

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 25 OCTOBER 1966

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Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. D. E. Nicholson, Murrumba) read prayers and took the chair at 11 a.m.

QUESTIONS

BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL SUBDIVISION USE
AND DEVELOPMENT OF LAND COMMISSION

Mr. Coburn for **Mr. Aikens**, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) Is the tribunal under Mr. A. Bennett empowered to hear and determine complaints of discriminatory treatment of landholders, tenants and people generally by any Council in the State or is the inquiry confined to the operations of the Brisbane City Council?

(2) If not, will he make provision for the enlargement of the terms of reference or the appointment of another tribunal to hear and determine charges of discriminatory treatment by other Councils, particularly the Townsville City Council, and, if not, why not?

Answers:—

(1) "No. The inquiry is specifically confined to the Brisbane City Council. The Order in Council embodying the terms of reference was published in the *Government Gazette* of Monday, October 3, 1966, should the Honourable Member desire to read it in detail."

(2) "No."

SCHOOL DENTAL SERVICE

Mr. Davies for **Mr. Bromley**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

(1) How many children have been treated by the school dental service in the years 1964-65 and 1965-66 and in what age groups?

(2) What treatment is provided and what is the collated number of each type of treatment?

(3) How many (a) dentists, (b) technicians, (c) dental nurses and (d) other staff are employed in the service?

Answers:—

(1) "Children treated 1964-65, 12,065. Children treated 1965-66, 11,256. Children between the ages of five and thirteen at primary schools and Correspondence children at the primary school level are treated."

(2) "Types of treatment provided are:— (a) Fillings (except where root treatments are required), (b) Extractions, (c) Prophylactic care. Lectures on dental health, particularly in relation to prevention of dental diseases are part of the service. The collated numbers of each type of treatment are:—Fillings, 36,814; Extractions—Permanent teeth, 1,113; Temporary teeth, 9,479; Other treatments, 45,374."

(3) "The following staff is employed:— (a) Establishment of 20 dentists includes 3 vacancies; (b) Technicians nil; (c) Dental nurses nil; (d) Three handymen attached to the rail dental clinics."

USE OF DATA PROCESSING EQUIPMENT IN RAILWAY DEPARTMENT

Mr. R. Jones, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

(1) What is the number of computers or similar equipment now in use in the preparation of returns, pay rolls and other clerical work in the Railway Department?

(2) On what dates were the machines installed?

(3) What effect, if any, has such equipment had on employment within the clerical or other sections of the Department?

Answers:—

(1) "Two."

(2) "February, 1965, and May, 1965."

(3) "The introduction of this equipment has permitted the carrying out of work which otherwise would have required additional staff."

STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE INVESTMENT BOARD

Mr. Hanlon, pursuant to notice, asked The Treasurer,—

(1) What are the names and addresses of the three persons from outside the State Public Service who are currently members of the State Government Insurance Office Investment Board?

(2) Who are the chairman, deputy chairman and secretary of the board?

Answers:—

(1) "James Henry Lalor, Solicitor, care of Thynne and Macartney, M.L.C. Building, Adelaide Street, Brisbane. Walter Raymond Hartland, Chartered Accountant, 74 Eagle Street, Brisbane. Leslie Wilson Dixon, Retired Banker, of 235 Rode Road, Wavell Heights."

(2) "Mr. Lalor is chairman of the Board. There is no deputy chairman. Mr. H. V. Parker, Investment Manager, State Government Insurance Office, performs the duties of Secretary of the Board."

TENDER FOR NEW AMBULANCE HEADQUARTERS, TOWNSVILLE

Mr. Tucker, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

In view of the building demand in Townsville and the likelihood of a further rise in building costs, has the tender price for the new ambulance headquarters at Townsville yet received consideration by the appropriate authority?

Answer:—

"On November 9, 1965, the Townsville Centre of the Q.A.T.B. was given approval to accept the lowest tender received, that of K. D. Morris & Sons, for the construction of the new Ambulance building at Townsville. Due to the inability of the Committee to make satisfactory arrangements regarding finance to cover the total cost of construction, the project was deferred. On the 6th instant, my Department received advice that arrangements regarding finance had been finalised and the Ambulance Committee had accepted an adjusted tender price submitted by K. D. Morris & Sons. The tender documents have been reviewed by the Department of Works, and I have now given approval of the action taken by the Townsville Ambulance Committee in accepting the amended tender."

FREEHOLDING APPLICATIONS, GOLD COAST AREA

Mr. Ramsden for Mr. Hinze, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Lands,—

(1) How many Crown leasehold properties are there on the Gold Coast in the South Coast Electorate?

(2) How many applications have been lodged by leaseholders intending to freehold their properties?

(3) What is the period of delay that could be expected by an applicant intending to freehold?

Answers:—

(1) "1,633."

(2) "840."

(3) "Allowing for processing, the making of an inspection by a valuer and the making of the Minister's determination of value, applicants might expect that, on the average, a period of six months would be involved before the advice of Departmental valuation would be communicated to them. I mention that matters involving freeholding applications are given priority within the Department."

LAND TAX REVENUE, GOLD COAST AREA

Mr. Ramsden for Mr. Hinze, pursuant to notice, asked The Treasurer,—

What were the amounts of revenue from land tax derived from the Gold Coast in the South Coast Electorate for each of the years ended June 30, 1964, 1965 and 1966?

Answer:—

"The Land Tax Department does not keep records of the amount of Land Tax collected in each electorate. Hence the information sought is not available."

PAPERS

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

Reports—

Department of Harbours and Marine for the year 1965-66.

Land Administration Commission, including Reports of the Acting Surveyor-General, Superintendent of Stock Routes and Rural Fires Board.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

The Southern Electric Authority of Queensland Acts, 1952 to 1964.

The State Electricity Commission Acts, 1937 to 1965.

The Irrigation Acts, 1922 to 1965.

The Water Acts, 1926 to 1964.

Regulation under The Irrigation Acts, 1922 to 1965.

SUPPLY

COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT—
RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Hooper, Greenslopes, in the chair)

Debate resumed from 20 October (see p. 1052) on Mr. Chalk's motion—

"That there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1966-67, a sum not exceeding \$3,700 to defray the salary of Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor."

on which Mr. Houston had moved the following amendment:—

"That the Item 'Aide-de-Camp, \$3,700' be reduced by \$2."

Mr. THACKERAY (Rockhampton North) (11.14 a.m.): Before supporting the amendment, I place on record my sincere thanks and gratitude to the hon. member for Toowoomba West for all the assistance and courtesy he has extended to me while I have been with him in this Assembly. I also record my congratulations to our new Leader and our new Deputy Leader, and to the new member of our executive.

This morning I shall deal with railway matters, because so important a subject should be dealt with in this debate. Never in the nine years that I have been here has the Commissioner for Railways been so late in presenting his Annual Report.

I was waiting this morning for the Minister for Transport to table the Commissioner's report for the year 1965-66. Last week the State executive of the Australian Federated Union of Locomotive Enginemen brought forward its meeting to discuss possible redundancies in the department, and this week the State conference of the Australian Railway Union will be held at which matters of policy will be formulated.

My main interest in the Railway Department is the future of the workshops at Rockhampton. Today, railwaymen in Rockhampton are wondering whether they will get turkey or the axe for Christmas. The Minister for Transport and the Commissioner for Railways have refused to give the Combined Railway Unions a blueprint of the future requirements of the Railway Department in Queensland. The Rockhampton workshops employ 900 men, whose pay packets total approximately \$70,000 a fortnight. The workshops are the greatest employer of labour in Central Queensland, and, as the money paid to those who work there plays a large part in the commerce of Rockhampton, many business people in that city are very worried about the future of the workshops. Are they to be closed? I know that this is of particular interest to the Rockhampton and District Regional Promotion Bureau, the Chamber of Commerce, and all the other bodies who are seeking new industries for Central Queensland. Recently another meatworks, employing about 400 men, opened, and there have also been established flour mills and other small industries that add to the prosperity of Rockhampton and Central Queensland. However, the railway workshops are still the greatest industry in Rockhampton.

What will be the future of the Rockhampton workshops when only diesel-electric locomotives are being used in Queensland? The Ford, Bacon and Davis Report, and an article in "The Courier-Mail" of 30 July, 1966, stated that servicing of diesel-electric locomotives will take place at the Redbank workshops every four years, or after 400,000 miles of running. During the last fortnight the Minister for Transport made a statement concerning complete dieselisation by 1971. When overhauling is being carried out at the Redbank workshops, what is to be the position in Central Queensland? What is the Government's policy on decentralisation? Is it that all of this work is to be done in the Southern Division, to the detriment of Central and Northern Queensland? What is the future of all the tradesmen who have given years of faithful service to the Railway Department? Will they be asked to take appointments at

Redbank? Will the Government give them financial assistance in selling their homes on a deflated market in Rockhampton and buying other homes on an inflated market at Ipswich or Redbank? These are problems facing railwaymen in Rockhampton.

How many of these men will be retrenched, and from what branches will they come? About four years ago we had the example of men being dismissed on the day on which they came out of their time and became tradesmen. Something similar could happen in the Rockhampton workshops, and it may happen about Christmas-time this year. There are already over 200 diesel-electric locomotives in Queensland, and the amount of maintenance work done on steam locomotives in Rockhampton is decreasing gradually. In the running section, for example, tradesmen and semi-skilled tradesmen have barely sufficient work to keep them fully employed.

Mr. Bennett: They will have to reduce the working week in the railways to 35 hours.

Mr. THACKERAY: That is one of the questions that the Government will have to consider. A 35-hour week might assist the the Railway Department to overcome some of the problems that railwaymen now face.

The Rockhampton workshops are not getting a fair go, in my opinion, compared with workshops in the Southern Division. A number of items now manufactured in the South could be manufactured in the Rockhampton workshops, which in the last few years have had the latest machinery installed in them. What will happen to that machinery? Will it be put in mothballs, as, for example, ships are put in mothballs after a war, or will it be used to keep the employees of the Central Division of the Railway Department employed? The future of the Rockhampton railway workshops must be considered very seriously, and, if necessary, it should be allowed to enter the field of contracting for and building machinery for private industry. The men and machinery are available; they could well be used for this purpose.

The situation in which apprentices are placed needs careful consideration, too. In 1969, about 109 apprentices will complete their time, and, with the present numbers on the staff and the number of apprentices coming out of their time between now and 1969, there will not be vacancies for them on the staff of the railway workshops. The apprentices who come out of their time in 1969 will be redundant in Rockhampton.

The union has asked the Commissioner over quite a long period of time to indenture lads as apprentices. Other employers also have been asked to take similar action. I do not say that what has been done is wrong, because I think it is better for a lad to be a qualified tradesman even if he has to leave the industry in which he was apprenticed after serving his time. The union

appreciates what the Commissioner has done in this respect, but there is really no continuity of employment in the Railway Department at present.

If one looks at the running section, for example, it is obvious that there will be redundancies when the Gladstone-Moura rail link is completed. About 15 sets to Mount Morgan will become redundant. It has happened at other depots; it could happen at Rockhampton. In the Central Division, the depot at Mount Morgan might well be taken as an example.

The A.R.U. and the A.F.U.L.E., which are constituent bodies of the Combined Railway Unions, held a meeting relative to redundancy and, so that it will be on record, I shall quote a letter dated 17 October that was forwarded to the sub-branch secretary of the A.R.U. at Gladstone. It reads—

"The following motions were taken from Minutes of the Combined Meeting of Rockhampton A.R.U. and A.F.U.L.E. Enginemen, held yesterday (16th) to discuss the Commissioner's proposal of closing depots and demoting trainmen:—

'That the Commissioner be advised that we do not propose to accept a policy of demotion. We consider that the present policy of regression is sufficient until such time as normal wastage of staff and possible traffic increase resolves the position throughout the State. If the Commissioner will not accept these terms the State Councils of the Unions search for other methods to combat demotion even if these methods contravene existing state policies on depot boundaries and if it is found necessary the Unions be asked to conduct a State-wide ballot on a strike of an indeterminate period.'

In the running section in Rockhampton 15 to 20 drivers have been reduced to firemen and the same number of firemen reduced to cleaners, although they have been paid their classification rates. The Commissioner has no authority to reduce a driver's rate to that of a fireman and his only alternative is to dismiss him. It is not difficult to forecast what will happen in the Railway Department in Rockhampton, because the men there will not take a reduction in their rates of pay.

A similar position exists in other sections of the department in the Central Division, particularly the clerical and the goods-shed sections in Rockhampton. Their position will be accentuated when the Australian National Line begins shipping operations to Port Alma and using container units. With the increase in railway freight rates, the result will be that a number of railway employees in the clerical and goods shed sections will become redundant in the near future. The Railway Department must look at these problems and face them. It must decide whether it is to compete against the steamship line in containerisation or whether it

will simply continue on as it has been doing, not meeting other forms of transport on a competitive basis.

Those are the things that are worrying railway employees at Rockhampton, and, if I may say so, also at Gladstone. My colleague the hon. member for Port Curtis realises that there will be a transfer of men between Gladstone and Rockhampton, because the major proportion of diesel running repairs relating to the Gladstone-Moura line will be effected at Gladstone. Therefore, there will be further redundancies in the diesel section at Rockhampton.

I think the Commissioner should inform the unions exactly what the requirements of the Railway Department will be. Since this Government came to power there has been a staff wastage in the Railway Department of approximately 5,000, and the Government has not been prepared to make any move to overcome the problems the unions have brought to its notice.

One of the matters that irritates unions today is the action taken by the Government in regard to railway employees' service leave. As hon. members know, service leave was previously enjoyed by railwaymen after they had served eight years in the department. They were given one day's extra leave a year with a maximum of one week, so that after 15 years' service they had an extra week's leave. When all railway employees were granted three weeks' leave, however, that concession was discontinued. It should now be restored to them. Both the Minister for Transport and the Commissioner for Railways have said that the department cannot afford it, but they can afford to give over \$1,200,000 in freight concessions to Mount Isa Mines Ltd., which, incidentally, made an excessive profit last year.

Mr. Chalk: We put up their freight rates more than you fellows did.

Mr. THACKERAY: You still give them a concession. We used to know exactly what their freight rates were, but when the Treasurer was Minister for Transport, the Commissioner dropped that schedule from the back of the report.

Mr. Chalk: Because you fellows were giving it to the road transport operators.

Mr. THACKERAY: Here we have the Treasurer defending Mount Isa Mines Ltd.; he is defending the big combines. All we are asking for is the restoration of the service leave that he took from railway employees. I still regard him as Minister for Transport because I realise that he wields the big stick. The only thing is that he is not collecting two ministerial salaries. It is obvious to everyone that his protégé is very slow in catching on.

Mr. Tucker: His junior accountant.

Mr. THACKERAY: Yes.

I will get back to a serious note. The restoration of service leave is necessary. Railway employees should have a 35-hour week. The Railway Department should provide door-to-door deliveries. It should use the containerisation system and give a better service. Some of the delivery times are shocking. A northern member will be touching on railway matters today, so I will not say too much about them; I do not want to steal his thunder.

Rockhampton should have a railway booking office in East Street. There should be an office of the Railway Department in the Rockhampton branch of the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau.

I could find nothing in the Estimates about a new railway station for Rockhampton this year. I am looking forward to learning what amount will be spent on it this year. When the Treasurer was Minister for Transport he quickly got people out of their homes without making them a fair settlement. After they vacated their homes he sublet the houses. If it was not a political stunt, why did he force these people out of their homes? Why did he not say, "We are going to build a new railway station in the year 2000 —"

Mr. Chalk: Your fellows laid the foundation stone in 1914.

