant in the matter of defence.

I listened to Senator Willesee speaking this afternoon on the question of the Australian-American alliance. He said what we have been saying for so long, namely, that we cannot rely altogether on America. It is the only great nation to which we can turn these days. Notwithstanding that, many people in our community would alienate and destroy that friendship by their criticism and their conduct towards that great country. Yet we know that there could be circumstances that would not permit America to come to our aid immediately. This is why we have the grave responsibility of being prepared ourselves and why we should have some forward defences, as provided for—

Senator Dittmer—How much would you spend annually on defence?

Senator GAIR—If the honourable senator gets a man's voice and speaks up I will be able to hear him.

Senator Dittmer—You can hear, but you will not answer the question. How much would you spend annually on defence?

Senator GAIR—I do not believe that the question of defence should be measured in pounds, shillings and pence or dollars and cents. The measure that we should use is what is considered suitable and adequate for the defence of this country.

Senator Dittmer—How much would your programme cost?

Senator GAIR—Our programme has been evaluated by the Treasury of this country. It is within the limits of the financial capacity of this country. I would take the necessary money from the rich, such as the honourable senator. I would impose a tax on gold and things like that, which would bring in the revenue to provide us with an aircraft carrier and things like that. I would make defence paramount.

Senator Keeffe—What would you do with the F111?

Senator GAIR—Now the honourable senator is tempting me.

Senator McManus—If Senator Keeffe wants Senator Gair to tell him, he will.

Senator GAIR—I might, too, if the proceedings were not being broadcast. Let me repeat that we will not be satisfied until we have obtained some firm indications that the Government accepts the need for the policies I have mentioned to be implemented. These are not extravagant demands. These are essential, particularly now, with the great change in circumstances. Britain has removed her forces from South East Asia—or will do so by 1971. The Indian Ocean is thrown free. Yet this magnanimous country allows foreign ships—Russian, Polish and other Communist ships—to come to our shores. They drop their goods at Haiphong and then come here and pick up backloading. We let them through with the blessing of a good Australian democratic government. We have people in this chamber who ask why we have a security service. They have been arguing about the necessity for it for the last fortnight. These ships are coming in and going out and no-one is taking very much notice of them. In what activity are they engaged? I wonder.

I reject Senator Drake-Brockman's description of this statement as a courageous one. It is not courageous. The Prime Minister could have made this statement 12 months previously, because it contains no alteration of the policy enunciated by his predecessor, the late Harold Holt—the policy that won so much approbation and support at the 1966 election. The Prime Minister thought he would get away from that policy. He thought it had probably grown stale. He intended to announce some new policy. But fortunately his thinking came right. For what this statement represents in Australian defence, we accept it with pleasure. As I said, it has pleasing features. But it is not complete. We have to have a more complete defence policy. But, to be fair, let me repeat that it is a statement on only a phase or a sector of defence policy.

I want to hear from the Prime Minister and his Government a complete defence policy. I suppose I will one day. I hope that it will be one that the DLP can embrace with enthusiasm. Paramount in our platform and policy is the matter of defence and foreign policy. Unless Australia has a sane, commonsense defence and foreign affairs policy, God help us. Limited as we are with 12 million people, we have to learn to stand on our own feet instead of continuing to bludgeon America or some other country, as we have done for so many years. Even in Vietnam today our position is not very satisfactory. We are dependent upon the United States of America for helicopters and almost all our needs. Do honourable senators in the Australian Labor Party believe that the Australian people are happy with that state of affairs? No, they are too independent of heart and mind to go along following the United States in every possible way. We have to grow up. We have to accept our responsibility, even though it may mean the payment of increased taxation by those people who can afford to pay it. They have the most to lose and they should be prepared to meet any increased commitment in this connection.

I could go on making many other suggestions with regard to defence, but suffice it to say that our policy is very clear and definite. It stands as it was having regard to changes in circumstances. We have adjusted according to the changes that have taken place. Any Australian government, and any government that sincerely and fervently is concerned with the importance of defending its country, must adapt its policy to the current requirements of defence. If we do not have proper defence we have nothing on which we can count on a permanent basis. Yet people talk about the withdrawal of our troops from Vietnam. They say: 'Pull them out.'

Senator Georges—Stop the war.

Senator GAIR—They say: 'Stop the war. Stop the bombing of North Vietnam. Let the North Vietnamese and the Coms shoot their rockets and belt hell out of the civilian population of Saigon and other places.' This is a strange sense of justice to which these people subscribe.

Senator Georges—How about a little humanity?

Senator GAIR—I am asked: 'How about a little humanity?' Why does not the honourable senator go and preach that philosophy to Ho Chi Minh and the others with whom he has so much close association and contact?

Senator Georges—Why do you not make a special effort?

Senator GAIR—Why do you not tell them of the need to preach humanity? Whilst the peace conference is proceeding in Paris, the Vietcong and the National Liberation Front in Vietnam are engaged in destroying the civilian population of Saigon and contiguous areas. Do honourable senators who are interjecting countenance that? Do they believe in that sort of action? They think it is good. They want all the peace movements, and the cessation of bombing and firing on North Vietnam, but are prepared to support the rocket attacks on Saigon civilians with all the vigour and effort they can muster.

Senator Little—They do not want peace. They just want North Vietnam to win, that is all.

Senator GAIR—Of course. And after the North Vietnamese have won, will the Communists be satisfied with the capture of South Vietnam and the submission of the South Vietnamese to a Communist regime? Of course not. They will move into Cambodia, Thailand, and down to Malaysia and Singapore.

Senator Georges—The good old dominoes.

Senator GAIR—The domino theory is right, and we in Australia do not overlook that fact.

Senator Georges—Even the Americans have given it away.

Senator GAIR—Oh yes! And we have heard about the peaceful Communist China, too, that raped Tibet and attacked the peaceful people of that country.

Senator Georges—And Russia, too?

Senator GAIR—Yes. They are two of a kind. They do the same things. They run to a pattern. The Australian Labor Party, by its support of an inadequate defence policy

and its thinking that the North Vietnamese and Vietcong are merely engaged in a civil war—

Senator Mulvihill—Do you think that the Government will increase its commitment in Vietnam now?

Senator GAIR—I am not speaking for the Government. I am not a member of the Government. You should ask that question of the Minister concerned. I am enunciating here again the policy of the Party I represent and lead in this Parliament. I think it is the real policy for the defence of Australia. I believe that it has the support of every thinking person, of people who are concerned about arresting the growth and downward advance of Communism on this fair land of the Southern Cross. Only a fool would believe that the Communists would stop in South Vietnam in the event of American and Australian withdrawal and the submission of the South Vietnamese people. Of course they will come through. Honourable senators should remember that the distance between Darwin and Malaysia is about 1,500 miles, or not much farther than the distance from Canberra to my home in Brisbane.

Senator Ormonde—Will they come down in sampans?

Senator GAIR—They will come down in many other ways. It did not take the Japanese very long—a matter of months—to go from Indo-China, which is now Vietnam, to Malaya and Singapore, and on to New Guinea. Some honourable senators are living in a fool's paradise. They describe me and others who talk about defence as warmongers. I say to the people who make those allegations about me that I am a most peaceful man. You know that. I am a benign man, a charitable man. Otherwise I could not have for so long put up with honourable senators who have been interjecting tonight.

Senator Dittmer—You conceal it.

Senator GAIR—You should be the most grateful man to me in this chamber. I will not enumerate the reasons why. You do not show it. If you did, you would behave yourself. The fact remains that I am peaceful by nature and disposition. I am a realistic pacifist. I believe that the best form of defence is the maintenance of a good

defence policy. Then we know where we stand. I propose to move an amendment to the motion that the Senate take note of the Prime Minister's statement.

