

## 128 RAILWAY NATIONALISATION

There are certain things which a State alone can do; individual effort is either incapable or unwilling to attempt them. The dispensation of justice, the maintenance of law and order, are examples which may be multiplied many times over, and usually education is included. These things may be called primary state functions.

Some States have more capacity than others; and, as a general rule, the greater the growth of the country, the greater the capacity of the State, but—and this must be remembered—there is also a corresponding growth in the number and complexity of its primary functions. Therefore, the State seldom catches up with its necessary work, seldom has time—and, may I say, surplus ability?—expendable in doing things which individual or group energy can do as well, and better. Many imposing obsequies have been performed over State socialistic ventures, because the men who planned them neglected to recognise this fundamental truth.

There is nothing abstruse about this reasoning; it is merely common sense. The experience of Australia bears it out, as was to be expected, and