Mr. THACKERAY: This Government has still not started on the new railway station.

For once I had to agree with the hon. member for Rockhampton South when he spoke about the necessity for an air-conditioned mail train for Rockhampton. I do not travel much on the Rockhampton Mail, but the hon. member for Port Curtis has described it as like being in Disneyland.

Mr. Chalk interjected.

Mr. THACKERAY: I thought the hon. gentleman was Walt Disney. As the hon. member for Port Curtis has said, the fellows who are arrested every Saturday night in Gladstone have better accommodation in the watch-house than is provided in the first-class compartments of the Rockhampton Mail. Some of them are so narrow that a passenger has to be like a crab and move into them sideways. When the hon. member for Port Curtis and I are in a compartment together we cannot move. No amenities are provided for passengers. There are no power-points on the train, and anyone who wants to shave has to use cold water. If a good air-conditioned service was provided, many people would use it. I urge the department to provide such a service.

I turn now to amateur fishermen, for whom I have a soft spot. I should like to quote from a letter I have received, because there are many people in Queensland who read "Hansard" and who are unaware of the latest rules governing amateur fishermen

and their licences. I received this letter from the Department of Harbours and Marine, dated 28 September, 1966—

“Dear Sir,

“With reference to information requested by you I have to inform you that the clauses referring to fishing licences which was approved by Cabinet on the 21st December, 1965, are as follows:—

(a) that, with effect from the 1st January, 1966, no net fishermen's licences be issued to persons other than to holders of net fishermen's licences as at 31st December, 1965;

(b) that licensees who renew their net fishermen's licences at 1st January, 1966, be advised that these will not be renewed after the 31st December, 1967;

(c) that, with effect from 1st January, 1967, no master fishermen's licences be issued to professional net fishermen who are unable to show that they derived an income of £500 or more from the fishing during the previous year or that they are new and properly equipped entries into the industry; and

(d) that no financial restriction be placed upon the issue of master fishermen's licences to line-only fishermen.

“Also please find enclosed copy of regulations relating to nets allowed to be used by the holder of a net fishermen's licence.”

This is very important; they are set out as follows:—

“The holder of a net fisherman's license may use any of the following nets—

(i) For the taking of all marine fish excepting dugong, turtle, whiting, garfish, and prawns in all Queensland tidal waters, a general purposes net not exceeding 50 fathoms in length, two-thirds of which shall be of a mesh not less than 3 inches and the balance of not less than 2½ inches.

(ii) For the taking of whiting in all Queensland tidal waters, a net not exceeding 33 fathoms in length and of a mesh of not less than 2 inches.

(iii) For the taking of garfish and herrings in all Queensland waters, a net not exceeding 33 fathoms in length and of a mesh of not less than 1½ inches.

(iv) For the taking of prawns in all Queensland tidal waters—

(a) A Push net not exceeding 10 feet in depth and 10 feet at the greatest spread, with mesh of not less than 1 inch.

(b) A small beam trawl, that portion of the net attached to each beam to be not more than 5 feet, with a mesh of not less than 1 inch.

Provided that this small beam trawl may not be used in the waters of Lake Weyba or Lake Doonella, or

within one mile of low water mark on the nearest foreshore within the waters of Moreton Bay.

(v) For the taking of prawns in all Queensland tidal waters north of the southern limits of the port of Mackay—a net not exceeding 33 yards in length and of a mesh of not less than 1½ inches.

“A net Fisherman's Licence is deemed to cover also the wife of the licensee and his children and other dependants under sixteen (16) years of age.”

This Government declared to the people of Queensland that they would have a Bill of Rights. When Government members were on the hustings they proclaimed that the proposed Bill of Rights would protect the people so that outside pressure groups would not take away the freedoms that they would enjoy under the Country-Liberal Government. Yet the Government is taking away the rights of the amateur fishermen to go out at week-ends with a net. I am sure that sharks destroy more fish in a day than amateur fishermen catch during a week-end, yet after 1967 no amateur fisherman will be allowed to use a net in Queensland. Even licences issued prior to 1965 will operate only until December, 1967.

A person who has purchased a nylon net, and ropes and corks it, at a total cost of nothing under \$60, will be allowed to use it for only the next 14 months because of this Government's policy. People are barred from taking out licences this year and those who took them out prior to December, 1965, were told that the licences had only two years to run. Nets, particularly nylon nets made from kuralon rope, do not rot in two years. They will last anything up to 15 years if they are looked after, washed, dried, and bagged. Yet the sports stores are selling nets to people who are not aware of this regulation. No restrictions are placed by them in the sale of nets.

It is about time the Government revoked this silly law concerning amateur fishermen. There are many amateur fishermen in Rockhampton. I was vice-president of the Part-time Amateur Fishermen's Club, which has broken up because of the laws introduced by this Government. The Government should force sports stores to display notices to the effect that they cannot sell netting unless the purchaser produces a current licence, and that the purchaser will be allowed to use the net for only 14 months and that it will then have to be destroyed, because that is what will happen if an inspector catches anybody with a net after December, 1967.

Mr. Coburn: Why don't you get your local newspaper to publish this?

Mr. THACKERAY: If the newspaper published it, all well and good. But how many people in Rockhampton know of this law? A push net for taking prawns can be 10 feet wide at its greatest width. I defy

anybody to push a 10-ft. wide net in mangroves. And where are the garfish in Central Queensland? If a person wants to get some prawns to go fishing on the reef he gets around with a small-beam trawl and scoops the prawns out. Yet the professional fishermen can go outside Yeppoon every day with large trawls and scoop out all the prawns and kill thousands of small fish every day, and nothing is said about that.

The Government is taking away the amateur fisherman's sport. The way things are going, the Government will next legislate on how many times people can go to the toilet, what they can eat, and whether they will use butter or margarine. This Government is taking all the freedoms away from the people of Queensland, particularly amateur fishermen. As the hon. member for Port Curtis has just prompted me, the Government might even try selling fresh air. I register a protest on behalf of amateur fishermen. There are many of them in Queensland, and the Government derives a considerable amount of revenue from them.

Whilst the hon. member for Rockhampton South is in the Chamber, I desire to raise a matter relating to the Rockhampton City Council. I think it comes within the jurisdiction of the council, not the harbour board. In 1955 the new bridge over the Fitzroy River in Rockhampton was opened, and this was followed by the demolition of the old bridge. Today piles from this bridge are still standing two feet under the surface at low-water, and they are a danger to navigation. The wharves are the boundary of the harbour board's jurisdiction, so that this matter is one for the Rockhampton City Council.

Recently a friend of mine, who is a well-known and reputable man in Rockhampton, raised this matter with the Rockhampton City Council because, as he was proceeding up the river under the bridge in a 35-ft. deep-sea boat drawing approximately three feet, he struck one of the piles and tore the keel completely from his craft.

Mr. Pilbeam: Will the hon. member accept my assurance that those old piles are not in the channel, and that the person who crashed into the pile should have known better than anybody else that he should not have been where he was, outside the channel?

Mr. THACKERAY: Wait a minute; I knew the hon. member for Rockhampton South would "come in" on this. First of all, what happened to the contractor who was supposed to remove them? They were supposed to be demolished right to the bottom of the river, yet they are still there just below low-water mark. Where is the navigation line? That does not come under the administration of the harbour board; it is under the jurisdiction of the council and the hon. member for Rockhampton South.

At least the council should pay the cost of the timber needed to repair the boat, which it has refused to do.

Mr. Pilbeam: He has no claim at all. He was outside the channel, and he knew it better than anyone else would.

Mr. THACKERAY: He was drawing three feet of water. The hon. member for Rockhampton South knows very well the pylon to which I am referring.

Mr. Pilbeam: He didn't have a leg to stand on.

Mr. THACKERAY: I do not propose to dwell at length on this matter, because others are wishing to speak and this is the last day of the Budget debate. I ask the hon. member for Rockhampton South if he will put a buoy over the top of that pier to mark it.

Mr. Dewar: Will you volunteer?

Mr. THACKERAY: The Minister asked if I would be the "buoy". I say, "Who would be the 'buoy' in the boat?" Most likely it would be the Minister who interjected. I am asking that the Rockhampton City Council mark this pier by placing a buoy over it. If the Minister wants to go up there and be the "buoy" in the boat, that is fair enough.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Hodges): Order! There is far too much interjecting in the Chamber. I ask the hon. member for Rockhampton North to address the Chair.

Mr. THACKERAY: I thank you for your courteous correction, Mr. Hodges. I shall conclude my remarks on that note.

Mr. MILLER (Ithaca) (11.50 a.m.): I join with other hon. members on this side of the Chamber in congratulating the Treasurer on the Budget that he has brought down. I think that any fair-minded citizen will agree that, taking the drought into consideration, this is a go-ahead Budget, one that will keep the wheels of progress turning.

I shall take the opportunity offered by this debate of speaking on road safety and traffic, because I believe that we are not looking at the problem in the right way and that a more positive approach to it will have to be made.

If one looks at "The Courier-Mail" of 23 July, 1964, one sees this headline: "Worst road toll. Penalty to be tougher."; in "The Courier-Mail" of 8 December, 1964, "Road accidents cost Queensland £10,000,000"; in "The Courier-Mail" of 20 May, 1965, "Record number of road deaths in State last year"; in "The Courier-Mail" of 14 September, 1965, "Grim State road toll for year to June 30th"; and in "The Courier-Mail" of 25 July, 1966, "Queensland road deaths highest ever." How long can we allow this to continue? I pay a tribute to the newspapers, to radio and television stations, and to

magazine editors, for their approach to the problem and for bringing this grim road toll before the public.

Each year we read of the record number of people being killed or seriously injured on the roads, but we do not hear a public outcry about it. A few years ago two babies in Victoria died as a result of being smothered by plastic bags, and there was an immediate public outcry. I agree that the loss of two lives is terrible; but surely 375 deaths this year is a tragic state of affairs. In spite of that, there is no public outcry against it. I stress that the figures I have given are the known deaths and do not include the people who died within one month of an accident. I am confident that all hon. members will agree that it is an unnecessary waste of human life, not taking into account the people who are seriously injured to such an extent that they will be a burden on the Government and the State for the rest of their lives.

In some quarters, members of the public are inclined to ask, "What is the Government doing?" or to say, "The Government should be doing something about this." If one looks at the statistics, one sees that between 1957-58 and 1959-60 the Road Safety Council's budget of expenditure was only a financial grant from the Commonwealth Government; there was no State grant in that period. In 1960-61 the Country-Liberal Government granted \$18,256, and it has increased it progressively to \$67,500 for the current financial year.

Mr. Coburn: And the road toll has become worse.

Mr. MILLER: Yes. That is what concerns me.

Mr. Coburn: Our methods of correcting it are not right.

Mr. MILLER: I quite agree; but at least an attempt has been made for some time to correct it.

I make it clear that the grant from the Commonwealth Government has continued from 1957-58 till the present day. Since 1960-61 and up to the current financial year, this Government has contributed \$286,906 to assist in the work of the Queensland Road Safety Council.

At this stage I should like to say that I believe the Road Safety Council has done a splendid job in publicising the causes of accidents and how the position can be remedied, but the public will have to be educated in ways of overcoming this problem by some stronger method.

The principal causes of accidents, whether they result in death or injury, are excessive speed, intoxication, and failure to observe the right-of-way rule. It is significant to note that statistics for the year 1965-66, now being prepared in detail by the Government Statistician, reveal that in Queensland there were 29,885 accidents involving 475 deaths and

10,099 cases of serious injury in that year. Of the deaths mentioned, 125 were of intoxicated road users, not all of whom, of course, were drivers. But, the important point is that, for the year, alcohol was the highest single cause of death.

Last night's "Telegraph" reported the death of seven people as a result of drink driving, and, in addition, two youths were charged with driving under the influence. In one case it was stated that Edward James Walsh, 21, builder's labourer, who pleaded guilty to a drink-driving charge, was under licence suspension for the same offence at the time of his arrest.

Mr. Coburn: Why don't you confiscate their cars? That is the way to get them off the road.

Mr. MILLER: Walsh was fined \$110 with suspension of his licence for a further six months. This man should have lost his licence for a longer period, or perhaps been sent to gaol.

In certain countries in Europe—I think Sweden and Norway are two—and in some particular States in America, there is an immediate gaol penalty for drink driving. It is accepted practice in these countries that should a person be going to a party he makes sure that he has a driver who drinks lemonade. I am told it is not unusual for a group to take it in turns at being the driver. That is now an accepted way of life in those countries, and it is something that we could well emulate.

Last Saturday, in the Ashgrove area, a young lad rode past me on his motor-bike and I could quite clearly hear him tell his pillion-rider that his machine was capable of 75 miles an hour in third gear and that after they drove around the corner he would demonstrate its capabilities. Within two minutes, two motor-cars screamed down the road racing one another, one of them on the wrong side of the road. Had there been a vehicle approaching round the corner from the other direction a serious accident would have occurred. The road concerned was Waterworks Road, Ashgrove, which as most hon. members know carries a tramline and is one of the main roads in Ashgrove; yet we see people such as these deliberately breaking the law and being unconcerned about the consequences.

We read in the newspapers advertisements by car manufacturers of increases in the horse-power of their motor vehicles. They proclaim quite openly that a certain vehicle is capable of doing over 100 miles an hour. We see young lads reversing the rear wheels on their cars to give them more traction on the road. In all cases it is to help the driver break the law, but we do nothing about it.

Queensland will have to follow the pattern set by Victoria to meet her traffic problems. In "The Bulletin" of 20 August, 1966, we read that Victoria has come to grips with

the speeding problem, and has substantially reduced the number of people being killed and injured on the roads. The police are in no doubt that the reason is a little black box called the amphotometer. At a cost of only \$260 each, in 18 months these boxes have been responsible in Victoria for the pouring into the Treasury of \$250,000, and the conviction of 12,000 speeding drivers.

The increased accident rate is costing the motoring public many million dollars a year. Claims on third-party insurance total \$65,000,000 a year, while the claims on comprehensive insurance total about \$100,000,000 a year. Each year we see increased administration costs as a result of increased claims, increased costs to local government bodies and other public authorities, and increased demands on the ambulance service.

Centuries ago it was written, "The young might die; the old must die." Let us face up to this problem and bring down legislation that will help to overcome the increasing road toll.

Mr. GRAHAM (Mackay) (12.3 p.m.): Let me preface my remarks by expressing my disgust, together with the disgust of thousands of people in Queensland who are looking at the problems facing this Government with the same degree of interest as I am. Over the last eight years we have seen the Government progressively destroying the State's financial position, to the extent that this year the Treasurer has presented a Financial Statement which does not augur well for the future of this great State.

On reading through the Financial Statement presented this year I was impressed by its similarity to the Financial Statement presented last year by the former Treasurer, now Sir Thomas Hiley.

The present Treasurer said—

"The year 1965-66 will go down in history as the year of conflicting trends."

The former Treasurer said in 1965—

"The year 1964-65 will go down in history as a year of mixed fortune."

I should like to know the difference between "mixed fortune" and "conflicting trends". To me they mean the same thing.

Over the years that this Government has been in office there has been a continuing increase in the public debt, with increasing forms of taxation, so that today the public is starting to sit up and take notice. In referring to democracy, the Treasurer said, "Government of the people, by the people, for the people". That is a very hackneyed phrase. Then, he continued, "Consequently this Parliament, like the parliaments of all democracies, has always been careful to preserve the many privileges and powers it enjoys." That is a privilege of democracy, and a privilege of parliament, if it applies it properly in all forms.