Senator Dittmer—It will not be carried.

Senator GAIR—Only because there are so few enlightened Australian Labor Party senators. I move:

After the word 'statement' add the following words—

'but notes with grave concern that it is limited in its objective and in no sense constitutes any general scheme of Australian strategic defence which should include:

- (a) acceptance of the overall objective of self reliance in defence;
- (b) universal national service for all males between 20 and 25 years of age;
- (c) increased land forces;
- (d) the establishment of suitable naval and air bases on our western coastline;

Particularly on our western coastline but also on our eastern coastline. We have one petty officer in Townsville.

Senator Mulvihill—Senator Keefe told us that months ago.

Senator GAIR—I got the information by way of a question. Can you not be fair even on a minor thing? The amendment continues:

- (e) the acquisition or leasing of aircraft carriers and support ships;
- (f) increased rocket development at Woomera;
- (g) a ground to air missile system and radar warning system;
- (h) the development of high level munitions production in Australia and an aircraft industry;
- (i) to take the initiative to form a confederation of free neighbouring Asian nations;
- (j) the development of an Australian nuclear capacity.

Senator Prowse—The honourable senator has forgotten one point. This would cost \$5m a year.

Senator GAIR—And what is that?

Senator Prowse—It would cost \$5,000m.

Senator McManus—I do not think Senator Prowse is an authority on defence costs.

Senator GAIR—No. Senator Prowse should stick to the wheat trade with Red China, which is helping to build up the Red Chinese economic strength. The Democratic Labour Party defence policy, as I said in the course of my remarks, has been assessed by

the Federal Treasury. In any case I repeat that whatever it costs it would not all be achieved in 12 months. This should be our policy and we should go to it, fervently believing that we are justified in fortifying and supporting this country in the matter of defence so that we might fulfil our obligations to the present generation and to the generations unborn; and that we will not be charged with having neglected to defend Australia against the potential enemies of Australian democracy.

Senator DRURY (South Australia) [9.43]—Before I refer to the defence statement itself I want to answer Senator Sim's criticism of the fact that Senator Mulvihill opened this debate on behalf of the Australian Labor Party. As Senator Fitzgerald pointed out, Senator Mulvihill is a member of the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs. He is also vice-chairman of the Australian Labor Party Defence and Foreign Affairs Committee. It was through the courtesy of the Leader of the Opposition (Senator Murphy) and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Senator Cohen) that Senator Mulvihill was given the privilege of leading for the Opposition because of his position on those committees. Also, I would like to say to Senator Gair that if he were half as sincere as Senator Mulvihill about the defence of Australia then he would have something to be proud of.

I would like to speak about aspects of defence which should have been covered in this statement. As we all know, a long term defence review was ordered by the Prime Minister (Mr Gorton) early in 1968. We are now debating the outcome of that review. It comes to us in the form of the Prime Minister's statement on defence. That statement has been delivered and debated in the other place and it is now being debated in this chamber. It would be appropriate if honourable senators considered some of the important defence aspects which were not covered in the statement. A complete consideration possibly would serve as a means of testing the factors covered and the solutions put forward. I propose to put forward considerations which I believe it would be desirable to test when debating a defence statement.

We should consider possible situations which could arise in the future. We shou'd look at the form of the review. I believe that any defence statement should cover,

firstly, any threat to Australia and all developments concerning Australia, not just the South East Asian area. It should deal with the ways in which Australia could be attacked in the future. There is no mention of this point in the Prime Minister's statement. I believe it is necessary for the statement to include a defence plan to cover a period of years—say 10 years—or alternative plans, depending on the turn of events and the weight given to some of the factors considered. I believe, Mr Acting Deputy President, that the matters I have mentioned should have been included in this statement.

Let us consider some of the important factors that should have come forth from this statement. I will deal first of all with the threat to South East Asia generally, including possible internal subversion and external aggression. One example of this which should be considered is the insurgency in the north east of Thailand. We should take our minds back to the Communist terrorist activities in Malaya some years ago, from 1948 to 1960. Australian, New Zealand and British troops fought the Communist terrorists in that area, defeated them and pushed them back to the borders of Thailand. I believe that these are the same people who are now acting as agents in Thailand. They are the remnants of the terrorists who fought against our forces in Malaya from 1948 to 1960.

I ask: Is there any possible long term threat to Australia? Has any cognizance been taken of Chinese growth from the military and industrial points of view? Has consideration been given to the capability of any Asian nation to wage war? This would include the possible strength of their forces, their industrial potential and their manpower base. Has any assessment been made of the possible intentions of the United States of America in the Asian area in the future? Is there any mention in this defence statement of the British attitude to, and capability in, the South East Asian area after the withdrawal late in 1971? Has Australia's interest in South East Asia, from the defence, trade and proximity points of view, been discussed in this statement? I believe that we should look very closely at the lack of cohesion of friendly Asian nations in establishing complete

regional co-operation in defence. There was no mention of this in the statement.

I believe that there are frictions, or possible areas of friction, between Asian nations which are friendly towards Australia. One of those frictions has been referred to by other senators tonight, that is, the current Malaysia-Philippines dispute over Sabah. Has any note been taken of the possibility of friction in the future between Malaysia and Singapore or the possibility of a renewal of some form of confrontation by Indonesia? I believe that this factor would go wide in its considerations, which should include aspects such as the continued friction between India and Pakistan and the possibility of clashes or friction between various powerful Asian nations. Take, for example, friction between Japan and China, China and Russia, or China and India. Has any mention been made of possible ways in which the defence of friendly Asian nations can be improved, for example, by means of direct military or civil aid and the lending of military officers to help with the organisation of forces? We also have to consider—there is no mention of this, to my knowledge, in the statement—Australia's commitment to New Guinea and other islands to the north. We have to look at the lack of naval power after the British withdrawal and the possibility of a Russian and American naval build-up in the Indian Ocean.

We have to look at the possible situation in South East Asia following the end of the Vietnam war, which we hope will be very soon. We have to take into consideration existing regional co-operation between Asian nations through the South East Asia Treaty Organisation, the Association of South East Asian nations and the Asian and Pacific Council. We have also to consider possible defence arrangements which Australia could enter into in the future. In this consideration there has to be an assessment of the value and reliability of possible allies. There has been no mention in the statement of the difficulties which Australia could face if she entered into a commitment which would lead to a situation involving the conduct of sustained military operations on a large scale in South East Asia or elsewhere at long distance from the Australian mainland.

We have to give heed to the need for Australian equipment planning which would cover requirements for some 10 years ahead at least. In this category would be items such as warships, aeroplanes and expensive items generally for expanded forces. In this consideration the fact would need to be borne in mind that from the time of initiating of a requirement for military equipment it may be between 5 and 7 years before actual delivery is made. The projections concerning improvements and expansion of Australia's capability to produce weapons and equipment need to be examined. We have to look at the potential of citizen and reserve forces as a mobilisable element of Australia's armed forces. We have to make an assessment of the benefit which could be derived from economic and defence aid programmes.

We should also have a look at possible circumstances which might arise regarding the defence of Australia. I put these forward to indicate a possible way in which the realities of defence policies or solutions to defence problems can be tested. The situations depicted represent some of the major possibilities only. The time frame envisaged for any one of these events to take place is the next 5 years or so and the question which occurs immediately is: What should Australia do? If there is a truce in Vietnam, leading to general elections throughout the country and an American withdrawal, and 12 months later the section of the population sympathetic to North Vietnam at present gains complete control, what will happen? I have already spoken about the insurgency in the north-east of Thailand. What would happen if it spread so widely as to become general? What would happen if President Suharto of Indonesia were deposed and replaced by a general who initiated a campaign of propaganda and action for the liberation and uniting of New Guinea?

