

Mr SMITH (Braddon) - Mr Speaker, I rise to support the motion and in doing so I, too, would like to express my loyalty to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and to the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Guy Green.

I am new in this House and I am new at this occupation. For the last several sittings I have had very little to do except stare at the opposition faces, because that is the view from the chair in which I sit. It is amazing to see the smiles on their faces. As a matter of fact, the member for Braddon fell off his seat laughing the other night and I thought I had missed the joke. I thought maybe it was because its members have had the weight of government taken off their shoulders, but I do not think it was that. They were laughing, of course, because of the fact that they are sitting there at all. I wondered how many of them would have been there after a single electorate election. The people of Tasmania are not laughing of course and the Opposition will not be laughing when the winds of change blow through this House and through the rest of Tasmania, and the extent of the creeping socialism, the mismanagement we have had in this State for many years, becomes known to the people of Tasmania. The truth will come out, as come out it must.

I would like to draw the House's attention to some of the things - and there are only a few; I could go on with a whole litany of course - that have helped to destroy private industry and business in this State. In doing so, I would like to refer by way of explanation to some of the businesses with which I have been connected.

We have heard that our deficit is \$40 million. That is bad enough but that is not the greatest achievement of the Opposition. Its greatest achievement has been to destroy the initiative of the people of this State. Fortunately it was not completely successful. The people decided they would cut out this cancer, knowing that it would cause some pain but that it would be the pain of getting well again, and I think people can stand that sort of pain. It is not the pain of knowing there is no end to the disease.

I will briefly mention a few of the things that are holding companies, individuals and industry back in this State. The Long Service Leave (Casual Employment) Act was brought in by the previous Government and amended over a period of about 10 years until its name changed to the Long Service Leave (Construction Industry) Act. I do not know whether the members of the Opposition realise what that did to various industries in this State.

I will take the case of an electrical contractor, and I have been speaking to one quite recently. An electrical contractor selling television sets and washing machines across the counter might be fortunate enough in the present-day climate to sell one. If he did, the housewife might ask him to put in a power point. He would send his electrician to install the appliance and put in the power point and when he had done so the electrician would return to the shop and might go on repairing washing machines or doing something on the bench. The proprietor of that business is supposed to keep a record of the time that man spent travelling to do the job, installing the power point and arriving back again. If he has a storeman he is also supposed to keep a record of how long that storeman handled the equipment that was required to be sent out to the housewife.

He can opt for one of two methods. He can send a cheque to the trust fund every so often, or he can keep a total of the times that happened until that man leaves his employment - if he does leave his employ. The amount that is supposed to be sent down is 2 per cent of the man's wages. That cost is bad enough, but the cost and the problems of keeping the records is beyond many small businesses. Now we have an inspector or inspectors - I am not sure how many there are - enforcing this act.

I believe this act was brought in to try to give long service leave provisions to casual employees in the building industry but it has now spread out its tentacles. People like the electrician I am quoting already provide long service leave for their employees, and they have to do it again. It has got out of hand. That act needs looking at and I hope this Government will do that. It needs tearing up; I think it is beyond any further amendment.

I will mention the transport industry. Besides the area permits everyone is supposed to get - and they are bad enough - there are other permits in the transport industry. If a firm has a mobile crane with a capacity of more than 15 tonnes it will be overweight on one or more axles. Those units of machinery are very expensive and before any firm will buy one it must add up its pros and cons. It will do a costing to see if it can afford to hire out the crane. It will try to estimate how many hours' hire it will get. But when the crane gets here the owner finds that he has to have a permit to operate it on the road. If a permit can be given, I suppose it can be taken away and, with that in mind, who would spend \$300 000 or \$400 000 on an item of machinery that he may or may not be able to take on the road?

The permits of course do not cost anything. One goes along to the Department of Main Roads or the Transport Department and gets a permit. But the permits take time and, if operators have to operate on a daily permit as some do, they have to go to the Transport Department or the Department of Main Roads, obtain their daily permit and carry it in the crane before it leaves their works to go somewhere. If they do not they can be pulled up on the road and booked for not carrying the permit. What good does the permit do? It does nothing.