The Treasurer then referred particularly to one of the powers, namely, the power to control the public purse. I believe that the Government has an obligation to control the public purse, but it should not abuse it or malign it, nor should it deplete the reserves of the State in an attempt to maintain a form of Government which I believe is objectionable to the people of this great State.

The present Government has been in power eight years, and I believe that while it is in office its administration will not be for the good of the people but to their detriment. The Government is trying to maintain the fast-decaying, white-ant eaten, borer-infested structure of Country Party-Liberalism and, unless we get to the source of the decay,—

Mr. Thackeray: We need the Flick man.

Mr. GRAHAM: Yes, we need the Flick man. There is no doubt about that.

Unless we can destroy this pest, the public of Queensland will continue to be affected as they have been over the past six years. Finance has tested Governments, and if that test is applied to this Government it will be seen that it has failed, and failed miserably. The Treasurer has been forced to resort to deficits totalling millions of dollars. In eight years of government there has been a continuing deficit. I wonder where it will stop? Surely it must stop eventually. Recently, certain company directors have been charged with issuing false prospectuses. This charge could be levelled at the Government, for it has issued false prospectuses over its years in office. In every policy speech the Government has cajoled the people into returning the Nicklin-Chalk Government, as it may be termed to-day. Has not the Government committed the same crime as the company directors who are now facing charges in the courts? Has not the Government in its approaches to the people adopted an insincere attitude, or proclaimed a policy that, in truthfulness, should not be put forward? The Government has been continually unable to balance the budget and has been continually forced to increase taxation to get the necessary finance to carry on the administration of the State.

When the Labour Party controlled the Treasury benches we were able, by the careful husbanding of the State's finances, to balance our budgets, and, in addition, to build up reserves to be called on when extra money was needed for capital expenditure. Not only has this Government established record deficits, but in the last eight years it has eaten away all of the reserves held by the Labour Government in 1957. Whilst they did not amount to many millions of dollars, at least they were there. In an endeavour to convince the Federal Government of the need for further finance, this Government soon got rid of those reserves, and, when the cupboard was bare, went cap in hand to the Federal Government seeking further finance.

Despite being given considerable increases in income by way of grants from the Federal Government, the cupboard is still bare today; the Government is broke to the world and has adopted the practice of increasing taxation in many fields. It has reached the end of its tether.

Queensland's public debt has risen from \$530,000,000 in 1958 to \$936,000,000. That might not be much to us, but, looked at in the right perspective, what will this mean to our future generations? Because of present economic factors we in this State may be able to bear these increased charges imposed by the Government to meet interest payments, sinking-fund payments, and so on. But what will be the position of our future generations who have to service this huge public debt?

In 1955, when the Labour Government was in power, Mr. Hiley said, "The first thing we must do is to slow down the pace of Government spending." Evidently he did not follow that advice while he was Treasurer because, as I pointed out, the public debt rose from \$530,000,000 to \$936,000,000. The increase last year was \$56,000,000, and the average for the last eight years is approximately \$50,000,000 per annum.

I ask the Treasurer where this is to stop. Is the public debt to continue increasing at its present astronomical rate? Is this vast sum of money to be increased, with little or no return? When the public debt is increased there should be a vast improvement in the national income, but that is not happening. Admittedly there has been an increase, to which many factors have contributed, but having regard to the increase in the public debt, the national income should be much greater than it is. Although increasing prices for primary products on overseas markets and greater industrial production have increased the national income, unless it increases pro rata with the public debt the Government must find ways and means of making up the leeway. The Treasurer is accomplishing this by increasing taxation in many fields. It is up to the Government to pay some heed to these matters. The public cannot be milked all the time; the time must come when it has to be considered. I could understand the imposition of additional taxation if it came from the profits of industry. However, when it is taken from the pockets of the working class by increased motor vehicle registration and other forms of taxation, I think it is time to protest.

Although we believe that we are a progressive nation, there are many reasons why we consider that Queensland should be developing faster than it is. The Government has never been hesitant in criticising the Australian Labour Party for lack of progress and development prior to 1956. The contention is that because of certain factors industry was chased from Queensland and its development lagged behind that of other States.

We all know the wonderful potential of Queensland; we hear of it so often, and few in this Assembly have failed to mention it. Although Queensland is fortunate in having a great potential in mineral deposits, primary production, and industrial development, the best results are not being achieved. Admittedly there has been some increase in industrial development in Queensland during the last eight years. One can refer to expansion at Mt. Isa, the activities of Comalco at Gladstone and Weipa, the discovery of oil and its transportation by pipeline from Moonie to Brisbane, and the establishment of two oil refineries.

That is all to the good, and I think every Queenslander is very keen to see further growth in those activities. However, we in Queensland today are not reaping the full benefit from this development. Unemployment has increased and population has decreased, neither of which should happen if what the Government says can be accepted. Instead, population should be increasing considerably and unemployment should be decreasing. From the discovery of oil and the development of the bauxite deposits at Weipa the Government is receiving additional revenue, and it should have been able to present a better Financial Statement than it has. Although there has been a fairly heavy increase in expenditure on public works, schools, main roads, and so on, the further the Government goes, the worse the position becomes.

It cannot be denied that Queensland's population growth has slowed down considerably. It never was fast; in fact, the over-all population growth in Australia has never been very fast. However, in view of the development in Queensland and the so-called encouragement that the Government has given to industry, one would have expected a much faster growth. The figures released by the Government Statistician show that the population of Queensland had decreased by almost 2,000 at 30 June, 1966, when compared with the figure at 30 June, 1965. One cannot blame the drought for that. The only reason for it is the failure of the Government of Queensland to do its job. While there was a loss of population in Queensland of over 1,800 as at 30 June, 1966, the population of New South Wales increased by 23,000 and the population of Victoria by 33,000 in the same period.

The public are entitled to ask why the population of this State has decreased. Although the Treasurer and other hon. members opposite try to cover up the position, the Opposition is quite entitled to ask the Government why that has happened. In my opinion, the Government, in collaboration with the Federal Liberal-Country Party Government, has sadly neglected the requirements of the northern part of the State. Admittedly, the Federal Government has made additional finance available to the Government of Queensland; but there is still a

grave lack of interest by the Federal Government in the development of northern parts of Queensland. So it is up to the Country-Liberal Government, which holds the reins of office in Queensland, to create a state or condition in which development will take place in North Queensland, in which population will be attracted to the area, and in which people living in the North can be given some security in relation to future development.

The Government is not fair if its approach to these problems is sectional, and I believe that the present Government has failed, and failed miserably, in giving consideration to the needs of northern areas of the State. It is never behind the door in handing out privileges and concessions to people controlling foreign capital who want to develop the vast resources of Northern Queensland for the extension of industries in other lands; but it has failed miserably, as I said, to give some consideration to the needs of people who live in the area. One has only to go north of Brisbane, into the more sparsely populated areas of the State, to see the conditions under which people are expected to live and the hardships they are expected to accept. Even Government members have spoken of those conditions and complained of the lack of interest shown by the Government in the difficulties that these people face. In my opinion, it is not good enough for the Government to show concern for the wishes of the controllers of industry and the exploiters of the State's natural resources and, at the same time, to neglect the needs of the useful people of Australia.

The people of Queensland are being treated miserably by the Federal Government; they are being treated as outsiders. That Government has shown, and is showing, little concern about the future development of northern parts of Queensland. I voice this protest because I think that, while there is a Country-Liberal Government in office that is incapable of handling the finances of the State as they should be handled, while it continues to increase the public debt in the manner that it has over the past nine years, and while it continues to impose new taxes on the useful people, there is little hope that, in the years to come, Queensland will progress as it should.

Dealing with the taxation that has been imposed, it is very interesting to see the field in which the present Treasurer has moved. For 1966-67 the State Government has received from the Commonwealth Government a further \$9,250,000 to recoup extraordinary expenditure on drought relief and \$2,750,000 to offset some of our losses in revenue because of drought.

I am not going to deny that there have been drought conditions in Queensland—I know that certain parts of Queensland have been affected by drought—but I have yet to be convinced that the present predicament in which the Government finds itself is, as

the Treasurer claims, mainly due to drought conditions. We have had fairly general rains all over Queensland in the last 12 months. Prior to 1964-65 there was a drought and I admit that that could have had some effect on the finances of the State for the 1965-66 year. But I have yet to be convinced that drought, and drought alone, was responsible for the heavy deficit of \$7,098,562 that the Government has had to admit has accumulated.

The Treasurer has said that the Government must balance its Budget, but what assurance have we from him that, despite the huge increases in taxation, the 1966-67 Budget will be balanced? If we go back a little earlier we will find that the same thing has been said previously. Last year the Government budgeted for a surplus but, because of the factors that the Treasurer claims were responsible, it ended up with a \$7,000,000 deficit.

In the field of new taxation we find, of course, increased rail freights and fares. The Treasurer claims that there has not been any increase in rail fares for some years. I do not think anybody would have objected had the Government had the courage, in 1962 or 1963, to increase freights and fares, but it did not do it then; it had to wait until 1966 to apply a 20 per cent. increase.

The Treasurer says that suburban rail fares will increase by 25 per cent. Why could they not have been increased by 5 per cent. last year, 5 per cent. the year before that and 5 per cent. the year before that? I ask the Treasurer to tell me why not. Evidently he had plenty of money then, or thought he had, but every year a deficit has been shown, and he then comes along with an increase of 20 per cent. in 1966. He had to increase these rates by 20 per cent. because he left himself financially embarrassed and would not have had sufficient funds to meet the Government's commitments.

Now let us see where the reaction to these increases is coming from. It is coming most strongly not from the working-class people, but from primary industries. Grain growers, for instance, have lodged a very strong protest at the increased freights and fares. The following is an extract from "The Daily Mercury":—

"The Clermont branch of the Queensland Graingrowers' Association passed resolutions registering a strong protest against the recent 15 per cent. increases in the freight on grain and against the increased road tax and registration fees."

I also have here a similar statement from the Mackay cane-growers. They, too, lodge a very strong and emphatic protest against increased rail freights and other taxes that the Government has been forced to impose. The Government has lambasted not only the

little fellow, but everyone who uses the railways. It has also been forced to increase State transport fees. This must affect, not the man who lives in Brisbane or the provincial city, but the man who resides in the Outback under conditions of extreme hardship.

Quite recently I spoke to some people in Burketown who were complaining bitterly about these increased charges. Already their cost of living has soared to unprecedented heights because the Government has shown no concern for them. If it was necessary to increase transport fees—I accept the fact that it may have been necessary—why have concessions not been granted to people in remote areas? The increases apply generally throughout the State, and so complaints are being made by cane-growers, grain-growers, and everybody else.

It seems that the motorist has to be attacked at every opportunity. Over the years the Government has extracted a considerable amount of revenue from motor-vehicle owners in registration fees and fines for various traffic breaches. Compulsory third-party insurance has increased 66-2/3rds per cent., from £5 to £9 a year. Motor-vehicle registrations increased from 343,971 to 541,000 at the end of 1965. Without any increase in registration fees the Government is already receiving increased revenue from motorists because of the increase in the number of vehicles registered. Now, because of the Government's need for more money, the motorist again has to accept a big "slug" by way of increased registration fees. One could go on mentioning these facts to show that the Government has not much concern about the little man, but has great regard for the big fellow.

It seems to be a case of follow the leader, because whatever the other States do the Treasurer decides to adopt. He says—

"Following the practice in other States, we will introduce from 1st November, 1966, a stamp duty of 3 per cent. of the premium on all Workers' Compensation Policies.

"Again, following the practice in other States, we will introduce from 1st January, 1967, a stamp duty of 1 per cent. of the consideration on the registration of all motor vehicle transfers and on the registration of all new motor vehicles."

The other States introduce stamp duty on workers' compensation policies and on the consideration on the registration of motor vehicles, so the Treasurer follows them. He adopts that as the reason for doing these things; not because they are justified, but simply because other States have done them.

In relation to certain hospital charges, I believe that in these days, in view of Commonwealth assistance, there may be some justification in asking those in receipt of medical benefits to pay something for their hospitalisation. However, if such a plan was sponsored by the Labour Party the Government would immediately accept it as an

indication that we wanted to abolish free hospitalisation. I want the Treasurer to understand that neither I nor any other member of the Labour Party will give a mandate to the Government to abolish free hospitalisation. The Labour Party established free hospitalisation, and as long as there is a Labour Party that can voice its policy we will retain it and make sure that no other Government abolishes it. Despite the fact that it has been whittled away for eight years and that the Government would gladly love to see it abolished, we will fight for it to the end.

There is not much wrong in asking a person who has voluntarily joined a medical benefits scheme to make some contribution for services received. However, it must be accepted that the present hospitals system in Queensland was established by the Labour Party which made free hospitalisation one of its foremost planks. We believed then, as we do now, that it is an injustice to impoverish people who need medical treatment. Other State Governments impose charges for public hospital services but we in Queensland down through the years, through Golden Casket funds, have been able to maintain free hospitals. We want to maintain them, and we will ensure that the present Government does so.

We believe, too, that it is wrong to increase fees for those who are forced to seek medical treatment in private or intermediate wards. That is one form of taxation that should not be imposed. While the Government is forced to find many millions of pounds to maintain hospitals throughout the State, I believe that the penalising of a person who, because of illness, has to use our hospitals, is contrary to all forms of justice.

On many occasions the Treasurer and the Premier have journeyed to Canberra to place before the Federal Government Queensland's case for further financial assistance, and, I might say, they have not been badly received. If we compare the financial assistance received by the Queensland Government in the last eight years with what was received by the Labour Party prior to 1957, we see that the Federal Government has not been too miserly during that period. But despite all that the Federal Government has given in the way of grants and assistance for housing, hospitals and main roads, the Queensland Government still has insufficient money. It is still unable to maintain a state of equilibrium with the State's finances.

I repeat: where do we go from here? How long can this Government carry on with its reckless and foolish spending of public funds before it will have to call a halt? Would that I had more knowledge of finance, would that I could go more deeply into the financial dealings of the Government; then I might be able to make a better contribution.

The Federal Government made a very generous donation to the State Government for drought relief. Some of it will be given to local authorities to ease unemployment.

Early in the year the Mackay City Council approached the Government for a grant of \$20,000 to relieve unemployment in that city. The request was flatly refused because the Government considered that Mackay was not a drought area, yet it had extended certain rail freight concessions in the areas adjacent to Mackay. The Government was willing to grant drought relief to other local authorities throughout the State—I could mention many of them—but evidently it did not suit it to give the Mackay City Council any drought relief, mainly, I claim, because Mackay has a Labour representative, and the granting of any relief would ease the unemployment situation in Mackay, and that might be an unwise move for the Government. I lodge a protest at the Government's discrimination in that regard.

I intended to say something during the Address-in-Reply debate about the road carnage. This question has caused a great deal of concern to every thinking person in Queensland, and to Governments throughout the world. Road Safety Councils and other organisations have been set up to investigate this question. Like other people, I am perplexed about how we can overcome this grave problem. Are road deaths caused by the irresponsibility of drivers, the lack of control of motor vehicles, the narrowness of roads, or the failure of car manufacturers to install safety devices and make their vehicles more roadworthy? We have had this problem for years in Queensland, and while we might not be able to overcome it completely, at least there are many things that can be done to alleviate it.