Japan has announced that she must re-arm in the interests of her own defence. She has also indicated that she will make nuclear weapons and means of delivery from submarines and intercontinental ballistic missiles. We have seen in the past the incursion of Japanese and Chinese fishing vessels into Australian waters. This has led

to violent opposition on the part of Australian fishermen, including the firing of shots and the arrest of vessels. We have been told that there is a possibility of a renewal of insurgency in Malaysia similar to that which occurred during the emergency. I fail to see why this has been allowed to happen once again, because for 12 years we gave Malaya assistance to keep down this insurgency. Now, just a few years later, there is a possibility of its arising again. What will happen if tension develops between Malaysia and Singapore, leading to a situation where it is apparent that neither of these countries is prepared to co-operate in any defence agreement? What will happen if a general upheaval in Indonesia causes the overthrow of the present regime and the establishment of one similar to that of President Sukarno, which commences armed confrontation of Malaysia and Singapore?

One could go on to give the Senate further examples. These are some of the factors that should have been taken into consideration in this statement. Have we been told what are the defence and industrial capabilities of Japan, mainland China, India, Burma, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines? If time permits, I will endeavour to give the Senate figures on the defence and industrial capabilities of those countries. We have heard a lot about subversion from within and without South East Asia. We have been told about the downward thrust of Communism and that this must be halted. We have not been told the reasons why this situation arises. To understand the situation one has to look at South East Asia, analyse it, and discover what it means to any power which would want to dominate it. As we all know, South East Asia stretches from Burma to the Philippines. This region with its great diversity of population and resources was once the arena of rival colonial powers. Today it has become a centre of grave international tension in which states have newly emerged from tutelage. It is also an area in which many people are hungry, most are illiterate and live in grinding poverty, and many have not seen a doctor, heard of democracy or known what civil liberties mean. They believe that freedom or free enterprise means the freedom of western colonial

powers to exploit Asians. They believe that anything different would be better than what they have at present. They are determined to improve themselves. Unfortunately most people in Asia distrust the white man. Is it any wonder that when all these factors are added together the people in these areas are easily led into the grip of Communism, which breeds and thrives on the very things I have mentioned? The people should be given food, relief from poverty, education and medical attention, but above all they should be given a decent, democratic government that would guide them wisely but would not exploit them. It would be a much harder task for the Communists to win the minds of these people if that were done.

South East Asia is the rice bowl which helps to feed the densely populated region that extends from India to Japan. It is rich in many raw materials such as tin, oil, rubber and iron ore. It offers industrial Japan potentially important markets and sources of raw materials. Despite this, people are suffering from hunger and disease and have an incredibly low standard of living. The Western world should hang its head in shame for having allowed this state of affairs to exist for so long. Now that the West has seen the possibility of losing the area, after centuries of exploitation, it has decided to do something. The area has great strategic value. South East Asia is astride the most direct and best developed sea and air routes between the Pacific and South Asia. It has major naval and air bases. Is it any wonder that Communist control of South East Asia would carry a grave threat to the Philippines, to Australia and to New Zealand, all of whom have treaties of mutual assistance with America? The entire western Pacific area, including the so-called off-shore island chain, would be strategically endangered.

In March 1954 General Eisenhower appraised the situation and said: 'The area of South East Asia is of transcendent importance.' Communism has spread rapidly in Asia since the end of World War II. What did the Western world do to prevent it? We saw the take-over of Malaya, the intrusion into India and the border fighting there. We saw the attempted coup in Indonesia. All these things happened under the eyes of the Western world. We sent troops to Malaya during the

struggle there. After 12 years of jungle warfare the Communist terrorists were defeated. I believe the people of Asia do not want to be pushed around; they want to go along in their own way. They do not want outside interference. It is true that in some ways Australia has helped the area by means of the Colombo Plan and by giving other aid. Has this aid gone to the people who needed it most or has it been used in bribery and corruption? In the 'Bulletin' of 25th January 1969 under the heading 'Is it love or self-interest?', written by Alan Reid, a statement was made which emphasises what I have said about whether the aid given to the countries has been received by those who deserved it most. The article stated:

Visitors, particularly politicians, are prone to utter flattering platitudes about the country they happen to be in. But most Singapore political leaders follow the example of Lee in being toughly outspoken.

That refers to the Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew. The article continued:

And nobody can be tougher than Lee, as he showed last week in London when he publicly condemned underdeveloped countries for abuse of foreign aid. Lee condemned the practice in some client countries (and it was clear that he was hitting at some of his fellow Asians as well as at Africans) of spending aid on Rolls Royces, executive mansions, and gold bedsteads instead of on dams, power stations, railways, and roads. The Opposition has always maintained that the onward march of Communism would be halted by destroying the seed from which it grows. I have obtained from the Library certain figures which show the potential defence and industrial capabilities of Asian nations. The total strength of the Japanese Self-Defence Forces at present is 250,000, consisting of: Army, 174,000; Navy, 36,000; and Air Force, 40,000. The Army is organised into twelve infantry divisions of between 7,000 and 9,000 men. There is also a mechanised division, an airborne brigade and supporting brigades of artillery, engineers and signals. I have figures on the principal ships in the Navy. I will not bore the Senate with those. The strength of mainland China's militia has been estimated at 2 million. The Chinese Army has a total strength of some 2,500,000. In addition it has a para-military force of tremendous size which, although barely trained and only partially armed, adds greatly to the manpower readily available for the

defence of China or for border type operations. I have figures of manpower strength of the Navy and of the principal ships. The manpower strength is 141,000, including 15,000 in the Naval Air Force. Mainland China has 4 destroyers, 4 destroyer escorts, 11 frigate escorts and 32 submarines including 21 W-class long-range vessels. I have figures in relation to Burma, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines. Yet we have the temerity to send 1,200 troops to Malaysia. I refer to an article which appeared in the Malaysian 'Press Digest' of 15th January 1969. It related to the establishment of a five-nation base at Singapore. The article stated:

Tunku Abdul Rahman tonight rejected Singapore as a base for any projected five-nation mobile force for regional defence.

'Singapore will provide no effective defence against any attack,' he told an airport Press conference before leaving for London to attend the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference.

He was commenting on a reported suggestion by Australian Prime Minister, Mr John Gorton, that a five-nation mobile defence force be established in Singapore.

Evidently the Prime Minister is in favour of a mobile defence force even though some of his supporters do not believe in it. The article continued:

The Tunku said he had no opportunity to study the proposal and added:

'However, as the last war proved beyond doubt, Singapore cannot put up any form of defence.'

In time of war Singapore would be declared a free area. If you dropped ten bombs on Singapore the whole island would be destroyed.'

The Australian Labor Party has been criticised because it has no defence policy. I think this statement was rebutted amply not only by Senator Mulvihill but by Senator Fitzgerald when he made his contribution to the debate tonight. I believe that the stationing of 1,200 men in Malaysia will help that country economically because the money expended on keeping them there will help the economy of the country. I believe that the Government has introduced its defence statement at this point of time as a political move to bolster the declining support of the people of Australia.