If the machine is overweight, overdimension, or whatever, the operator can be informed at the time of registration that he is restricted from going over this or that bridge, or is not allowed on this or that road, and that would be the end of it. There is no necessity for people to be running around the countryside getting permits before they can go from A to B. Take the case where a crane operator has to do a concrete pour and on the day, with his permit in his hand, it rains. So he cannot do the concrete pour and has to arrange other business for the crane; but before he can do it he has to send somebody off to obtain another permit. In my neck of the woods in Braddon, we had to go to Ulverstone to get the permit from Somerset. It involved many hours of travelling and sending people up and down the road just to get a piece of paper. It was absolutely useless; the paper did nothing.

I could go on and point out a whole litany of things, but I am afraid it would only take the House's time unnecessarily. Of course we are told all sorts of reasons Tasmania is not doing as well as it could. The Opposition would have it that it is the Federal Government's fault. Other people have come up with other reasons. We are told we do not have enough people in this State. If we do not have sufficient people in Tasmania to survive economically, how did King and Flinders islands survive at all and what happens to Bruny Island - there should not be anyone on it at all. If all the State needs is simply an increased population we could look at countries like China, which has the greatest population in the world and cannot even feed its people. It relies on the West for its supplies of food. So our problem is not simply a lack of people. Some people have said it is because we have no oil and gas, and I guess we only have to look at Japan and see what it has. Japan has nothing over there of course, but it has the greatest economy in the world.

So we must ask ourselves why are we the worst off in Australia - and we are the worst off. We have more unemployment, less industry, a higher deficit per capita and a lower income per capita than anywhere else in Australia. We do need help from the Federal Government, and will need help for many years yet. We are like this because we have no healthy, vibrant private sector.

We used to laugh at the natives in New Guinea - and I think I have heard the member for Denison talk about this before - when they used to wait for an aeroplane to fly over and drop goodies out, and it was called the cargo cult. The Government that was has been leading the people of this State down that road. They have become used to asking the Government, whether it is this Government, the Federal Government, local government, or anyone in fact, for the money to do things. We all know that anything the Government does - any government - will be more expensive, it will take longer and when it is finished it will probably not be what we wanted in the first place anyway. But that is the history of governments. It will take time to change that attitude and this Government is setting about doing it. Private enterprise means people want to be left to use their own initiative; they want the Government to get out of their hair and let them get on with it.

Let me tell members another couple of reasons for our oft-quoted demise. We are told that because we live on an island surrounded by water we must be worse off than anywhere else. How do we then look at England, which has been surrounded by water since there has been an England and which rose to be the greatest nation this earth has ever seen? Sure, it has gone into decline; they changed the government and started on the socialist road and down it has gone. Let us look at one that has not gone on that road, Japan. It is still a democracy and a free enterprise society and it is still on the up and up - and surrounded by water.

Why are we so badly off? It is because we have come to rely on a government - the Federal Government in fact - to supply our shipping services for the majority of shipping in and out of this State. In northern Tasmania we do not have any option; ANL does all our shipping for us. Bass Strait is now the most expensive stretch of water in the world. I recently shipped some goods out from Hamburg in Germany which had to come via Victoria. The freight bill from Hamburg to Victoria was \$450; the freight bill from Victoria to Northern Tasmania was \$800. Mr Speaker, if you would like to do some mathematics and work out how many miles it is from Hamburg to Victoria, and multiply that by what it costs per mile and have a look at Bass Strait, it is nearly 100 times dearer to ship stuff across Bass Strait! We could perhaps understand being twice as dear because we are a smaller economy. We could probably understand being 10 times as dear because the ships are making more ports of call, but 100 times? What is the excuse for that? All I can say is thank God for freight equalisation. Without it, this State would be like Dr Sanders would have it - a national park we could fly over in three minutes in a commercial airliner.

There is an answer to our problem of Bass Strait. There is a booklet called 'The Uniform Shipping Code'. This booklet was compiled by the States and the Commonwealth and it has been put together by experts in their own field. That booklet tells how one can build a ship, operate a ship, what sort of qualifications one needs on that ship and so on and so forth. It is a pity it does not apply yet but I am hoping that one of these days it will because, if it did, we would not have had the situation of this State buying a ship in New South Wales, getting it here and finding it did not pass survey. The uniform shipping code would have ensured that it has been surveyed under the same standards. That booklet is a good piece of work but, as I say, unfortunately the Commonwealth has not yet agreed to all of it, and I do not know whether this State has in fact agreed to all of it yet either. The other States have agreed to other bits and pieces of it and I do not know whether anyone knows who has agreed to what, but it is a very good code.