I believe that until more severe penalties are imposed on those who transgress the traffic laws, the high accident rate will continue. The most tragic aspect of it is that it is the youth of today—the potential fathers of tomorrow—that suffers the highest death rate. Young males 18 to 24 years old are perhaps the greatest transgressors against the traffic laws. If they took only their own lives the position might perhaps be more easily accepted, but when in many cases they also take the lives of others, it is time for us to sit up and take notice.

I do not know if it can be said that our laws are wrong. Although perhaps they could be stricter, if they were rigidly enforced there would possibly be some reduction in the high accident rate. There is no point in magistrates being lenient in extreme cases. Accidents, of course, will happen, and in many cases magistrates are quite correct in imposing light sentences. In other cases, however, where extreme carelessness has been shown, they should apply the full force of the law.

Nor does the matter finish with magistrates. On many occasions the Police Department is lacking in its duty in not making charges after accidents in which deaths have occurred. I could quote many cases in the Mackay area in which no charges were made after lives were lost in road accidents. I know that for many reasons

the police are somewhat hesitant in bringing charges because of the difficulty of producing evidence sufficient to warrant conviction. However, I believe that unless there is a sterner approach to these matters the road toll will continue. It is no use merely fining young people who want to take charge of the road and who, by lack of care and attention, cause accidents. The only thing that will stop them is depriving them of their liberty. Any person who, through gross carelessness, is responsible for the death of another on the road should not be allowed his liberty and the privilege of using a motor vehicle. Until the Government, and all those who are responsible for the implementation of the laws on the Statute Book, adopt this attitude, the present situation will continue.

In conclusion, I wish to have a little to say on the matters that have recently disturbed the Chamber. The hon. member for Bundaberg said that although he spoke on Supply, he also had other things to say. So, too, have I. I believe that using the Chamber to attack John E. Duggan, the former Leader of the Australian Labour Party, in the manner in which he was attacked because of a tax defalcation, was not fair play. John Duggan transgressed a law, and for that he has paid the penalty. Despite his having transgressed the law, he retained the full support and confidence of the men whom he led in this Chamber. That can be verified by reference to a resolution that is on the books of the Parliamentary Labour Party, because a unanimous vote of confidence was carried in him.

There is not one man among us, including the hon. member for Bundaberg and the hon. member for Townsville South, who could say truthfully that he is a "clean potato" (I include myself). No hon. member in this Chamber is without sin, and if Jack Duggan was guilty of a breach of the Federal Taxation laws, I am sure that other men in this Chamber are guilty of greater crimes. The hon. member for Bundaberg, who must know in his own conscience that what I say is correct, has done things that Jack Duggan would be ashamed to have done.

Mr. Walsh: You had better look at your own conscience.

Mr. GRAHAM: If the hon. member has something to say about me, let him say it. I am quite happy for him to do so. If he can say one word against my private life, let him get up and say it now.

Mr. Walsh: I could say quite a lot of things about your private life. I would not come down to that level—not that I cannot.

Mr. GRAHAM: The hon. member said it about Jack Duggan. He thinks he can use this Chamber as a haven of protection; but people who live in glass houses should not throw stones. If they do, then they must expect to have the stones thrown back at them.

If Jack Duggan has been guilty of this misdemeanour—he admits that he has—I say that it is a technical breach, one that many

men, including other hon. members, have committed. The hon. member for Bundaberg insinuated that, because Jack Duggan was able to accumulate a certain amount of wealth, he got it by using questionable tactics. He has answered for that misdemeanour, and if there was any suspicion that Jack Duggan, as a public man, had been guilty of a crime, I believe that the Commissioner of Taxation, having investigated it, would have made it public. In spite of that, people have used this Chamber to malign, criticise and kick the politically-dead dog, to use the hon. member for Bundaberg's own words. What for?

Mr. Walsh: I did not use the word "dog".

Mr. GRAHAM: Well, politically-dead something.

Mr. Walsh: Do not misrepresent what I said. I will stick to every word that I said.

Mr. GRAHAM: The common phrase is to "kick the dog that is down". That is what you did to Jack Duggan.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Campbell): Order! I ask the hon. member to address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am attempting to do that, Mr. Campbell. The hon. member for Bundaberg gloried in the fact that he had this stick to belt Jack Duggan with. He and the members of the political party with which he was associated—the D.L.P. or Q.L.P., call it what you will—gloried in the fact that Jack Duggan had fallen by the wayside. If they get a further chance of kicking him, they will take it, and kick him not with one foot but with both feet, because they glory in situations of this type.

The hon. member for Townsville South also used the Chamber to belittle Jack Duggan, and the remarks that I have made about the hon. member for Bundaberg apply equally to him. If he could look the general public of Queensland in the eye with the degree of sincerity that Jack Duggan has shown, he would not stand up in this Chamber and accuse Jack Duggan of all sorts of things.

I do not justify what Jack Duggan did; perhaps no other member of the Australian Labour Party does, either; but he has given reasons why he did it and the Labour Party has accepted those reasons. In my opinion, hon. members should not use the privilege of this Chamber to impute improper motives to an honourable man. I will leave it at that. If the hon. member for Bundaberg has something to say about Frederick Dickson Graham, he can use this Chamber to say it.

Mr. HUGHES (Kurilpa) (12.55 p.m.): At the outset, I take the opportunity of congratulating the Treasurer on bringing down his first Budget. He does this at a time in Queensland's history when we are most desperately in need of finance. Our State is

developing and there is great need for public works and expansion in the primary and industrial fields; there is need to finance further the progressive development of the State as well as to secure funds for social and welfare services at a time when we are suffering adverse seasonal conditions to the greatest extent in our history.

This is a continuing and developing Budget—a push-ahead Budget, as the Treasurer has said—and there is no justification for any member of this Chamber associating himself with a censure motion unless it be at the dictates of a party.

If we peruse the Budget, we see that \$3,000,000 is going towards implementation of the Wilbur Smith plan, \$19,000,000 to housing, \$13,000,000 in loans and subsidies to local authorities, and a record \$28,500,000 for electricity development on a scale never before known in this State. This is expenditure on future progress because, if we do not generate electrical energy to supply the needs of industry and to develop our rural sector, the State will not progress. There is a Main Roads programme of almost \$30,000,000. That is record expenditure in this sector. In railway capital works such as the Moura-Gladstone line, dieselisation and other works there is provision for \$24,500,000.

How can those associating themselves with this censure motion justify their case in the face of this additional development being undertaken not in a flamboyant manner, but in a push-ahead manner with a great degree not only of sincerity but of objectivity in analysing the situation in a businesslike way.

As has been pointed out by other hon. members, the State has suffered the ravages of drought which has caused a sharp drop in our sheep and cattle numbers; our economy, and, thus our revenue, have suffered severely through a drop in our primary and other production.

Mr. Murray: Its worst suffering, surely, would have been 40 years of Labour chaos.

Mr. HUGHES: We are still trying to overcome the effects of inefficiency on the part of Labour administrations. We are still trying to overcome the lag in development of water resources and railways, and in many other fields. We are still trying to overcome the mental and physical stagnation caused by a Labour Government that became apathetic and lazy as a result of having been entrenched in office for 30-odd years.

In the relatively short time that we have been in office we have achieved intense development and have overcome many of the problems that beset us in the past in the fields of housing, hospitalisation, and the development of our rural and other resources. Labour Party policy was to tax people out of this State. Industry would not come here because of high company taxation. I think one hon. member opposite mentioned the case of an

insurance company that was not now going to establish its head office in this State. In the past, this was the last place in the world in which to establish a head office. It was Siberia to business and industry because the Labour Party taxed industry out of the State.

[*Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.15 p.m.*]

Mr. HUGHES: I think it would be fair to say that the Labour Party today is a disunited group of calamity howlers. To call them apostles of doom would be the understatement of the year. In the gloom that they have tried to cast in this Chamber their thinking is in the horse-and-buggy days, because they have never adjusted themselves to Queensland's present-day developmental needs. As a party they can no longer command the respect or confidence of the people. The present confusion in their ranks has been exemplified by the remarks of their speakers during this debate. On the one hand many criticise us for not balancing the Budget yet, on the other hand, others ask why we do not budget for a deficit. Whatever the Government does, in some way they always find some cause for disunity amongst themselves. Over the years we have come to expect this, and to know that they cannot adjust their thinking to the needs of the time. They have not the spirit, imagination or foresight to hold the administrative reins in the development of this State.

The Labour Party is a declining influence as a party. On a number of occasions the people of this State, as they no doubt will in the future, have shown their confidence in this Government because it has shown the lead in the way that this State can develop, progress and prosper.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. HUGHES: As a joint, coalition Government, at this level, in Parliament, we have demonstrated that we are able to hold the administrative reins in a way that makes for the progress of this State.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. HUGHES: If Opposition Members want to indulge in such Alice-in-Wonderland or Gilbertian flights of fancy, they should join the Tintookies who have gone to India.

I extend congratulations to the hon. member for Bulimba and the hon. member for Townsville North on their appointment as Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition, respectively. Personally they are quite likeable chaps, but I do not think they can hope to emulate the excellence of oratory or the ability displayed by the previous Leader of the Opposition. Their appointment is indicative of the declining force of the A.L.P. They cannot hope to match the eloquence and experience of their former Leader who, by his forthrightness at times, and fearlessness made the Opposition a force to be reckoned with. The pity of it is that some Opposition members take dictation from the

Trades Hall and others do not know what to do, which does not make for an Opposition to be reckoned with. Although the public of Queensland will no doubt keep many of them in the ranks of the Opposition for years to come, I believe that some of the objectiveness of the Opposition has been clouded by the resignation of the former Leader of the Opposition. The circumstances of his resignation were outlined to a silent and generally sympathetic Chamber. I join with the Treasurer and my colleagues in saying that I feel this is a rather sad occasion, on a personal basis. His breach has not tarnished my thoughts of him as a person. I am proud to say that I enjoyed his friendship in the past and I hope to continue to do so. I extend the hand of friendship to him. Whilst politically opposed, on a personal basis, generally speaking, I should say that we share the same views on this occasion.

However, because of this, and because of the Labour Party's muddled thinking and living in the past, and because the A.L.P. has no spirit of objectiveness or realism as to the needs of the State, it will long remain in Opposition. It is a simple fact that the A.L.P. is dominated by the Trades Hall men—a group of militants with left-wing ideas—who want people in this Chamber as mouth-pieces for their own perverted views on what should happen in the State and in the trade union movement. While this state of affairs continues the party will remain wallowing in a pool of political stagnation fraught with faction fights between the right and left wings, with battles taking place between those in the Trades Hall, or "Hill-ites," and those hoppers who desire to reconstruct the party as a more acceptable party, with middle-of-the-road policies, similar to the former great party which has slipped from its high place in public opinion to what it is today.

The A.L.P. is in a political wilderness and, in answer to a recent interjection, I do not think it will get any public commendation by this puerile attempt to censure the Government. The party has not the capacity to examine objectively and analytically the needs of the State and the manner in which these needs are being met by the Budget, which contains hope and confidence and provides in every way for our continued progress. Does the A.L.P. want to put on the brakes in this State, or does it want to go forward? If it wants to apply the brakes it will continue to receive public condemnation.

This is a time for wise administration. Courage, foresight and virile leadership are needed, and these qualities permeate the coalition Government's thinking and action in the Budget. They are demonstrated by the Government's programme of development. I point out that scarcely a constructive suggestion has emanated from the Opposition during this debate. It has attempted to castigate the Government for obtaining increased revenue. The Government has embarked upon a realistic and

constructive programme. This can be seen in the almost-too-late development of our roads, and in the new industries, the Wilbur Smith Report, and new bridges. There are many other ways in which it can be seen that the needs of the State have been recognised.

I have just been handed a note saying that while we have our foot on the accelerator, hon. members opposite appear to be muddled at the wheel and have no petrol in the tank. I think that typifies their attitude to the Budget.

Much has been said about what we have done during our term of office. Let us see what we have done. We have outlayed over \$34,000,000 in subsidies to local authorities. This has provided no small measure of assistance. I venture to say that we are the only State in the Commonwealth to give such assistance to local authorities.

Mr. Pilbeam interjected.

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member for Rockhampton South agrees with that statement. He knows that Rockhampton has benefited substantially from the realistic view of the Government.

Mr. Hanson interjected.

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member for Port Curtis has no cause for complaint. Look at what is happening in Gladstone; for instance, port development and the construction of the alumina plant. The Labour Government's files on Weipa simply gathered dust in the pigeon-holes while the trees continued to grow there. The Opposition does not want development. That is why it is in Opposition and why it will remain in Opposition. Yet its members dare to "knock" the Government for the port development at Gladstone. Think of the hundreds of millions of dollars being spent there!

The hon. member for Cairns interjected a while ago. He should think of the reclamation work being carried out at Cairns by the Government and the new industries there, such as C.I.G. and others. Opposition members apparently do not want that because they do not want progress. They do not want the infusion of capital into the State. They want a socialistic empire which the Trades Hall can dictate to and dominate.

Mr. R. Jones: What new firms are there?

Mr. HUGHES: I mentioned C.I.G. There are engineering, manufacturing, warehousing establishments. What about the brigalow lands and subsidies to local authorities?

Mr. R. Jones interjected.

The **CHAIRMAN:** Order! I have allowed the hon. member for Cairns some latitude. I ask him to refrain from further interjection.

Mr. HUGHES: I know this hurts. The truth always hurts. Opposition members do not want development and they do not want

infusion of capital. No matter where money comes from, it develops the State, provides employment, and boosts the economy, and finds its way back in the form of works, services and free hospitalisation which Opposition members are crying to retain. Why, then, should they find it necessary to castigate the Government? They should reassess their thinking.

I shall now get back to local authority areas. We are budgeting for nearly \$3,000,000 to go to the Brisbane City Council by way of subsidy to provide roads, sewerage, electricity, and many other things that will benefit the citizens of Brisbane. In this term of office we will be doing things for which the council has the sole responsibility and obligation. We are not responsible for cross-river bridges, yet we are providing 50 per cent. of the cost of the new cross-river bridge, because it has to be built. We are doing something about implementing the Wilbur Smith plan, which will provide a network of arterial roads to overcome the present traffic chaos. The State Government will contribute 50 per cent. of the cost, or \$36,000,000, of which we are providing many millions this year. Would Labour have done that? When I was an alderman in the Brisbane City Council we could not get a friendly smile, let alone a handshake, or a handout from the Labour Government.

Mr. Hanson: You reduced the amounts paid in subsidies.

Mr. HUGHES: The only reduction was a percentage in some of the subsidised works. But even then they are getting more now than they ever got. Labour in its entire life as a Government did not do what we are doing in one financial year, namely, providing a \$3,000,000 subsidy. The Brisbane City Council should take a more objective view in providing what is needed in our capital city. This all has an effect on our economy. Transport delays are a cost factor in the passage and transit of goods, and have a bearing on the purchase price of goods.

We must have a live, ambitious programme and the physical and financial resources to get it under way. More bridges are needed, Fairfield Road needs widening, and various other things, for which the Government is granting subsidies, are required from the Brisbane City Council. But what does the council do? It sits back and builds edifices to the glory of Lord Mayor Jones. I can almost imagine him drooling over all the 5c pieces from parking meters running through his fingers into the coffers to make mountains of silver and gold for the erection of edifices to his glory. One can imagine him sitting in his robes of office drooling over the mountains of coins that should be spent on real developmental works to overcome traffic hazards and speed the flow of traffic. What a shocking tragedy it is to see vehicles proceeding at a snail-like pace from urban industrial areas that have been

established because the Government has been able to get something done in the industrial sphere.