Senator MAUNSELL (Queensland) [10.10]—I enter the debate in support of the defence statement made by the Prime Minister (Mr Gorton) in which the Government undertakes to support our friends in

Malaysia and Singapore after the British withdrawal in 1971 and also to continue with the general policy that the Government has embarked upon. We have to realise that we are a young country with vast resources which have not yet been developed. Our population is small by comparison with many of the nations in Asia. Many of our areas are sparsely populated, particularly in the north. Our geographical position is such that we would be isolated from our friends in the event of Asia falling victim to powerful aggression. Consequently our defence policy and expenditure have to be such that we are able to retain close ties with strong allies such as the United States and, at the same time, give moral, economic and military support to those friends in Asia who may not be as strong as we are. We must give them the confidence to resist aggression and enable them to do so.

But also we must retain at home the nucleus of a strong defence force using modern methods, equipment and techniques so that when trouble does come our way we will be able to gear ourselves, in the shortest possible time, to defend our shores effectively. At the same time we must make sure that our progress towards building up our population and industrial strength and the development of our nation as a whole is not impeded or diverted by placing too great a strain on our economy by spending extraordinary amounts on defence. Our whole approach, therefore, has to be one of securing the best value for our money and the best deal for our nation without impairing our growth or our ability to help ourselves. Our policy must be elastic so that as the threat of danger looms or increases we will be able to step up our defences in the shortest possible time and as the threat wanes we can get right on with the job of developing our national wealth, which in the future will be our greatest strength in defending ourselves.

We can say that since 1949 this Government has, in the main, secured much for the Australian people. We have strengthened our ties with the United States of America and have fulfilled our responsibilities to that nation. Through the ANZUS treaty, which involves Australia, New Zealand and the United States, we have the assurance that

the United States will come to our protection. We have given great heart and confidence to our friends in Asia. They have the confidence to protect themselves and that has become an important part of our own security. As an example I cite Malaysia's great fight, with our assistance, to rid itself of insidious Communist infiltration. Our nearest neighbour, Indonesia, has rid itself of a threat of Communist takeover. No doubt this was made possible by the confidence gained from the activities of the United States and Australian forces in South East Asia. This favourable climate in South East Asia has been attained without slowing down or restricting our growth and development. Throughout this period the Australian Labor Party has opposed all actions which have brought about this confidence. Members of the Labor Party has opposed our troops going outside Australia to support our friends in Asia; they have opposed the policy of compulsory national service to ensure that we meet our commitments; and whenever we have tried to bring in capital to build up our population and economic growth they have endeavoured to knock that.

The development of our own oil industry is absolutely essential to enable us to carry on modern warfare with modern mobile equipment. But the Opposition members want to knock that also and to put as many obstacles as they can in the way of those who are risking their capital to try to make this nation self sufficient in fuel. Imagine what would happen to this nation if we did not have our own oil industry and we were cut off from supplies during a future conflict. This nation would grind to a halt in a matter of days. By building up our trade with our Asian friends, not only do we help to build up their economy but also we make it essential that they support us. Japan is a typical example of this. It would be almost disastrous to the Japanese economy if they were to lose the opportunity to trade with us at this particular time. However, I feel that there are matters which would help to improve our position and which I would like to see done by the Government.

I should like to see greater military installations in northern Australia, not only in respect of equipment and bases, but also with more troops located in various areas. I know that we are doing something already by establishing an Army base at Townsville

and by developing a naval base at Darwin, but I would like to see Army marine bases established in the north, particularly near our Great Barrier Reef and our Gulf waters. They could do a tremendous job up there by assisting us in what at the moment might be regarded as a civilian job in protecting our fishing interests, our interests in the Great Barrier Reef and our tourist potential in that region. There could be Air Force bases in the dry inland area where flying conditions are suitable. Not only would this help the Australian defence setup but also it would be of considerable help to the economy of northern Australia. I believe that it is absolutely essential that we populate the north in case of any future attack or threat of attack. Our greatest strength lies in the population, development and protection of our northern shores. Much has been said about the equipment that we have been using. The F111 aircraft has received more than its share of abuse. However, I am quite happy to go along with my colleagues and friends in the Royal Australian Air Force who have been to the United States and have studied the equipment. We have heard people condemn the F111.

Senator O'Byrne—The Americans are condemning it.

Senator MAUNSELL—Many Americans have condemned it but just as many Americans swear by it.

Senator O'Byrne—According to tonight's news it has been modified.

Senator MAUNSELL—There is no doubt that the F111 will be modified. This has happened to every new aircraft that has been produced. Many of us have seen aircraft which were brought out by the Americans during the last war scattered all over Queensland. I believe that in some cases they lost up to 80% of their squadrons. There is no doubt that lack of training of air crews contributed to the losses, but eventually the aircraft were modified and towards the end of the war some of those aircraft were among our best fighting equipment. The people who flew them had complete confidence in them. This will happen also with the F111, which is a completely revolutionary aircraft.

Senator Keefe—If it flies.

Senator MAUNSELL—It has a record better than any other aircraft turned out by the United States. It must fly. It is just that over-emphasis has been placed on the number of crashes that have occurred.

Senator Keeffe—Will we ever get it?

Senator MAUNSELL—We will get it, and we will be very happy indeed to have it. As I said before, this is a revolutionary aircraft and, from its performance as we know it, it is the very thing that this nation requires. One of its greatest attributes is that it can fly to any of the areas in Asia that we are concerned with and return without refuelling. This cannot be done by any other aircraft. This is one of the requirements of the specifications issued to the United States. In addition, the sophisticated equipment of the reconnaissance version will enable it to detect enemy positions up to 1,500 miles out with the result that within 2 or 3 hours the enemy object can be identified and our bombers or whatever we may have can be on the way out to take action against it. This type of equipment is most essential to a nation like Australia that is so far removed from other nations in these days of modern forms of attack. Should we be subjected to what might be termed an attack before we are ready, it is essential that we have aircraft with the capabilities of the F111 for our protection.

Senator Keeffe—What are they?

Senator MAUNSELL—I know that some people have ideas about keeping our old bombers, but we all know what happened to our boys in New Guinea with our Wirraways in the last war.

Senator Keeffe—When do you think we are going to get the F111?

Senator MAUNSELL—You have heard all about it. You can read the newspapers as easily as I can. You know when they are expected to arrive here. You ask most of the questions around here, and you get most of the answers.

Senator Keeffe—Do you not know?

Senator MAUNSELL—Have you not read the newspapers? It is a wonder you are asking these questions. You are so interested in the F111 it is a wonder you have not

been asking questions about it instead of questions about the Hoffmann affair. The F111 and the defence of this country are of much more interest to the country than the way you have been carrying on lately. At this stage, I should like to refer to the statement made by Senator Gair. I note that he has moved an amendment. No doubt, if this nation were in great danger of attack the amendment proposed by Senator Gair would be appropriate. I have already pointed out that this Government has been in office for 20 years—since 1949. It would have been disastrous if, during that time, we had spent on the defence of this nation, at the cost of our own development, the amount of money envisaged here. If we had done that we would not have been in a position today even to look like spending the amount proposed. Fortunately, should there be a real threat of invasion to this country we are now in an industrial and economic position to marshal greater force to meet it.

Senator Keeffe—Who is going to invade us?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT—Order! Honourable senators will refrain from interjecting.

Senator MAUNSELL—I know they do not like it when we get on to matters of defence. However, I know that the people who are listening, and indeed the people of Australia generally, are concerned about the defence of this nation.

Senator Keeffe—You are not going to convince them.