Our company brought a ship out to Tasmania six or seven years ago - in fact the member for Denison, Dr Sanders, interviewed me at that time when he was representing a useful organisation - and we have been trying to get it across Bass Strait ever since. Of course if this ship were registered in Tasmania it could sail to Hogan Island, only a few miles off the Victorian coast, but because it had to cross this magical line we came under Commonwealth Department of Transport regulations.

We sailed this little ship around Tasmanian waters and over to Victoria with cattle and things from the islands for four or five years and we had a crew of seven. There was no joy in that for us; we were going broke so we decided we would put it on to a service across Bass Strait. Immediately we made that decision the roof fell in. We already had a Commonwealth certificate; the ship was registered; it had a licence to sail anywhere around Australia but because we wanted to go across Bass Strait we actually upset our competition. The competition - ANL - became so upset it went out of its way to put that ship out of business.

The Marine Board of Devonport owns two fork-lift trucks and leases them to ANL. The arrangement has always been that, if another ship is in port, one or perhaps both of those trucks are leased back to the Marine Board to allow the other ship operator to use them. When the 'Roger Rougier' went in to Devonport to unload its cargo, ANL would not release the fork-lift trucks from its yard although there was no ship in its port and it had no use for either of them. Maybe it could have used one to unload, receive and deliver cargo - I do not know - but it could not have used two. When the Marine Board

official questioned ANL about why it would not release this fork-lift truck its representative said he had instructions not to give the 'Roger Rougier' any co-operation or assistance whatsoever.

ANL even took that through to the maritime unions and I found myself sitting down at a manning committee to decide how many men were needed to operate the 'Roger Rougier' - and remember I already had seven; the uniform shipping code said I needed five. After three days of negotiation in a manning committee which comprised five maritime unions, an independent chairman from the Department of Transport and myself - feeling slightly outnumbered - we had nine men. I pointed out to that committee that these other fellows would be on board and would have to share a cabin and we would have to have two-berth cabins. I was told that was no problem.

It was not a problem at the manning committee; it was a problem of the accommodation committee - which I did not even know about at the time. But after I had done one trip the accommodation committee sent me a telex saying that my accommodation was not approved. So I contacted the chairman - the same chairman from the Department of Transport - and asked who the accommodation committee was and what this non-approval meant. He told me we did not have approval and that we were not allowed to sail that ship again until we presented some new ideas to the accommodation committee.

I asked who the accommodation committee was. It was the same five unions, the same chairman and, you have guessed it, ANL, BHP and a few others I cannot remember. I did not get a voice on that committee. I was not even allowed to front. So it decided that my ship would stay out of business for three months. It did not decide the three months part, it thought it would be longer than that. It decided that ship was to stay out of business until we rebuilt the accommodation on it. This happened in December and I think the thought was that we would not get going again for several months and that by that time we would not be in anyone's hair anyway. In fact we were going in three months and again we upset people by getting going so quickly. In fact the Seamen's Union then decided, when we were ready to sail again, that we needed another man and we had to tie the ship up for a day to argue about that. It was full of frozen cargo with a frozen cargo sitting in Victoria waiting for it, so we had to put another man on. The accommodation committee has not come back to me since - perhaps it will after this speech.

Tasmania needs ships of its own with Tasmanian crews, run by private enterprise and not by government. Then we will see Bass Strait become an advantage to this State and not a disadvantage as it is at the moment. The disadvantage has been going on so long that if it is not soon reversed there will not be enough people in this State even to build a ship.

The private sector wants the Government to get out of its hair and let it get on with the job. This Government will help private industry do that - I am proud to be a member of this Government because I will see that we do get out of private industry's hair. I am going to do my bit to see that we get some private shipping across Bass Strait and then perhaps we will be able to transport across Bass Strait the goods the people of this State want carried across, at a reasonable price and when they want it carried.

We will not have any more situations such as happened on the north-west coast a few months ago, when a person had all the onions in the world and no containers to ship them. Private enterprise will fix that. Politics fixed the onions, because ANL got stirred up and the containers were eventually found when it was given a good needle about it. But private enterprise would not need that.

Mr Speaker, I support the motion.