This industrial development, particularly on the south side of Brisbane, has brought traffic problems. Almost every morning and evening one can see private and commercial vehicles moving at a snail's pace along arterial roads, Fairfield Road in particular. The council has taken no notice of the problem and has done nothing about it, regardless of the subsidies paid to it and the filching from the people's pockets by increased tram and bus fares and rates, and money collected in parking fees which, under the Act, the council has the obligation to spend parking meter funds on easing traffic problems. The council prefers to spend this money, however, on riverside drives, underground parking stations, and other works to the glory of Lord Mayor Jones.

Let us talk about what has happened in this State. Each page of the Budget contains programmes that will produce worth-while results for every sector of the community. The Government has been castigated for imposing a duty of 1 per cent. on the transfer of registrations of motor vehicles. But where does the money go? It is paid into a special fund to provide roads. Hon. members opposite say, "Let us do something about our roads. Look at some of the roads in the North that require maintenance and capital works." Where is the money to come from for this purpose? Obviously it has to come in the main from the people who use them. Although I agree that there is a good case for receiving from the Federal Government a larger percentage of the amount collected in petrol tax, we, as a State, also have an obligation. Because we embark upon the most ambitious programme of road construction ever envisaged in the State's history, a programme that will benefit the beef-cattle industry, decentralisation, and the tapping of our mineral resources, we are castigated for it and told, "Let us do these things, but let us get the money from the money tree." If we could find that tree, that would certainly be the way to do it.

Let us have less of this Alice-in-Wonderland attitude and more of the practical approach. What is happening in Queensland? The greatest programme of electricity development in the State's history, to cost \$28,500,000, is being undertaken. We now have oil refineries, development of the brigalow lands, beef-cattle roads, opening of the land in Cape York Peninsula and other places, and the development at Gladstone to which the hon. member for Gladstone seems to object so much. If this Government had not been in office, the file would still be gathering dust—and it would not have been dust from the processing of bauxite into alumina. Car manufacturing plants have been established, with other industries of great magnitude and number. They are here today

because the Government did something about attracting them and displayed the initiative required in this State.

The Labour Party, with its restrictive thinking, displayed a negative attitude. Obviously they did not want any development in Queensland. Their thinking belongs to the horse-and- buggy era, when Queensland was the Cinderella State. The Labour Party believe that the apathy that prevailed during Labour's term of office made existence easier. It is obvious that if no work is done, no-one can be blamed for a project that fails. There is a saying, "Nothing ventured, nothing gained", and the present Government has had the virility and strength of purpose to undertake work.

Hon. members opposite say, "Let us not have an infusion of overseas capital", as if that were a dirty phrase. Goodness gracious! How is the State going to be developed with the few dollars and cents that we can find to spare here? If one looks through the pages of history, one finds that a great deal of the worth-while progress and development that has taken place in other countries has followed an infusion of foreign capital. Take America, for example, and look at places such as Detroit, whose position in the automobile industry resulted largely from the United States Government's immigration policy and the infusion of overseas capital. A number of countries have had to combine their own labour force with capital from other countries in order to bring about development and progress. England has not adopted that policy, and look where it is today. With a Labour Government in office, men are on the dole and lines of workers are marching on their own administration saying, "Give us work. Feed our wives and families." That is where England is today under Labour, and I am sure the people of Queensland will never turn back the clock to the stagnation and maladministration of Labour's term in office here.

Hon. members opposite have attempted to castigate the coalition Government for having the foresight and initiative to develop the State by bringing industries to it. In my opinion, every £1 sterling and every dollar that has been brought to Queensland has been well worth having. It has been alleged that the Government is giving away Cape York Peninsula. It has been here since Queensland has been a State with its own constitutional rights. What has happened? One or two people have held tremendously large aggregations of land and have failed to develop them. I remind hon. members that many countries in the world today are short of food, and that Asian Countries are using more and more of Australia's primary products. People who take an interest in population studies, surveys and trends say that the population of the world will be starving if something is not done in the next 20 years to increase food production. Where can a lot of this additional food be produced? Obviously in

Queensland, whose rivers carry about 43 per cent. of all the water in Australia and where millions of acres of land are available.

Although Peak Downs was a Socialist failure under Labour, it did prove one thing.

Mr. Hanson: How was it a failure?

Mr. HUGHES: I have insufficient time to educate the hon. member at this stage. He knows it was a gigantic and Socialistic failure. However, it proved that grain could be grown in the area, although it was a costly exercise. Since then, thanks to the initiative of the Government, people have been given a greater incentive to settle in the area and develop it—free people, free enterprise and hard work.

In the future, Queensland will be in the forefront as a food-producer for Eastern markets. It will attain this position only if it has men of courage, foresight and initiative in its ministerial ranks, men such as those who now sit on the front benches on the Government side of the Chamber. It will not attain it under the guidance of men whose thinking is geared to the horse-and-buggy era, men who act as a mouthpiece for the Trades Hall and who dance every time the strings are pulled by their masters in the Q.C.E. Under the guidance of men of foresight, ability and courage the State will prosper and progress still further. There would never be any progress if the Government were to be dominated by the Trades Hall.

Hon. members opposite have attempted to castigate the Treasurer for introducing a push-ahead Budget, and for taxing a certain section of the community. Those people will get back more than they paid as a result of that small increase in taxation. The Government has a \$500,000,000 programme of development, and the money will not be wasted. The Department of Lands is already doing a good job in opening land in Queensland for development. It is true that some members feel that it may be contrary to Government policy. These matters have been discussed in the Press and are public knowledge.

It has been stated many times that we must provide the means for further industrialisation of our city and State, and I hope that we will successfully obtain an infusion of the necessary capital and know-how to to develop them. I should hate to see the State drift along the road taken by the Labour Party in the past, using our own constructing authorities, trying to go it alone rather than bringing into our ranks those with know-how, ability and finance to do these things alongside Government spending.

Mr. R. Jones: Do you want to sell Cape York Peninsular to the Americans?

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member and his party sing hymns of hate against Americans, but he knows what we are doing in Cape York Peninsula. What is being done there will bring millions

of dollars to this State. Bauxite is being dug from the soil there and has resulted in the building of a \$150,000,000 alumina plant at Gladstone. Gladstone has been advanced from the horse-and-buggy-type town to a city foremost in the thinking of those who look to the future development of Australia. If the hon. member does not want that, let him join the others in his party who want the State to stagnate.

Allied to the growth and development of this State there is an urgent need for migrants. In the past we have not done sufficient in our migration programmes. We commenced spending on migration in 1963-64, when we provided \$23,000. In 1964-65 we spent \$24,000 and then, because we realised the need for technicians and the great need for population and industry in this State in 1965-66, expenditure was stepped up to \$150,000. Today we are budgeting for \$172,000. But this is not enough. There is a shortage of labour here. In the last "News Release" issued by the Department of Labour and National Service, the Honourable Leslie Bury said—

"The 50,916 registrants in Australia at 30th September represented 1.1% of the estimated work force. The percentages by State were: New South Wales 1.1%; Victoria 0.9%; Queensland 1.2%; South Australia 1.6%; Western Australia 0.8%; and Tasmania 1.2%."

Unemployment is lower here than it is in South Australia, a State that, in the past, was highlighted as having the greatest degree of expansion and industrialisation. We seem to have outstripped South Australia and have gone further afield in development than even that State, which is now operating under a Labour Government. Job vacancies registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service at 30 September, totalled 26,506 for males and 14,717 for females. New vacancies were notified to the Commonwealth Employment Service at a weekly rate of 11,966. Queensland showed a decrease in the number of persons receiving unemployment benefits and an increase in the jobs available in industry.

We need population to build this State, and I believe we should go even further than we have gone in the past and spend more money in trying to obtain migrants for Queensland. We should do more to attract them. There is a great need for an infusion of people and capital into the State and, when Parliament is not sitting—between its legislation sessions—I think that much could be achieved by sending a group of M's.L.A. on campaigns to get migrants for Queensland.

Mr. Hanson interjected.

Mr. HUGHES: If we sent the hon. member the best investment we could make would be to buy him a one-way ticket.

Of the number of migrants to Australia, of which approximately 60 per cent. are British, 50 per cent. went to New South Wales and Victoria, with South Australia obtaining 18 per cent.; Western Australia 12 per cent., Canberra and the Northern Territory 12 per cent. and Queensland was last with 8 per cent. We are getting fewer migrants than the other States, and I think this is a matter which should occupy our attention.

What other country in the world provides such opportunities for migrants as Australia? In Queensland, in particular, there are advantages, freedoms, a high standard of living and opportunities. Under this Government there are rewards for personal initiative and hard work. Of course, the Labour Government offered no form of reward for initiative, skill or hard work.

Mr. Lloyd: That is why you deleted the bonus payment provision from the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act.

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member had better not mention the Mt. Isa dispute or he will go out of the Chamber with an embarrassed glow on his face, figuratively, black eyes. The greatest problem at Mt. Isa was the inter-union faction fight. That dispute was aided and abetted by members of the Labour Party—those upholders of Mackie and all that he stood for. Only two hon. members on that side had the courage to get up and say that that man prostituted everything that is decent and right in trade unionism, freedoms and democracy. I refer to the hon. members for Warrego and Brisbane. The hon. member for Kedron should sit shamefacedly quiet about that matter. It developed into nothing more than an inter-union faction fight. Queensland was held to ransom. The dispute caused the then Treasurer heartaches and headaches, and its effect is still being felt in today's restricted budgeting.

We should do more than we are doing about migration. The token payment of £10 will bring a British migrant to the fertile fields and opportunities of Australia and Queensland. I believe that the avenues for obtaining migrants are particularly fertile now because of the thousands and thousands of men in England who are on the march and on the dole. They have been brought to their knees, to degradation and despair by the Labour Government of that country. Because the opportunities are not there now, and because there are opportunities in this State, we should do something about it. I believe that we can capitalise on the position. While so many people in England are on the dole, and on the march looking for work, I believe that between parliamentary sessions we should send members of Parliament to England to do all they possibly can to attract migrants. We should be selling Queensland by looking for migrants, by talking to them and by properly presenting Queensland—what it offers and what it needs in the way of work and finance.

A great deal has been said during the debate about the free hospital system. I believe that it is another way we can attract migrants from overseas and from within Australia. The free hospital system has operated in this State for many years. In my opinion it has been the reason that some people have come to Queensland to live. Industries to provide employment and housing to house the people are basic requirements. Hospital services are another basic need. I believe that we can obtain many migrants from other States and other countries if we are careful in our approach to hospitalisation.

I would not go along with any suggestion to completely abandon our free hospital system. It is worth while and necessary. However, I also believe that there is a need from time to time to review hospital administration and costs, and the ways and means of financing the scheme. I believe that we should do everything possible to retain our present free hospital system, if necessary by looking for new sources of revenue. I refer, for instance, to accident victims receiving workers' compensation payments from the State Government Insurance Office. Also, some people who have been involved in accidents would appear to have been awarded fantastically high amounts by the courts. It is not for me, of course, to say that they are fantastically high, but it is obvious that they are high.

Although a person may receive workers' compensation benefits or a substantial payment from a court judgment, no money is paid by him for hospitalisation, for treatment by specialists, and for in-patient care. This is a source of revenue that the Government should rightfully obtain. It is not in keeping with proper business methods that persons involved in road accidents should receive large awards in compensation and benefit from free hospital care, treatment, and specialist attention. When an award is made in an accident claim, provision should be made for these costs to be met by the insurance companies. The State and its people should not have to carry the burden.

In accident cases compensation is paid for everything that is damaged, such as spectacles, clothing, suits, and other items. The State should also be reimbursed for its costs. The same system should apply in workers' compensation cases; the hospitals should be reimbursed for their costs. I have a very high regard for workers' compensation benefits, and the State Government Insurance Office is doing a wonderful job in this field. The premiums are paid by the employers, but it is only because of the businesslike methods adopted and the work of the manager, Mr. Eric Riding, in putting the office on a sound basis that it has been able to compete with free enterprise. It is able to do all these things only as a result of the administrative methods employed. However, it is not fair that our hospitals should have to bear all the patients' costs where people are paid workers' compensation.

The hon. member for Mackay said that a person in receipt of medical benefits payments should pay for his treatment. It is wrong for a person to make a profit because he is sick, as happens in some instances today. Many people who contribute to medical benefits schemes receive a cheque for hospital benefits, and thus make a profit. We have been castigated for the rise in intermediate-bed fees but the cost is infinitesimal compared with the service given. It is still the cheapest service in Australia. When a person goes into a public hospital as a medical benefits patient, the State carries the cost and the patient makes a profit. That is not fair and reasonable. As far as possible we should retain the free hospital system, but we should review the system and the methods of financing it.

Mr. Melloy: Very few people make a profit out of being in hospital.

Mr. HUGHES: Many of them do.

Mr. Hanlon: They get only half the benefit in a free ward. Why don't the medical benefits schemes pay the other half to the hospital?

Mr. HUGHES: I agree. Does not the hon. member think that a reorganisation would adjust these matters? This is where parliamentary committees composed of members from both sides of the Chamber would bring out pertinent and vital facts in our budgeting and revenue system. The point raised by the hon. member for Baroona is pertinent. A parliamentary committee to investigate these matters would be very advantageous and productive. In investigating such matters we would be doing our job in a far more capable way. Although I have a very high regard for our hospital administration and medical supervisors, I believe that in this way we would keep them on their mettle. It would not mean that Parliament was rubber-stamping departmental Estimates. On the contrary, it would mean that we would be able to investigate the possibility of effecting economies and conducting services in a far more efficient way.

A review of administration costs, charges, and all other aspects of hospitalisation is long overdue. It should be conducted in a businesslike way by a parliamentary committee consisting of members from both sides of the Chamber, not by a political party, the Minister, or departmental officers. In that way it would produce impartial results.

The hon. member for Mackay mentioned that the Golden Casket carried hospitalisation. That is not so. When we took office approximately \$11,800,000 was spent on hospitalisation. Today we are budgeting for \$26,706,722. That is a tremendous increase. If we are to husband the State's finances in a businesslike way we must not allow departments of the magnitude of the Department of Health or the Department of Education to go along completely unnoticed, without

review or research, or without trying to effect economies. The Budget has increased to such an extent that we must effect savings wherever we can and maintain our hospital programme, to which we are wedded because in the last election campaign we told the people, "This we believe in; this is our policy". Having said that, we are obligated to retain this system in essence.

Mr. Davies: In view of that, why is the Minister for Health not willing to give Parliament an authoritative statement denying reports that the public of Queensland are to be denied free hospitalisation?

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member for Maryborough should direct that question to the Minister. He has already said, as I have, that it should be subject to review. If we did not do that we would be unbusinesslike. We should investigate to see if there is any inefficiency or any wastage of funds or any unnecessary costs. These things would go on ad infinitum under Labour administration. Let us ensure that these things do not happen under this Government.

Fortunately, we have a basically different approach. Our approach is more for research and study, and is businesslike, whereas Labour's approach is, "Well, it is going all right today, it should go all right tomorrow, so leave it alone because it will not cause any public stir and we will not get into trouble, and it will not cause us any work." That is apathy and stagnation. We on this side of the Chamber do not hold with that sort of thing.

This year we are budgeting approximately \$27,000,000 for hospitals. The amount transferable this year to the Hospital, Motherhood and Child Welfare Fund is slightly less than \$3,000,000. It was less than that the year before, and less the year before that, and still less the year before that. So Golden Casket revenue is decreasing and hospital costs are increasing. Yet we are supposed to sit still, close our eyes, and bury our heads in the sand and say that all is well. If we governed that way we would soon be in Opposition, because that is where the voters put people who have not the sense to see what is going on.