Senator MAUNSELL—Maybe I am not, but I know that whatever has been said by the Opposition both here and in another place will not convince them sufficiently to persuade them to put the present Opposition in the position of handling the defence of this country, so we need not worry about what you think. The people of Australia are concerned with what this Government has been doing and what it intends to do in the future. I am quite certain that they will give full support to the Prime Minister's statement and the Government's intention to stay in South East Asia. I support the statement and am entirely opposed to the different policies on defence—someone said they numbered up to six—enunciated by the

Opposition. The only one of the six upon which I think the members of the Opposition will agree is the Fortress Australia policy which, of course, will eventually become the Brisbane Line policy. So, like other supporters of the Government, I fully support the Prime Minister in his action and I am quite certain it is endorsed also by the Australian people.

Senator WHEELDON (Western Australia) [10.26]—The subject that we are debating tonight is defence. Nothing produces more emotion in any form of political discussion than does a discussion on matters of defence. When defence is being discussed, one finds both the real fears and the imaginary fears of the people are played upon. It is very difficult indeed to have a rational discussion on this subject because of constant allegations which are made against those people who do not share the ideas of the government in office if that government in office is putting forward what might be described as an aggressive policy or a policy which tends towards undue emphasis on military force. Always those people who are opposed to any such policy by the Government are accused of lack of patriotism. This has been a tradition right down through the years. Charles James Fox, whose bust we thought we had in Kings Hall till it was discovered to be that of King George IV, and who was one of the greatest Prime Ministers of England and one of the greatest liberal thinkers England has ever produced, was himself constantly accused of lack of patriotism by the superior Menzies of late eighteenth century England, William Pitt the Younger, because of his opposition to Britain's taking part in the wars against the French revolutionaries on the continent of Europe. Nonetheless, when one looks back on the development of democracy, it is the name of Fox which is revered and it is the name of Pitt which is remembered largely with contempt. In 1848 Abraham Lincoln was driven from the Congress of the United States because of his opposition to the imperialistic war against Mexico which was undertaken by the United States Government. It is Lincoln who is looked upon now as one of the two or three greatest presidents, if not the greatest president, of the United States of America, who was held up to every piece of vilification that ever a politician could be held up to, because

he opposed the action of the United States against Mexico in 1848, in the same way as many distinguished successors of his in that country have opposed United States participation in the war in Vietnam. It was not until many years later when the issue of the extension of slavery became a lively issue that Lincoln returned to the political life of his country after having been forced into retirement because of the allegations that were made against him.

In the middle of the last century when Disraeli was engaged upon his grandiose schemes to enlarge the British Empire—schemes which he maintained were necessary not only for the wealth but also for the safety of England—it was Gladstone, the leader of the Liberal Party, who said that he would not trade the meanest English county for the whole of the British Empire. Subsequent events have proved that Gladstone was right; Disraeli was wrong; the British Empire has disappeared; the standard of living of the British people did not rise to any significant extent through its possession of this Empire; and the creation of this Empire by Disraeli instead of producing good feeling produced ill feeling. Again, when one studies the history of England, one sees that Gladstone, the man who was accused of lack of patriotism, is easily the more outstanding statesman of the two. Disraeli is recognised now, despite his great abilities, to have been very largely a charlatan.

Lloyd George, who became a great Prime Minister of England, was almost lynched at the beginning of the century because of his opposition to the South African war and the part that Britain was playing in that war. He believed that it was a stupid, foolish and cruel war for England to be engaged in, in the same way as other people have described our participation and the participation of the Americans in the war in Vietnam. They described that war as being a cruel, foolish and stupid war. Lloyd George was almost lynched; he was almost hounded from public life in England at that time. But again, despite many failings that he had, he is remembered as having been a great patriotic Prime Minister of Great Britain.

In this country, John Curtin became the great wartime Prime Minister of Australia in the early 1940s. Because of his opposition

to the conduct of the First World War by the tory government of the time—by a remarkable historical similarity, that tory government was assisted in the conduct of that war by renegades from the Australian Labor Party—Curtin himself was gaoled for sedition. In fact he was ineligible to be a candidate for any State parliament and could not stand for the State Parliament of Western Australia because of his imprisonment for sedition.

When we have these debates on defence, we find that nobody can be more patriotic than the old patriot. Nobody can be more enthusiastic about the military than those who see no prospect of having to do military service. The easiest way to acquire one's bona fides as a patriotic citizen is to urge that somebody else be sent off to Vietnam. But we can find members of this Parliament who have never seen a shot fired in anger, nor are likely ever to see a shot fired in anger, who are able to make themselves appear the great patriots of this country and who are able to call out the police to prosecute those persons who possibly could have evaded military service but who have the courage to say, as Lincoln said, as Lloyd George said and as Charles James Fox said, that they are opposed in principle to the war, even though possibly by various devious means they could have evaded military service as other people are able to evade military service.

Frankly, I myself have seen no military service. I have managed to avoid it. May I paraphrase what a former President of this Senate, the late Gordon Brown, once said. I understand that three wars were fought during his lifetime. He had not taken any part in any of them. The first was the Boer War when he was too young to participate. The third was the Second World War when he was too old to participate. When asked about the First World War he said that he was too scared. My situation is that I was too young to serve in the Second World War. Although I am not too old even now, I would not go to fight in the Vietnam war because I do not approve of what we are doing there. As far as the Korean war was concerned, despite any other opinions that I may have on the subject, I was certainly too scared to go there. My only service—and I frankly admit it—was 3 years in the Perth Modern School

senior cadet detachment. Mr Robert Hawke, the present research officer and industrial advocate of the Australian Council of Trade Unions and I created the record of retaining the rank of private for 3 years during our entire service in that cadet corps. Our commanding officer was Lieutenant Newton, now better known as Mr Maxwell Newton, a journalist held in high regard by honourable senators opposite.

The subject that we are discussing tonight is the statement on defence which has been brought down by the Prime Minister. This is the first comprehensive statement on defence that Mr Gorton has made since he became Prime Minister of Australia. I was in Honolulu at the beginning of 1968. I read in the Honolulu 'Advertiser' one of the first statements that Mr Gorton had made upon assuming the Prime Ministership. This was that the number of Australian troops in Vietnam would not be increased. Speaking for myself, although I would say that all Australian troops should be withdrawn from Vietnam, I would like to congratulate the Prime Minister for adhering at least to that programme despite pressures which must have been brought upon him. While he has been Prime Minister of this country, the number of Australian troops in Vietnam has not increased beyond the number which it had reached when he became Prime Minister; whereas I feel that in other circumstances there may well have been a grave danger that the number of Australian troops in Vietnam would have been increased.

Mr Gorton himself has made at various times a number of statements on defence. I do not know—I can only speculate; and I would not want to comment on statements that I hear in the lobbies as to what divisions there may well have been in the Cabinet, within the Liberal Party and within the Government Parties regarding what defence policy ought to be brought down on this occasion—but it may well be that the Prime Minister himself would have preferred to have done something else than what was done. However that may be, he has produced a statement now which is the declared statement of objectives of the Government.

In the debates on this statement, the Prime Minister himself has spoken with

some scorn of the concept, so called, of Fortress Australia. His own statements earlier would have tended to indicate to people that in fact this was a doctrine to which he himself perhaps subscribed. One of his early statements last year was that what he believed Australia should have was an Israeli type of defence force. He was not specific about this force. There was some criticism of him for not being more specific. I can only assume that, if the statement did mean anything, the Prime Minister was not suggesting that Australia should have precisely the same form of armaments, precisely the same form of national service and precisely the same percentage of the national budget spent on defence as was the case in Israel, but I would have assumed from this statement that what he was saying was that Australia should be following the same sort of defensive policies that Israel itself follows.