It is true that we have increased rail fares and freights. That has been necessary because of the extension of dieselisation, track renovation and improvements. This is only the second time in the nine years of this Government that fares and freights have been increased. In comparison, Labour increased them nine times in nine years. So let Labour not castigate us for increasing these charges. Earlier when the Treasurer said there would be an increase of 25 per cent. an Opposition member interjected, "Not enough".

If hon. members opposite want another comparison, if the Australian Labour Party had any real concern for the ordinary working man there would not have been such

savage increases in tram and bus fares. They were increased a few months ago by up to 38·3 per cent. by a Labour council. Away went workers' weekly tickets, up went fares, and children's fares were increased by 100 per cent. Surely hon. members opposite are the greatest political sophists that ever walked this city or State. They castigate the Government, yet their party has increased fares nine times in nine years, by as much as 38·3 per cent. I repeat that the Labour council increased children's fares by 100 per cent. and abolished workers' weekly tickets.

We are told that no increases should have been imposed, even though the State is suffering from the effects of the drought.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. HUGHES: Hon. members opposite who are interjecting have never been to Cunnamulla. Have you ever been there in the sand and dust under the scorching sun? I went out to see, and at Eulo I have seen cattle and sheep left by the roadside to die.

Mr. Hanson interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Port Curtis knows that interjections must be made from his place in the Chamber. I also ask the hon. member for Kurilpa to address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. HUGHES: I only wish some hon. members opposite, instead of spending their time here as mouthpieces of those at the Trades Hall, would go out West and see the effect of the drought. I have the greatest sympathy for our friends in the country. Some property-owners are now working on other stations because they have no flocks left, or they are shearing for only one week instead of four. Cattle and sheep have been dying by the roadside. There are highways of bones, carcasses and skulls in the western areas. If anyone wants the greatest feed of dust he has ever had, let him go there, and he will return with the greatest sympathy for the people in the West.

In spite of all this, hon. members opposite castigate the Government because small increases, which will not have any real effect on anyone, have been imposed. The increase in motor-vehicle registration fees is to be ploughed back into roads. Freight increases are designed to provide a better transport service. There is to be an increase in fees in the intermediate sections of hospitals, but subscribers to medical benefits schemes will still profit from a stay in hospital. What right, then, have hon. members opposite to move a censure motion? How out of step and hopeless can you be! I only wish I had another hour in which to speak; I am getting warmed up and tearing a few strips off the Opposition because of their hopeless attitude to the State's administration.

In the few minutes in which I have left to speak, I may say that I share the views of other speakers who have dealt with road safety. The Road Safety Council has, within

limits, done a good job, but the number of road casualties is still alarming. Whilst it may be said that we have shown the lowest figures for a couple of years, compared with population they are among the highest in Australia at 9·1 fatalities, and 205·6 injuries, per 10,000 registered vehicles in 1964. Obviously something must be done to improve the position, and the Budget has not overlooked road safety. However, in such matters as policing, car-safety standards, and driver-training programmes we must take positive and urgent action.

I believe that a committee should be set up to investigate these things. In the U.S.A., Congressional committees are appointed to investigate questions such as these. A Congressional committee that had power to call for papers and persons brought the directors of General Motors and the Ford Company to the witness stand to give an account of why they were not building safety features into their vehicles and some of the other things they were not doing. I believe that Australian car manufacturers have both a financial and a moral obligation. Financially, they have an obligation to support the Road Safety Council and the road safety programme generally.

The Government should set a standard by purchasing only those vehicles that have a very high degree of safety. It should be made a requirement, when tenders are called, that vehicles must have collapsible steering wheels and other safety features. Probationary licenses could be issued and driver-improvement courses instituted. I am sure that the public would respond if the Government gave the lead. In a publication called "Traffic Safety", which was published in America in July this year, there is an article about a driver-improvement course at the Collinsville, Oklahoma, High School. Evidently it caught on in a big way. After the work for the day was completed at the high school, from 4.30 p.m. a driver-improvement course was conducted, and the article says that the students were so quiet and attentive that it was possible to hear a pin drop during the two-hour period of each session. Students had to pay for the course, but one of the men who conducted the course said it was hoped that a course would be offered next year as part of the Collinsville school system.

There should be a Safety Week in Queensland, and people of all ages should be educated in every aspect of road safety. In my opinion, a traffic accident study should be undertaken along the lines of the one undertaken recently in South Australia. The report of the team that carried out the investigation is well worth reading, and I commend it to the attention of all hon. members. I have read it carefully, and at page 21, paragraph 1.141, this appears—

"This study also suggested that the 'give way to the vehicle on the right' rule may be unsatisfactory in this city, for at

the speeds at which vehicles are actually driven only one driver in seven could hope to obey the rule in every case."

The report makes many suggestions that could be worth considering if a study were undertaken in Queensland. I believe that, here again, members of Parliament could be put to work in a productive way by appointing members from both sides of the Chamber to a select committee.

Mr. Thackeray: What about the kitchen study group?

Mr. HUGHES: It certainly provided some worth-while and interesting results. If the hon. members was interested enough to follow that example, he would get the same percentage of votes as I do. People know that I am interested in their welfare and progress.

The investigation into traffic accidents in Adelaide was carried out by mechanical engineers and medical men. They had two-way radios in the vehicles that they used and they went to the scenes of accidents. They endeavoured to discover whether the accidents were due to faults in the vehicles, whether safety features could have been embodied in them, and so on. All factors having a bearing on road safety should be investigated, and there should not be only a cry in the wilderness from a pulpit or from a place in this Chamber, "Look at the fatalities on the road!" We need some guts in our road safety programme, and we should give it some by appointing people with technical ability and qualifications that fit them to carry out investigations. They should be given sufficient time to make a thorough study of all the problems involved.

Is the Police Force as effective as it should be? Has it sufficient men and equipment to do the best possible job? I know that we cannot have a policeman on every street corner or a policeman on a motor-cycle following every car on the road.

(Time expired.)

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) (3.10 p.m.): In this debate, every hon. member can speak about any matter at all. It is not necessary to speak about the Budget—he need not even mention the Budget—but I am sorry that my friend the hon. member for Mackay today saw fit to bring up the Duggan affair again in this Chamber and to make an attack upon the two Independent members who have dealt with that unfortunate occurrence. It will be a sorry day when members of Parliament cannot come into this Assembly and say what they want to say about anyone outside, or inside, so long as they remain within the rules of debate.

Mr. Aikens: It would be a negation of democracy.

Mr. MANN: We do not know much about democracy, but I believe that a member of Parliament has the right to say what he wishes to say provided he observes the rules of debate in this Assembly.

I do not want to enter this controversy between the hon. member for Bundaberg and the hon. member for Townsville South on the one hand and the hon. member for Too-woomba West on the other, but I am a fully fledged member of the Labour Party and I have been a member of that party in this Assembly for over 30 years. I believe it is not etiquette, anyhow, for any member of a party to attack any other member of that party in any open place; there are places where they can do that if they so desire and I consider it to be a sorry state of affairs that any member of the party should get up in this Chamber and attack any other member of the party. Probably, he would be immediately dealt with and, I think rightly, expelled.

In this affair I agree with Bert Milliner, who said—

A Government Member: Who is he?

Mr. MANN: He is president of the Australian Labour Party in Queensland, and, incidentally, our Senate candidate in the next Federal election. He said that what happened to Mr. Duggan should sound a note of warning to all politicians that they should not indulge in share-market dealings. He said that if politicians engage in share-marketing they obviously will not be able to discuss effectively legislation that comes before Parliament. Members of the Government parties should consider those words very carefully and analyse their meaning. Members of the Labour Party are elected in Labour's name to this Assembly, to highly paid positions, not to secure social security for themselves while members of the trade union movement and workers in general face insecurity and difficulties.

There are many things that I could say in this debate. For instance, I could speak about the demotion of the hon. member for Kedron, but that was done within the party. In my opinion Mr. Lloyd was a very good Deputy Leader. In my opinion he did a very good job for the Labour Party, but what happened to him happened within the party's rules and framework. The same thing happened to Bill Baxter. I did not hear anybody crying crocodile tears about Bill Baxter, who was refused endorsement within the rules of the party. He has been a mate of mine since 1950, when Mr. Gair was leader of our party. I said to him, "There is a seat that we can win", and I went with Bill Baxter to his first campaign meeting. Only seven people turned up at that meeting but Baxter won the seat for Labour and he held it until his endorsement was withdrawn before the last election.

Mr. Sullivan: Why did they chop his head off?

Mr. MANN: It has nothing to do with me, but it was done within the rules of the Labour Party and I accept it.

Mr. Hanlon: It also happened to Charlie Russell in the Country Party and to Peter Connolly in the Liberal Party.

Mr. MANN: I think everybody on this side of the Chamber should let the Duggan matter die. It was an unfortunate incident and it was unfortunate that it was raised again today. I feel that the matter should end there and we should do the best we can for the Labour Party. I accept Mr. Duggan's resignation and I have nothing further to say about it.

I now want to deal with some aspects of the Budget. I listened very attentively to the hon. member for Chatsworth and I thought he made a very good speech for his party. He eulogised the Treasurer and made statements that he thought were in keeping with the Treasurer's policy and that of the Government; but he posed the question as to whether we of the Labour Party would like to cut down on education, whether we would like to cut down on the amount set aside for the Wilbur Smith plan and whether we would like to close the Ipswich Railway Workshops. We support all those things to the very hilt, but we are growling about the way the Treasurer has gone about raising the money. He has not turned his attention to the big monopolies; instead, he has slugged the small man—the worker in the community. I will deal with that matter in a moment.

The hon. member for Toowong also made a very good speech, but he did not go far enough and delve into the effect of these increased taxes on the pockets of the workers. I wonder whether the hon. members for Chatsworth and Toowong would have said the same thing if a Country Party Treasurer had been sitting over there. It was Liberal Party policy that they were putting forward. Later on I will have something to say about the Liberal Party convention, and what was said there about the free hospital system—how they felt that more money should be coming from the sick and the infirm. The hon. member for Kurilpa said that some members of the community made profits out of being sick. What cock-eyed thinking!

In his Financial Statement the Treasurer said—

"It is my personal belief that opportunity should be provided for every Queensland to become better acquainted with the basis on which the State acquires its revenues and that the Budget should be a simple explanation of the avenues through which the Government of the day proposes to disburse those revenues."

We on this side want the people to know exactly how those revenues are being increased.

The Treasurer continued—

"The year 1965-66 will go down in history as the year of conflicting trends. On the one hand, there was the serious drought situation which had a depressing

effect upon incomes and expenditures and therefore upon the level of activity in the economy as a whole."

Let us compare that with what the former Treasurer said last year. On that occasion it was pointed out that the Budget was planned for a normal wet season, but unfortunately the wet season did not materialise and, as a result, revenue under several headings was depleted. This year it was "a drought"; last year it was "no flood". What is the Treasurer going to say next year? Is he going to combine them and say, "Drought and flood"?

The Treasurer has given us a very lame excuse for the position in which he finds himself. Unfortunately for him, he has taken over as Treasurer after his predecessor, now Sir Thomas Hiley, who was hailed as one of the State's great financiers, had emptied the coffers. Consequently the present Treasurer has had to scrape the bottom of the barrel. But instead of looking around in a statesmanlike manner for more money, he set about to tax the working people in the community. I make no apology to the hon. member for Kurilpa for standing up here and speaking about the increased taxation that has been imposed on the workers.

I support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. I agree with many of our leading citizens, who are not members of the Opposition but who support the Government, that the Budget presented by the Treasurer can be regarded as a "little horror" Budget. Mr. Peter Bell, of the United Graziers' Association, said that the Budget will hit the grazing industry, and that the wool industry, in particular, cannot go on much longer trying to absorb rapidly spiralling costs. What have members of the Country Party to say about the remarks of Mr. Tozer, Australian Primary Producers' Union State President, who also was very critical of the Budget? Neither the hon. member for Kurilpa nor any other hon. member opposite can say that Mr. Tozer is a supporter of the A.L.P.

A Government Member: I thought you said it hit only the worker.

Mr. MANN: I did not say it hit only the worker. I said it hit the worker's pocket hardest.

Mr. J. G. Munro, of the Queensland Tax-payers' Association, said the tax-gatherer has run riot. Not one of the gentlemen to whom I have referred is a supporter of our party. Not only do we criticise the Budget, but prominent citizens in the community also severely criticise it. "Sunday Truth" of 2 October said that the Treasurer is "out-Faddening Fadden". In a leading article it said that Sir Arthur Fadden at his peak could scarcely have improved on Mr. Chalk's performance, and everyone in the community knows how bad the "little horror" Budget was that Sir Arthur introduced.

The tax on motorists has risen from 8½ per cent. to 16 per cent. Every person owning a motor-car has been slugged by the Treasurer. Registration fees are to rise. It does not matter whether a car is owned by an ordinary worker for use at the week-end or for everyday travel to work; all are slugged by the Government. The Government could have made representations to the Federal Government for the return of money paid in the petrol tax. But, as we all know, once having got the money the Federal Government will not return it. I think most hon. members will agree with me that there should be a State petrol tax so that those who use the roads will pay in accordance with their road usage. The money derived from that tax could then be used to build roads. The Treasurer has not given consideration to that matter. He wants to tax motorists by increasing registration fees and imposing a further tax on the sale of motor-cars. The Treasurer is not concerned about how little or how much a person may use the roads; all motorists have to pay the same tax. That is an imposition.

The hon. member for Kurilpa said that the State has to find money. Everyone knows that we need money if we are to develop the State as we wish. My complaint—and the complaint of the Opposition—is that the Government did not look around for means of taxing those who can afford to pay. It went blithely ahead and imposed a blanket tax on everyone who could possibly be covered and, worst of all, it slugged the little man when it should have taxed those who can afford to pay.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: In the limited field of taxation now operating, how could we do this?

Mr. MANN: For a start, the Government could have imposed a State petrol tax. Those who used the roads most would then pay their just dues, whereas under the present provisions those who use their cars only at week-ends, or to drive to work, pay the same as those who drive thousands of miles.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: I agree with that, but you cannot do it under the law.

Mr. MANN: If the Treasurer had wanted to do it he could have devised a means; all he wanted to do was to slug the little man.

Cabinet members must have changed their minds about the Commonwealth Government. When we were the Government we heard them—Hiley and others—saying that the Labour Party did not use the right approach to the Commonwealth. We were told that we were too blunt in our approach, that we should use finesse and technique. But what technique have they used in approaching the Commonwealth Government to get more money to develop this State?

I agree with Mr. Bolte and Mr. Askin. I think that this Government should have joined with them in making an attack on the Federal

Government and demanding more money out of the taxes it has received from this State to help the State balance its Budget, particularly when the Government's coffers are empty and the State needs more money for development. The Commonwealth Government has become a financial monopoly in the taxation field and the State goes cap in hand to the Federal Government every year asking for a greater share of the taxation funds it has gathered. Generally it comes away with less than it asked for, and is told to take what is given to it and see what it can do with it. That is the position.

I have suggested that we impose a State tax on petrol. I now suggest the introduction of capital-gains taxation in this State and tax those who make profit out of capital gains, on which at present they pay no taxation at all. Somebody should find a way to tax those people instead of the motorists, the down-and-out, the sick and the infirm. That is what this Government has done. Nobody can argue otherwise.

The Government should impose an excessive profits tax. Here is a report of a company that made a record profit of \$16,000,000, and most of it goes to overseas bondholders. What is wrong with a State excess-profits tax?

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: Company taxation is a Commonwealth matter.

Mr. MANN: Well, what is wrong with our getting into it, too? Why should we leave it all to the Commonwealth? There is Commonwealth company tax and Commonwealth petrol tax; we go down to Canberra and ask for so much money to develop this country and they say, "Here is a few bob; take that and do the best you can with it". The Government is taxing the ordinary people, who are already making all the sacrifices. Yet these fantastic profits are made right under its nose, and no effort is made to impose an excess-profits tax.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: If you can discover a formula under which we can get into that field of taxation, I will support you.

Mr. MANN: I am not an authority on taxation, nor am I an accountant. But I believe there are officers in Government departments who could find the answer to the question the hon. member for Chatsworth asked me. They could find a way of taxing these people to the benefit of the State. I cannot answer the question but I believe there are men in the Government service, experts in that field, who could.

Mr. Chalk: Do you think we should tax baccarat?

Mr. MANN: That could be done, if it was made legal. But at the moment it is illegal.

I do not want to be funny about this matter. The Government should investigate this field and impose an excess-profits tax

and a capital-gains tax. All of those things should come within the scope of the Government, which needs money to build and develop this country.

Government members have asked if we recommend less road construction, less education, fewer hospital services, and less State development. Of course we don't. We want to see it go on; the more money spent on education, development, and hospitalisation, the happier members of the Australian Labour Party are. So I make that suggestion to the Treasurer.

Recently I directed the following question to the Minister for Transport—

"Is the railway freight concession granted to Mount Isa Mines when Labour was in power still in operation?"

He answered—

"The railway freight concession granted to Mount Isa Mines in respect of blister copper and silver lead bullion is on the same basis as applied during the previous Government. Zinc concentrates, coal and coke are now on a fixed rate."

I ask the Treasurer and the Minister for Transport to tell the Committee in round figures how many dollars a year this agreement means in concessions to Mount Isa Mines Ltd. I do not want anybody to think that I am attacking that company because it has been granted concessions. They were granted, however, to assist the company when it was struggling to become established. Today, we note a profit of \$16,000,000 a year made by the same organisation, and I estimate that the concession in rail freights granted to it represents approximately \$1,500,000 a year. In spite of that, the Treasurer has increased the rail freights and fares paid by the ordinary people in the community. For workers who travel from Wynnum or Ipswich to the city, weekly fares have increased by 30c to 50c a week. That may not be much for hon. members opposite, but for a whole year it represents a fair amount. Whilst the working people are paying these increased fares, Mount Isa Mines Ltd. is receiving a concession amounting to about \$1,500,000 a year. That is my estimate following a question that I asked about this concession some years ago. I should like the Treasurer to correct me if I am wrong. Indeed, I challenge him to inform the Committee how much the concessions given on concentrates and lead bullion amount to in 12 months. He will find that my estimate of \$1,500,000 is not far from the actual figure.

There are in the community today young people who are looking for homes. When the Queensland Housing Commission begins a housing project, such as the ones at Inala and Woodridge, land developers immediately move in and take options on all the surrounding vacant land. They subdivide it, and up go the prices of allotments. They buy it for £2 or £3 an acre, subdivide it, and sell it, for example at Woodridge, at £275 to £375 a building block. At Runcorn

a block cannot be bought for less than £700, or \$1,400. Where the Hooker organisation is developing land at Jindalee, the cost of a block is \$1,800 to \$2,000.

Mr. Houghton: How much do you reckon the council is making out of that?

Mr. MANN: I do not know what the council is making out of it, but I am sure that the land developers are making a lot, and I believe that the Government should find out how much is being made and impose a capital-gains tax on it. Let the Government resume the land and sell it to workers at fair and reasonable prices. In Aspley a block costs about \$740, and at Strathpine, or Little Aspley, \$500 to \$600. Wherever a Housing Commission project starts, land developers move it, and no tax is imposed on their capital gains. The Treasurer, however, is taxing all the workers in the community, and those who use rail transport. The Financial Statement informs us that suburban rail fares are to be increased by an average of 25 per cent., and motor-vehicle registration fees by from 8½ per cent. to 116·7 per cent.

I cannot help referring to the statement by the hon. member for Kurilpa that people make a profit out of being sick. I do not believe that; I throw that statement back at him. If one becomes ill and occupies a bed in an intermediate ward, the bill will now be \$8 a day, or \$56 a week, as against \$6.20 a day previously. For a bed in a private ward, the charge will now be \$10 a day, or \$70 a week, instead of \$7 a day.

Much has been said about the Government's policy relative to hospitals. I challenge the Treasurer or any other member of the Government to answer this question: does the Government intend to impose a charge on patients in public wards in hospitals throughout Queensland? At the last election, which was held only six months ago, no mention was made of the Government's intention to increase charges for beds in private and intermediate wards, and no suggestion was made that railway fares or freights would be increased or that motor-vehicle registration fees would be increased. I think the Minister for Primary Industries has a bit of a soft spot in his heart for the workers in the sugar industry in his area, and I ask him to make a statement in relation to people occupying beds in public wards in Queensland hospitals. My question probably will go unanswered. The Government did not give any indication of its intention to slug the sick and the infirm who had recourse to private or intermediate wards; and I do not think it will give any indication of whether or not it intends to charge people who use the public wards. I understand from the hon. member for Mackay and others that people who pay into hospital benefits funds receive a certain amount of the hospital charges. That may be so; but the policy of the Australian Labour Party over the years has been that there should be

free hospitalisation at least for people who have to resort to public wards. I am sure that in the near future the Government will impose a charge on the poor people who use public wards. As I said, I should like the Treasurer, in his reply, to make a definite statement about the Government's intentions in this regard. I am glad to see that he has returned to the Chamber, because I want him to know exactly what I am asking him to do. If he does not give me an answer, perhaps the Premier will make an announcement at a later date.

To sum up, the new charges will come directly or indirectly from the ordinary working people of Queensland, and the Treasurer has said he is going to ask them to pay an additional \$15,000,000, I think it is. He is going to increase transport fees, and in his Financial Statement he says—

“Rail fares and freights will be increased from 1st November next. Suburban rail fares will increase by an average of 25 per cent.; country fares will increase by an average of 20 per cent.”

I wonder what the country people will think about that, coming from a Liberal Treasurer. It is not surprising that members of the Liberal Party have eulogised the Treasurer for using methods such as this to obtain additional finance, because I have a very clear idea of the attitude of the Liberal Party to the ordinary people. It gives concessions to the wealthy people in the community—the big business people and the monopolies—who are its friends; it does not want to see the Treasurer taxing them. If the Treasurer had been a member of the Country Party, would he have been eulogised in this Chamber by members of the Liberal Party?

Mr. Chalk: I am elected by country people.

Mr. MANN: The hon. gentleman is elected by some country people, but he has to expound the policy of the Liberal Party. He is the Leader of the Liberal Party in this Chamber; he has to expound its policy.

Mr. Chalk: I am expounding the policy of the Government.

Mr. MANN: As dictated by the Liberal Party, of which the hon. member is the Leader.

I want to say a few words about housing, because in my area people are leaving to go into houses in the outer suburbs. Many of them want to buy their own homes and they go to Inala and similar areas. This is a matter to which the Government should give serious consideration. I think it should be more concerned in the interests of working people and in obtaining homes for them than in those of big businesses and monopolies. It should assist workers to obtain their own homes more easily and more cheaply.

I feel that it is not labour costs or the costs of materials that are responsible for the high cost of homes today, but the high interest charges, in addition to profits, together

with the high cost of building allotments, with which I have just dealt. Those are the reasons for the astronomical cost of homes today. Homes that could be bought for £3,000 a few years ago today cost £5,000 or £6,000, and I think the Government should go more extensively into home building than it has in the past. It should build homes, home units, and flats for the people. I think there should be 100 per cent. loans to young couples of good reputation, and the interest rate should be no more than 3½ per cent. with repayments spread over 40 years. I think also that reduced repayments should be allowed to young couples in the first five years until they have overcome the initial cost of new-home occupation. If the Government would do that it would not have to slug the workers with increased railway fares and country people with increased freights.

The hon. member for Mackay was in Burketown a few weeks ago and he told me of the enormous cost of goods up there, principally because of the freight charged on them. That is passed on to the people in the community.

I ask the Treasurer to look into these matters. Let him examine the possibility of a capital-gains tax, a State petrol tax and an excess-profits tax and see if he cannot take money from those who are making millions from the community instead of slugging the workers. If he did that, I think he would earn the approbation of everybody in the community, as well as all members of this Assembly.

Mr. LONERGAN (Flinders) (3.44 p.m.): I have listened on eight occasions to Budget debates and I have never heard such weak contributions from members of the Opposition as have been made on this occasion. It is quite obvious that they are demoralised by the resignation of their former Leader. But I am not going to enlarge on that; he has been castigated in this Chamber by some hon. members, while many of his followers have praised his courageous action. I do not propose to enlarge on that matter, other than to say that had the hon. member 12 months ago taken the action that he took quite recently I would have given him some credit for it. As it is, I give him no credit because when he rose in his place on the Tuesday morning he knew full well that the report of the Commissioner of Taxation would be tabled in the Federal House on the Thursday morning. He waited right to the very last. I may have done the same, but I do not think so because, without being unfair to the hon. member, I believe in certain principles. I think that rather than embarrass my friends and the members of my party I would have spoken out long before.

I congratulate the Treasurer on his first Budget, although I am not completely happy with it. I am one of many on this side who exercise the right to express their private opinions, which is so different from the position on the other side of the Chamber.

Only a few Opposition members have had the intestinal fortitude to stick up for their beliefs and, although disagreeing with their politics, I admire them for it.

Mr. Thackeray: Who would they be?

Mr. LONERGAN: As much as I like the hon. member I would not name him.

I have a high regard for the Treasurer. I have been here only a few short years but I hope to be here many years yet. Now that the Trades and Labour Council is in control of the Parliamentary Labour Party we will be here until Doomsday. I admire the Treasurer's capacity for work and the fact that he has the courage of his convictions. As he knows, I have disagreed with him on many occasions and, with my disposition, I realise that we will disagree on many more.

Mr. Thackeray: Do you think he should be Premier rather than Mr. Pizzey?

Mr. LONERGAN: The hon. member will never attain ministerial rank, although I would say that he has the personality for it. I would not go any further than that.

I am very happy to see you in the chair, Mr. Rae. You are a very distinguished gentleman.

I was rather fearful of the Budget before it was brought down; I feared it would be much worse than it has turned out to be, although, as I say, there are some parts with which I disagree. I will enlarge on that as I go along.

We have been chided by various hon. members opposite on putting forward the excuse on many occasions that seasonal conditions have adversely affected the Budget. No-one can deny that this State, particularly in the West and in some northern areas, has come through the worst drought in living memory.

Mr. Aikens: They don't get off the tramlines. How would they know?

Mr. LONERGAN: They would not know. We well know the amount of money made available by way of drought relief to graziers, selectors and various other people who earn a precarious living from the land. It is well known that some people on the land have a quid today and are broke tomorrow.

I listened attentively to the hon. member for Mackay. As usual, he rambled all over the place like Brown's cows. Once again we were chided on consistently bringing down deficit budgets. I remember that the A.L.P. when in Government transferred large sums of money from the Main Roads Department to Consolidated Revenue to balance the Budget. At least £1,000,000 was transferred, and I challenge any member of the Opposition to deny it. The truth is unpalatable and they would not dare to quote it. What is the use of having money in the Treasury if we do not use it? All of us know that when we took over the reins of Government

Queensland was a run-down State. Our public buildings were in a shocking state and the kiddies in the outback were denied their right to secondary education. Because of the neglect over the years the State had to spend more money than it could afford, and perhaps more than was prudent. I commend the Government for adopting its present policy but the present generation should not have to pay the total cost. It should be partly the responsibility of posterity, for posterity also will reap the benefit.

It was somewhat sickening to hear various hon. members opposite refer to the many sterling qualities of the newly elected Leader of the Opposition and his Deputy. I will not say much from the personal angle, but, if anyone in the chamber should congratulate them, it is we on the Government side. They will occupy the Opposition benches for a long time.

I have always been interested in politics. All of us have some interest in politics, and although previously I did not have enough time to enter politics, I eventually got here. It is not a bad job; I cannot see anything better, and I propose to stick to it. As a result of the election of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the Country-Liberal Party Government will be here for at least another 15 years. Their election has set the Opposition back at least another six years, because the people of Queensland will not tolerate any Trades and Labour Council nominees. Had the hon. member for Baroona wanted the Deputy Leadership he would have "walked in". However, for reasons best known to himself, he chose to allow the hon. member for Townsville North to accept that honour. That is rather unusual because it is the practice for such a position to be held by a person whose seat is considered to be safe.

Mr. Thackeray: Is that why you are not in the Cabinet?

Mr. LONERGAN: If the hon. member for Rockhampton North will contain himself a little he will get the message and will have more knowledge after I have finished. We are the people who should be grateful for what has happened, although we have benefited from the misfortune of somebody else.

As the Transport Department's Estimates will not be debated this year, I shall devote some time to transport matters. I join with the hon. member for Rockhampton North in deploring the fact that the annual report of the Commissioner has not yet been tabled. When it is tabled I hope that it will give more information this year than it did last year, because it was not what was contained in the report that was important; it was what was left out. Three or four years ago it was an interesting report. I do not know why it was cut down. In deference to the Treasurer

I say that it would not be any desire on his part to withhold any information from the Committee.

Increased rail freights and fares were expected and inevitable. It is some years since the last increase. But how many basic wage increases and marginal increases have been granted in that time? It has been a matter of great wonderment to me how the Railway Department has fared as well as it has. But I must protest at the severity of the increases because they will affect the man on the land at a time when he is least able to absorb them. In contrast, a storekeeper is allowed to pass on to his customers additional costs that result from an increase in the basic wage to cover a rise in the cost of living. During the time Queensland was under the oppressive heel of Labour administrations there were eight increases in nine years, although the pastoral industry, in particular, was in a better position at that time to absorb those increases than it is today. At that time wool was selling at 240d. a lb., whereas today even those graziers who have grass on their properties are struggling and battling to make ends meet. How they are going to carry on, I do not know. Country people are an important section of the community. But for their efforts in their respective callings, there would be no cities. Country and city dwellers depend one on the other.

Mr. Thackeray: Do you believe in sales tax on freight?

Mr. LONERGAN: No, I do not.

Mr. Thackeray: Have you done anything about it?

Mr. LONERGAN: Of course I have, as well the hon. member knows. He is getting a little senile and his memory is failing. The years are catching up with him.

Mr. Aikens: He is not too bad; he voted for Hanlon.

Mr. LONERGAN: I admire him for that. I am concerned about increases in rail freights and fares, and as I proceed I intend to devote some of my time to some of the problems of the Railway Department today. Quite candidly, I feel that many railway workers are getting a very raw deal, and I make no apology for saying that.

Mr. Thackeray: You can say that again!

Mr. LONERGAN: If hon. members opposite were on this side of the Chamber, they would not say what I am saying, irrespective of their opinions.

On the question of main roads fees, I agree with the hon. member for Brisbane. Personally I raise no real objection to the increase; after all, it is quite small when spread over a year. A motorist who goes to the T.A.B. on Saturday morning could in one bet place the increase on a horse; and if he goes to the corner pub on a Friday

night it could all go in a couple of shouts. I do feel, however, that the system for levying motor-vehicle registration fees is iniquitous and unjust. I mentioned this in my first speech in this Chamber.