If one could give the same sort of description to the defence policies of Israel as has been given of certain policies which have been suggested for Australia, clearly the defence policy of Israel could be described as a Fortress Israel policy. Whatever the merits of the situation in that area may be, the Israelis—and this they have in common with other countries such as Sweden—have not based their defence upon a system of alliances. For example, they have not become members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, despite the fact that it may have been to their advantage to do so in the short run, but have relied on themselves to protect themselves from whatever offensives they believe might be undertaken against them.

When the Prime Minister spoke about Australia having an Israeli type defence force—I may have been mistaken on this—I inferred not that he was advocating the specific kind of ordnances that should be provided for the Australian defence force but that the Australian approach to defence should be similar to the approach of Israel which, in turn, is an approach similar to that, for example, of Sweden. However the Government now has produced a statement which has been delivered by the Prime Minister. I would like to think—in many respects I have a very high regard for him—that the Prime Minister's own influence

played some part in the production of the statement.

Although in the statement there is a certain semblance to the regional approach to Australian defence, when one analyses the statement one finds that there is very little reliance indeed upon regional defence. In fact there is implicitly a reliance upon independent Australian national defence. The Government has agreed to send certain small contingents of naval and military forces, and an Air Force squadron or two, to South East Asia. I do not think even the most enthusiastic supporter of the Government would say that this was a formidable force which would be capable of resisting any serious aggression directed against Australia by anyone. It certainly is not. It is a token gesture—it may or may not be valuable—in the same way as some police constables were attached to the United Nations force which was keeping order in Cyprus. Clearly the more intelligent members of the Government do not believe that there is any real fear of an onslaught from anyone; otherwise they certainly would have sent a much more substantial force to Singapore and Malaysia than the microscopic combination of troops which has been sent. However it was necessary to send some troops there because if you are to run an election on the basis of a lack of patriotism on the part of the Australian Labor Party—I do not have the slightest doubt that the next election will be run in that way—you need to be able to draw some contrasts between the policies of the Government and the policies of the Australian Labor Party.

There are gullible people like Senator Gair who told us tonight that he is reasonably well satisfied by this magnificent military contribution. On the whole the Press, the pundits in certain newspapers and various retired civil servants who now lecture to different institutes believe that a major contribution has been made to the defence of unspecified places against unspecified attackers and that anyone who criticises this policy clearly is selling out this country to some unspecified person who will try to do some unspecified thing. I believe the troops are there, not because anyone seriously believes that they will be fighting anyone but because the Government will be able to say: 'Look what we are doing to

save Australia from the down-rushing hordes'—possibly of Chinese wool or wheat buyers or whatever else they may be—"We want to keep them out of this country whoever they may be. Someone is trying to come here and we are stopping them by sending this tremendous force of troops".

Let us examine the Prime Minister's statement. I have been surprised that so many people who have commented so learnedly on the statement and the regional emphasis it has given do not seem to have read in much detail precisely what he said. First of all the Prime Minister refers to the fact that Britain is withdrawing its forces from Asia and, although he does not refer to the fact with any detail or with any specificity, one knows that the United States is in the process of doing the same thing. I do not think anyone who can read and who reads other than the kind of material with which we are provided here has the slightest doubt that the intention even of the great hero of the Senate investigatory committee into Communism, who is now the President of the United States, is to withdraw the United States forces from Asia. Despite whatever the Vietcong or the North Vietnamese are doing at the present time, there is no provocation, no atrocity, nothing, which is so great as to prevent the United States from continuing with the peace talks and withdrawing her troops from Vietnam. America intends to leave whether we like it or not and whatever the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese do. She intends to leave and I am confident that it will not be long before she does so and before she decides, as has been suggested by advisers to both the Republican and the Democratic parties, not to continue this participation in Asia which has proved so costly and has produced no result which the United States can regard as being of the slightest benefit.

Senator Gair—That will please you and Ho Chi Minh.

Senator WHEELDON—It will also please General Matthew Ridgway, but Senator Gair's military experience would be infinitely superior to his. Having discussed withdrawal of the British forces and, implicitly, the American forces from Asia, Mr Gorton referred to the fact that in the

past the great powers had taken an interest in Asia. He said:

Now all that has changed. The major power will be withdrawn. It is no longer a contribution to the efforts of a major power which we will be called upon to make. It is a substitution for the efforts of a major power. And such a substitution must fall far short of what previously existed and be of a different character.

Already there is an admission that no longer can we rely on the major Western intervention that there was previously in Asia to hold back the flood of whoever is coming. The Prime Minister went on to say that there must be a reassessment and that various courses were open to Australia. Either there could be a complete withdrawal—he rejects that; he does not want the Israeli type defence force now—or there could be some sort of regional arrangement. Apparently that is what we have. However he mentioned certain terms on which the troops are to be stationed in Asia. He said:

They will be stationed in the area under existing arrangements, the terms of which are governed by our association with the Anglo-Malayan Defence Agreement. Should that Agreement in the future cease to be operative we would wish general understandings rather than specific treaty obligations to be worked out with the countries concerned and ourselves.

What does 'general understandings rather than specific treaty obligations' mean? We will not say specifically that if Malaysia is invaded by a foreign power we will go to her assistance. We will not say specifically that if there is internal subversion in Malaysia by the Communists, whoever they may be, we will help the Government of Malaysia; but there will be a general understanding, the general understanding presumably being 'you do not like Communists and we do not like Communists, and if there is trouble we will give it thought to see what we can work out'. If a serious effort was being made to preserve the integrity of Malaysia and Singapore against external invasion and internal subversion specific treaties, not general understandings, would be sought. The Prime Minister went on:

Their presence, and their military co-operation with Malaysia and Singapore, are not directed against—

In the printed copy of the statement the word 'against' is underlined—

any other country in the region, and this we believe is well understood and accepted.

Apparently there is a change here also. We were once told that the reason we had our troops in Vietnam, for example, was to resist the downward thrust of Chinese Communism. It was directed against someone. The country against which it was directed was specifically named. It was that terror of the Orient, the yellow peril in its red uniform. But no. We are not directing anything against Communist China. After all, who knows what trade relations might be under investigation at the present time? How upsetting it would be if somebody from the Department of Trade and Industry was in the process of making a big sale of some strategic material to somebody from the Chinese Government and we said that we were sending our 1,200 men to the area and that they were directed specifically against China. Imagine the consternation that there would be on the Country Party benches if the sale was called off, and how distressed Senator Maunsell, who has just spoken, would be if the Chinese were to do something worse than invade Vietnam, namely, stop buying Australian wool. Then the Prime Minister went on to say:

It is clear however that at some time in the future it could be possible that a situation might arise when the scale of such subversion and infiltration from outside—or some other organised threat to the region at present unforeseen—could be such that Australian resources alone would be insufficient to support successfully the forces of Malaysia and Singapore. If such a situation should arise we would have to look to the support of allies outside the region and the scale of Australia's continued effort would in that case have to be decided in the light of all the circumstances that then prevail. What they would be we cannot know now and we cannot therefore now make precise decisions.

The Prime Minister has said already that there is to be a total change in the nature of Australia's military commitment inside South East Asia; that no longer will we be able to rely on association with some major power—the major power he has specified is Great Britain—and therefore we will have to do something else. But, having said that, he then says that, if a serious situation arose and if it were a very serious one, obviously we would not be able to handle it without the support of a major power. So we would have to look around. Precisely what is he saying? He is saying that the major powers will not be there. He is also saying that if there is serious trouble in Asia Australia will need the

assistance of a major power and if it does not get that assistance it will have to think about withdrawing.

So, in fact, when the argument is taken to its logical conclusion, the Prime Minister has said that we are sending this token force into Malaysia and Singapore but that if there is any serious conflict it will be withdrawn. In fact, that is what the statement says. Yet Senator Gair is delighted with it. He probably read the headlines in the 'Courier-Mail' stating that the Democratic Labor Party's policy has been accepted and that now we are joining in with the free countries of Asia, whoever they are, in order to protect their freedom and to resist those who want to take it from them, whoever they may be. He believes that. But when we read the statement in detail we find that what the Prime Minister has said is that we are sending a token force to the area and that if trouble occurs it will come out. Of course, the whole argument is one that is directed to the Australian people. It is one that will be used in the next election campaign in an effort to establish that we have a Government that is patriotic and defence minded whilst we have an Opposition that is unpatriotic and has no interest in Australia's defence.

When we look at these great defensive treaties that we have we find the South East Asia Treaty Organisation. This magnificent body consists of those great old South East Asian countries—the United States of America, Great Britain, France, Australia and New Zealand; two minor South East Asian countries—the Philippines and Thailand; and one major Asian country—Pakistan. Of all those countries, only the United States of America, Australia and New Zealand are contributing forces to the area. There are small, virtually token, forces from the Philippines and Thailand. France—another member of SEATO—is categorically against the idea. The present regime in Pakistan is categorically against it. If present indications in Pakistan bear any fruit, in that country there will be a government that will be even more categorically opposed to the whole Western position than is the present Government.

The Australian Government has been living in a world of goodies and baddies.

According to it, Pakistan was good because it was a member of SEATO. Now Pakistan is already pretty bad and looks as if it will get even worse. Indonesia was bad because it said nasty things. Now 1½ million people have been murdered and there has been genocide of the Chinese population on a scale exceeded only by the genocide of the Jewish people by the Nazis. So it has become good. But what guarantee do we have that merely because General Suharto, for example, is anti-Communist Indonesia is sympathetic to us? He is a fanatical Moslem. To him, we are just as much infidels as any Communist is. General Tojo was one of the founders of the anti-comintern pact, but that did not stop him invading Australia. It is not only Communists against whom Australia has had to fight in the past.

What faces us at the present time, as far as the whole of Asia is concerned and as far as the whole of the undeveloped world is concerned—whether it is Asia, Latin America or Africa—is that there is a constant state of flux. The old empires, the old societies, the entire economic structures of those continents are falling down. Alliances are disappearing. Governments are falling. Countries are changing completely their whole complexion. They are shifting, changing and moving constantly. To speak of regional alliances in these circumstances is an absurdity. In any event, the Government has not been able to point to one country that is in a position to mount any sort of attack which would have any serious consequences for this country in the next 50 years.

The whole defence argument, the whole story about the necessity to defend this country, in the manner in which it is being debated by the Government and its adherents in the Democratic Labor Party, is not a serious examination of the real world in which we live. They are living in a make-believe world created in order to terrify, in the words of one American journalist, little old ladies in white tennis shoes. The little old ladies in white tennis shoes will be voting on polling day. The Government and its Democratic Labor Party supporters hope that if they are frightened enough by some unspecified aggressor, if they are encouraged enough by the Government say-

ing that it is doing some little thing which it does not intend to do in any case if the position becomes serious, and if they are told often enough that the Australian Labor Party is unpatriotic because it believes that what the Government is saying is nonsense and does not believe that this so called defence contribution is a contribution to anything, then they will return the Government for another 3 years so that it can carry on with the same Minister for Customs and Excise and so that we can still be talking in 3 years time of when the F111 aircraft are to arrive. The Australian Labor Party rejects the statement on defence presented by the Prime Minister.

Senator COTTON (New South Wales) [10.57]—I must say that Senator Wheeldon's speech was a fascinating tirade of unintelligible ideas. We are required to take note of this defence statement made by the Prime Minister (Mr Gorton). I imagine that it is appropriate to try to make some useful comments while we are doing so. What is the background to this statement and what it implies? I suggest that three matters have to be borne in mind. Firstly there is the general position of the area in which we are placed as a nation and with which we have a geographic affinity but not an ethnic one. Secondly there is our own increasing growth, the increasing importance of the area and our own growing independence. Thirdly there is the changing position through the years in the region itself and particularly in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United States of America, mainland China and Japan.

I have a very useful document from which I wish to quote. It is a book written by Brian Crozier and called 'South East Asia in Turmoil'. About 2 years ago, in an attempt to come to an understanding of events in South East Asia as they affected this country, I studied this book reasonably carefully. The passage I wish to quote relates to earlier events and is near the beginning of the book. It is as follows:

Violence has been the daily fare of South East Asia ever since the Japanese Army moved south in 1941. Terrorists have tortured traders and murdered officials. Insurgents have risen in the name of nationalism, Communism or anti-Communism, and in some places for the pure spoils of banditry. Old empires have been overthrown and new ones are on the make.

Debate interrupted.

ADJOURNMENT

**National Service: Medical Examinations—
Oil Rig Service Vessels**

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. Sir Alister McMullin)—Order! In conformity with the sessional order relating to the adjournment of the Senate, I formally put the question:

That the Senate do now adjourn.

Senator O'BYRNE (Tasmania) [11.0]—I seek the indulgence of the Senate to exercise a right that the wisdom of the pioneers of the parliamentary system carefully and positively established and nurtured as an essential ingredient of a way of life for free men—the right to protest. I draw the attention of honourable senators to a letter appearing in today's issue of the 'Australian', one of the few existing remnants of another institution, the Press, that sometimes gives a glimmer of what a free Press should be. The letter is headed 'A Mother's Anger'. It expresses a view that down through history has carried with it the poignancy of a mother's grief at the suffering of her son. It reveals the inbuilt mechanism of the mind of woman, whose purpose of creation is to give life and which equally and oppositely abhors and detests the wastefulness and negative aspects of war and death—the periodic process of skimming off the fittest and most vigorous of the nation's manhood in war.

This letter will cause resentment in the minds of Government supporters because its intent and content must agitate the consciences of those people who are Christians, not just by habit or conformity or in order to keep up with the Joneses. The letter is signed 'Elizabeth Jones (mother of Mike Jones)'. It states:

Sir—When my son was gaoled, I felt numb and then despairing. This was followed by a blinding, almost overpowering anger and hatred for the people responsible for his suffering. Now I understood how the Vietnamese people feel towards the oppressors of their country.

This passed, and I experienced physical pain, then a mental anguish so intense I begged on my knees for help and guidance. At last the pain eased and I knew that what my son was fighting for was right and I knew that whatever the Government did to him and despite the suffering this would bring about, I could never try to use my influence to turn him away from the stand he is taking against the crime this Government is committing against the Vietnamese people.

Often in the past I have seen in newspapers and magazines, pictures of suffering Vietnamese mothers and I have felt a great pity and sympathy for them but I never really knew their agony. I know now, even though mine is not the anguish of holding a dead child in my arms (killed not because he had harmed anyone but because some foreign power wished to dictate the form of government under which he should live) or watching a hurt and bleeding child suffer.

I cannot accept the view that a body of men who are not divine and therefore capable of making a wrong decision, have the right to force my son and other young men to kill and inflict that kind of suffering. The only justification for this is that we must stop them over there in case they attack us at some future date, or that we must support America, otherwise she may not support us later on.

This is not good enough. There is a higher law which says: 'Strive not with a man without cause if he hath done thee no harm'. Until the Government can prove to me that the Vietnamese people have done us harm, I shall support and encourage my son and all other young people to resist its demands.

My son believes that this Government is guilty not only of committing a crime against the people of Vietnam but is also guilty of committing a crime against the Australian people by fostering a race of frightened men so blinded and confused by the propaganda continuously being pumped into them that they will eventually be incapable of thinking for themselves.

He believes that this Government is taking away the hard-won freedoms which our forefathers fought for and that it is subjecting us to the same conditions which the Vietnamese are fighting and dying to rid themselves of. As Ngo Duc Lieu once said, the Belgians and the French and the British who defended themselves against Hitler's armies were called Freedom Fighters, the Hungarians and the Finns who defended themselves against Russia were called Freedom Fighters, but Asians and Africans who have tried to gain freedom from foreign domination are called tools of the Communists.

The Vietnamese are defending themselves against the Americans and us.

This gallant breed of young Australians whose love for their country and their people is so great that they are willing to jeopardise their future to try and awake the public to the falsehoods being fed to them by the Government, they are the ones who will fight for and guide Australia in the future; they are proving their ability and their dedication today. My son said in early 1965: 'Only by a tolerance of each other can man sit down to discuss his problems across the table rather than on the battlefield.'

So I say to all Australians: 'Let not mercy and truth forsake thee; bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart!'

Elizabeth Jones wrote the letter from Belrose, New South Wales. I hope that the historians who peruse the records of our time, seeking reasons for our blind stupidity,

will dwell for a moment on one person's resentment in an era of demoralisation, deceit and doublecross. I hope that thousands of mothers throughout the world will try to share the agony of this lonely but brave mother.

Senator McCLELLAND (New South Wales) [11.7]—I take this opportunity to raise the question of the standard of medical examination of some of our young men who are unfortunate enough to be called up for national service. I refer particularly to one young man who works for a small newspaper office which publishes a newspaper that circulates in some of the southern suburbs of Sydney. I state quite categorically that if the example I intend to cite is typical of what can happen to any young man it is about time that higher standards were applied for the medical examination of young men called up for national service. I can assure the Government that the circumstances of this case will be known throughout the Illawarra area of Sydney between now and the next Federal elections. If this case is typical of what can happen to a young man who is not well and is subjected to the medical standards of examination for national service set up by this Government, it is a very serious matter indeed.

On 20th February 1968 the young man presented himself at a public hospital in Sydney for a medical examination. After a medical examination of his eyes was carried out no further physical examination was proceeded with. He was told by the medical practitioner that he needed glasses, that his eyes were defective and that no further physical examination would be conducted. He was told that he would be recommended for deferment on the ground of medical unfitness. On 5th March 1968 he was informed that at that stage he did not meet the standards of fitness required of persons called upon to render service under the National Service Act, notwithstanding the fact that only his eyes had been tested and no other physical examination had been carried out. He was told that he would be required to present himself for another medical examination later in the year.

In July 1968 he was notified to present himself again for a medical examination. On 30th July he was examined by two medical practitioners, who again examined

his eyes. Both commented that they were very bad. He was referred to an eye specialist of Macquarie Street, Sydney. I am informed that as a result of this examination the eye specialist held that he was fit. Subsequently he was told by the Department of Labour and National Service to present himself for military service on 6th October 1968 notwithstanding the fact that at that stage only his eyes had been tested by the medical authorities.

Incidentally, Mr President, this boy is the son of a war widow. His father, after discharge from the Australian Imperial Force in the Second World War, unfortunately contracted tuberculosis and died. The widowed mother and two young sisters—schoolgirls—were living at home. The only income was the mother's war widow's pension and the earnings of this boy. He has a younger brother who was then working as an apprentice in a far country area in New South Wales.

This young boy then applied for exemption on the ground of exceptional hardship. The matter eventually came before Mr Rogers, a Sydney magistrate handling these matters. Whilst the magistrate held that hardship did in fact exist, he found that it was not exceptional hardship as defined by the Act and that the boy was to be admitted to call-up. Indeed, the young boy was told by the Department of Labour and National Service to present himself for call-up on 26th January. After the rejection of the application for exemption, the young man came and saw me. On 23rd December, I took the case up with the Minister for Labour and National Service (Mr Bury). As a result of my representations the Minister ordered that a new medical examination be conducted by a specialist physician in Macquarie Street, Sydney. On 12th February the Minister wrote to me that, as a result of the examination by the specialist physician, the young man had not been found to meet the standards required for Army service and that he would not be called up.

I am told that as a result of the examination by the specialist physician it was found that the boy was suffering from high blood pressure and the after effects of hepatitis and that he was subject to fainting turns for which no organic basis could be found. Despite the existence of those conditions,

the boy, on the result in the first instance of an examination of his eyes and nothing else, was found to be acceptable for military service. Indeed, I might mention that today he is in a very serious condition in one of the Sydney metropolitan hospitals. At the original medical examination, he merely had his eyes tested. Had he not sought the advice and assistance of a member of Parliament he could well have been foot slogging around an Army camp today. One can well imagine the consequences of such physical exertion on a sick lad. I say to the Minister and to the Department that if this is the system of examination conducted by medical practitioners under the provisions of the National Service Act, it is far too lax and it has to be tightened up. I raise this case to indicate to the Parliament and to Government supporters in particular how young fellows can be victimised by the lottery luck that prevails under this Government's balloting system.

Senator WRIGHT (Tasmania—Minister for Works) [11.14]—I was told of the case referred to by Senator McClelland only 3 or 4 minutes before Mr President formally put the question that the Senate do now adjourn. It follows that I have not been able to inform myself, either partly or completely, on the matter. The honourable senator can be assured that the file will be considered and that when it is fully examined a statement will be made as to the justification or otherwise of his remarks.

Referring now to Senator O'Byrne's contribution to this debate, all I would like to say is that one feels very great sympathy for a mother in those circumstances. Her anguish is quite understandable. But let us all recall that here within the Parliament we have passed measures which require compulsory service. Those measures have been considered by the representatives of the people, and have been passed by representatives freely elected by a majority of the people of Australia. While ever there is an obligation evenly imposed upon a section of our manhood to serve in the defence of this country, in my submission it is a mistaken view of the function of a member of parliament to over dramatise or over emphasise an individual's emotions and thereby forget that the burden falls on others to serve in places where particular indivi-

duals fail to serve. That is all I wish to say and I hope I say it with complete understanding of how particular circumstances of anguish actuate a mother to write a letter such as the honourable senator read to us.

Senator SCOTT (Western Australia—Minister for Customs and Excise) [11.17]—Mr President, the Minister for the Interior (Mr Nixon) has supplied the following advise on questions raised by Senator Cant about the arrest of the oil rig tender 'Missouri'. The arrest, which was made on a writ and warrant issued by the Registrar of the High Court through the Crown Law Officer, Darwin, on behalf of Weco Shipping, was, as I stated in the Senate on 18th March, on the ground of damage to another vessel in Western Australian waters. The rig at Lacrosse No. 1 well is located on permit area PE 127H, a Western Australian off-shore oil permit issued by the Designated Authority for that State to Alliance Oil Development NL. It it understood that the operating company is Arco Ltd.

Although I understand that the operating company is working out of Darwin, the honourable senator's other questions relate to the responsibilities of the Designated Authority for Western Australia and of the company. It will be of interest to the honourable senator to know that among the directions which Designated Authorities issue to permittees on behalf of the Commonwealth Departments are directions relating to the marine precautions to be observed. A copy of these directions will be provided to the honourable senator.

Senator CANT (Western Australia) [11.18]—I thank the Minister for the information he has provided. I was not quite sure about which adjacent area the rig was working. I am now informed that it was in Western Australian waters. Mr President, tomorrow I propose to test the ministerial responsibility under the Commonwealth Act to ask the questions of the Minister for National Development (Mr Fairbairn).

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Senate adjourned at 11.19 p.m.