I believe that there should be a tax on petrol at the Federal level. I cannot see how it could be done on a State basis. There could be a nominal registration fee of, say, \$1 a year. What I suggest would mean that those making most use of the roads would pay the most. I travel an average of 30,000 miles in my car in my electorate, not running around Brisbane, yet the man who goes fishing at weekends and covers only 2,000, 3,000 or 4,000 miles a year pays as much in registration fees as I do. I think that that is quite wrong, and that the time has arrived when we should have a critical look at the system.

Mr. Aikens: If the Federal Government levied the tax, how would we get our share from them?

Mr. LONERGAN: Many difficulties may arise, but I always say that where there is a will there is a way. Anyone who really wants to do a thing can do it. I do not think that it would be any more complicated than the standardisation of petrol prices. We in the outback pay for petrol 4d. a gallon more than the price at the nearest port. I can remember, before standardisation became effective, that approximately 400 miles from Townsville I was paying 6s. a gallon for petrol, whereas now I pay approximately 4s. If petrol prices can be standardised, surely something can be done about the iniquitous system of imposing motor vehicle registration fees. I hope you are not thinking of calling me to order, Mr. Rae; that would destroy my confidence completely. I listened carefully to your speech the other day, as I always do, because you are one of our up-and-coming orators in this Chamber. You speak off the cuff, say what you mean, and get the message across. You said, Mr. Rae, that the greatest problem and the greatest need in the west is roads. With due respect, I disagree with you on that point. The greatest need in the west is water conservation. After all, one does not build roads in the desert.

It is unfortunate that the Minister for Local Government and Conservation is not in the Chamber, but I say without any reluctance that I am beginning to believe that the many representations I have made to him have fallen on deaf ears. I appreciate that all allocations have been reduced this year, but I think that the Government could have cut down on the money it spends—perhaps mis-spends—on tourism and spent it on more productive work. Why should the State publicise various resorts such as those on the islands in the Whitsunday Passage? The proprietors should pay for their own publicity. In this way, more money would be available for works that are productive and create real wealth for the State.

In my opinion, there is a place in Queensland for both road and rail transport, and I hold the view that if the railways were efficient, road transport would not be in the race. Unfortunately, they are not as efficient as one might expect them to be.

Mr. Aikens: They have not been any good since I left them.

Mr. LONERGAN: The hon. member for Townsville South may be right.

It is unfortunate that the Minister for Transport is not in the Chamber to hear what I have to say now. There is quite a lot of dissatisfaction among employees of the Railway Department in my area, and much of it is well founded. Although they are grateful to the Government for providing improved housing for railway employees, much more remains to be done. If I go to the General Manager in Townsville or to the Minister for Transport with a request, I am told, "We have not made any provision for that in this year's Estimates." I should like to know why. The Commissioner makes an annual inspection. Surely to goodness he knows the conditions under which these employees have to live.

Mr. Aikens: Plenty of money for big buildings in George Street.

Mr. LONERGAN: I have said before that the closer one comes to Brisbane, the better the standard of accommodation becomes.

For some years now the railway employees at Richmond have been pressing and agitating for refrigerators and water-coolers at that centre. On each occasion their requests have been turned down flatly by the General Manager for the Northern Division. Earlier this year the temperature was over 100 degrees for 14 consecutive days. In temperatures such as that the water does not get time to get cold in the water-bag and the men have to drink it lukewarm, but the Railway Department has no intention of doing anything about the problem; it is not concerned about the conditions under which people work in western areas. However, in spite of the difficulties under which the employees labour now, they are being treated 1,000 per cent. better than they were treated when Labour was in office. In fact, in those days they would not be game to complain. They would be transferred if they dared to raise their voices. The A.L.P. governed by fear, even at the ballot boxes. There was no such thing as a secret ballot in the days of the A.L.P.

Now I propose to raise what is to me a very sore point. Over the years I have been in this Chamber responsible Ministers have stated that our policy is one of decentralisation. I should like to know when this policy is going to be put into effect.

I could not put up any argument for the retention of running staff at the various depots where steam locomotives have been abolished. No sensible or sane person could

defend their retention; they have become redundant and we have to face up to the unpleasant fact that they just have to be moved. They have my sympathy, because many of them have lived there all their lives and now have to sell their homes at a great loss and move down here where homes cost £5,000 or £6,000. But there does appear to have been a determined effort on the part of the locomotive engineer in Townsville—Mr. Lettice, commonly referred to by employees of the Townsville Railway Workshops as "The fossil"—to close workshops wherever possible. He seems to have gone out of his way to do it. We well know that in the Mt. Isa rail project it was proposed to enlarge and modernise the Hughenden wagon shop but I have a few bob to say that that will never be done despite what some hon. members on this side of the Committee might think.

Railway employees in Charters Towers although not great in number are nevertheless a very important section of this small community. After all, if wagon repair work is available why should it not be done in that centre? It has been proved that work can be done in Charters Towers at lower cost per man-hour than in Townsville, but still "old Jock" wants to close the shop. Hon. members can believe me; he is old, and I wish he could be retired or brought down here as a porter to get him away from the North. He is not doing us or the railways any good.

I told the chaps in the wagon shop that when the wooden wagons are finished they will have to leave. They realise that, because they are sensible chaps, but, if the Government is sincere and believes in decentralisation, it will do something about this matter. Also, if it has any sense of justice to the individual it will keep these shops open. I have heard on the grapevine however, that it is proposed to close them in the near future. For the benefit of the Treasurer and the Minister for Transport, who no doubt will pay me the compliment of reading my speech, let me point out that, although in August last we had only two tradesmen in the wagon shop in Charters Towers, they changed 17 pairs of wheels and repaired 163 wagons in the four weeks of that month. That was not a bad effort. I admit that some of the wagons would have needed only minor repairs, but the figures prove that there is work there for these people. That is not an isolated instance. In September they changed 21 sets of wheels and repaired 118 wagons. As an indication that Townsville cannot cope with the volume of work offering I point out that they sent 17 wagons from Townsville to Charters Towers for repairs. Hon. members who take an interest in what is going on will recall that some time ago I asked a question of the Minister for Transport about the delay in the repair of wagons at the Charters Towers centre. If ever a Minister was given a deliberately misleading reply by his department it was on this occasion. I should like to know what

he is going to do about it. Is he going to swallow it? I shall be very disappointed if he does. They would not get away with it with me. The wagons were there for some weeks before I left. On my return to Charters Towers I found that the wagons were still waiting for brake fittings from Townsville, and when they finally came they were the wrong fittings. That gives some idea of the efficiency that is peculiar to the northern division. It is not unusual for wagon repairs to be held up for two or three weeks while fittings are awaited from Townsville. Quite recently repairs to an H. wagon were held up for 14 days awaiting the arrival of the proper draw gear from Townsville, the wrong draw gear having been supplied. Yet Jock Lettice and his minions will try to tell me that the Railway Department is efficient.

How often do we hear the rank-and-file railwaymen being castigated by the public for the late running of trains and many other things. In some instances the ordinary workers are to blame, but in most cases it stems from the top.

No doubt the Minister has heard of goodwill. If he has it is time he took some notice of that word and instructed his officers to take notice of it. Charters Towers has a population of more than 8,000. If we are kicked about by the Railway Department and some people leave the town, that must have some effect. Can you blame people for using road transport? Road transport today is giving better service than the Railway Department. As a former railway man I am not happy to say that, but I have to face up to facts.

I have already mentioned that there is a place in Queensland for both road and rail transport. With the increases in motor-vehicle registration fees—exorbitant increases for heavy vehicles—and increased road transport fees, many road transport operators are going to be taxed off the road. Many people would like to see that happen, but I remind the Committee that but for the road transport operators stock losses last year in the West and Central West would have been astronomical. No-one can deny that. The hon. member for Roma, who has forgotten more about road transport than I know, and many others will agree with me.

Another matter is exercising my mind and the minds of the men on the land. From time to time we have considerable difficulty in securing railway trucks to transport sheep from one place to another. This was particularly so last year, which was an abnormal year. There were delays of five to six weeks, and in that time sheep can die. I have been asked to submit to the Minister for Railways that, if the Department cannot supply trucks within 14 days, road operators should be permitted to carry the stock free of transport charges. I cannot see any objection to that; it seems reasonable. If the Railway Department cannot handle the

stock, the road transport boys should be allowed to come in and provide the service for the men on the land.

While on the matter of transport taxes, I shall mention some glaring anomalies which, as usual, favour the coastal people to the detriment of the people in the country. The latest schedule effective from 1 November, 1966, in relation to grain transported from the Clermont area to Mackay, states—

“All grains from producers and depots of the grain boards in the Capella-Clermont area to Mackay for consumption at Mackay—fee 1.5c per ton per mile on the registered load capacity of the vehicle subject to a clearance from the grain board concerned.”

There is nothing wrong with that, but let us see what happens when we want to transport grain to the inland areas. Here we get blatant discrimination, which the figures will prove, and no-one can refute them. It reads—

“Grain sorghum from Clermont to Charters Towers and Townsville—fee 3c per ton per mile on the registered load capacity of the vehicle.”

I do not know the reason for this discrimination but I and many other people in my area would like to know it. The schedule is unfair, and I am opposed to it. Why should Mackay get grain from Clermont at these reduced rates? In my area the grain is used to feed starving stock. No-one can deny my statements because I am reading from the schedule prepared by the Commissioner for Transport. This matter warrants the Minister's attention.

I turn now to petroleum products. I know there is reluctance on the part of the authorities to give permits to road transports that will be operating in competition with the Railway Department. I repeat that I have a great deal of time for the railways. But I must be consistent; I have referred to what is happening with grain and I now want to point out what happens to these products. It is roughly 127 miles from Brisbane to Gympie and roughly 126 miles from Townsville to Tully. Permits can be obtained, as set out in the schedule, firstly to all places situated within 75 road miles therefrom, and secondly, to any place situated between Townsville and Home Hill, Millaroo, Macknade, Long Pocket, or Tully. If my constituents apply for a permit to carry packaged petroleum products they are refused on the ground that it is over 75 miles. There again, why the discrimination? The department favours coastal people in the cartage of grain, and in no uncertain manner in the cartage of petroleum products. If a permit can be granted for 120 miles on the coast it should be granted for 120 miles inland. I fail to see why these people should not be given the same rights. I hope that my representations will not be in vain. The Minister, although new to the job is

able man. I trust that he will do something about it. I am concerned about it and I think it is most unjust.

The next matter concerns the Treasurer. I might touch a soft spot here but I have been doing that all my life and getting away with it.

Mr. Chalk: We are the best of mates.

Mr. LONERGAN: Of course we are. When the Mt. Isa railway project was proposed, and later when it was under construction, we heard many glowing reports of what would happen when it was completed. It was claimed that goods trains would run at 50 miles an hour. If they did, the Railway Department would have no fear of competition from road transport because road transport would not be in the race. I shall now quote some figures taken from a train notice of the feature train of 2,600 tons drawn by two diesels coupled together. On 17 September, 38D ran from Townsville to Charters Towers, a distance of 76 miles, in five and a half hours. It should be better than that. The train was composed of WHO wagons. I have no definite proof of this, nor would I say my information is correct. But I believe that the wagons are held at Partington for five or six days until there are sufficient of them to make up a train.

If I got up in the House tomorrow and asked the Minister for Transport to tell me if train 38D that left Townsville on Saturday, 17 September, arrived at Mt. Isa on time, he would say that it did, and I would not doubt him for a minute. When one looks at the train notice, however, it will be seen that that train is held at Charters Towers for seven hours. Anyone who puts goods on a train does not want them to be sidetracked along the line for seven hours. Would that happen with road transport? Yet wagon shops are being closed on the ground of inefficiency! Can anyone say that the running of that train is efficient, at a time when railway running-staff men are on a guarantee? For the benefit of some hon. members who may not know what a "guarantee" is, it means that the men work only 30 hours a week but are paid for 40 hours. They are usually booked on and do a bit of chipping round the shed; in other words, they are paid appearance money.

Whilst this is going on, double-header trains are being run. My view, which is shared by many practical railwaymen, is that trains of 1,300 tons could be run in half the time. These would require twice the number of men now needed, but over-all costs would be no greater than they are now. The economics of long trains are not sound. Believe me, I have devoted some time to this matter and have gone into it thoroughly.

Another feature train that has received some attention is 30D. It is an express train, mixed, with passenger accommodation, and is fairly fast. Do hon. members know its

average speed between Charters Towers and Townsville? I would expect someone to say, "About 40".

Mr. Bennett: It is 15·8.

Mr. LONERGAN: The hon. member for South Brisbane would not know the first thing about it. The average for this express train is 22 miles an hour. Someone might say that it is held up at crossings, but the longest delay for that train is 12 minutes. Whilst these things are happening, unfortunate people are being transferred on the ground of efficiency.

Another matter causes me grave concern, and in this I am on the side of the railwaymen. I raised it when the Treasurer was Minister for Transport, and he then told me the problems connected with it. Recently men who have been transferred have had to wait eight months before taking up their new positions. That is quite wrong. We have had the spectacle of railway employees with many years' service having to resign to return to their families, which I think is a disgraceful state of affairs. One transfer usually involves other transfers. In one case, a man from out my way was transferred closer to the coast. Before he could go there, a man from Emerald had to take his place, and one from Mayne had to go to Emerald. The man at Mayne malingered.

Mr. Aikens: Pulling political strings to stay here.

Mr. LONERGAN: Yes—compassionate leave and all the rest of it. The transfers of the other two men were held up for six months.

I suggest to the Minister for Transport that anyone who malingers—I think that is the correct word to use—should have his transfer cancelled and his name put on the bottom of the list. If he does not wish to take up a position, why should other railway employees be inconvenienced?

Mr. Aikens: Running round to all the metropolitan politicians asking to be kept here.

Mr. Bennett: Those malingers were trained by you—energy actors.

Mr. LONERGAN: Most of them were A.L.P. stooges. They would not be where they are if they had not been.

No Government is perfect, and I wish to refer now to one blot on the record of this Government. The railway station at Julia Creek is a disgrace. It does not rain very often out there, but when the rain comes from the North all the tables have to be shifted to the southern side of the building; if it comes from the South they have to be moved over to the other side. The railway stations at Pentland, Torrens Creek and Prairie are in a similar condition, but no provision is made in the Estimates for their

replacement. If my memory serves me correctly, in his report last year the Commissioner flew a kite about getting a new administrative block for the Railway Department. I should like to see the question come to a vote, with my vote being the one to decide whether or not such a block should be built. Believe me, it would not be built until the people of the Outback got suitable buildings to work in and suitable accommodation to live in.

I shall conclude on that note. I appreciate, as do many of the railwaymen, what the Government has done. As I said, much remains to be done. I do not accept for one minute the brush-off that no provision has been made in the Estimates. It is all hooey and baloney. It could be done if the department wanted to do it, and if railway employees are to be induced to go to Western Queensland the Minister for Transport will have to do something to improve their conditions; they are very trying at the moment. Recently I received a letter from a railwayman living in an area notorious for the infestation of flies in a normal season. He applied to my friend Charlie Hutchinson and asked that the department fit gauze to the front verandah of his residence. His request was refused, which, as far as I am concerned, was not unexpected. I leave those thoughts with the Treasurer, who can pass them on to the Minister for Transport.

I hope, too, that something can be done about anomalies connected with the carting of petroleum products and about smartening up the railway system generally. If it is not, there will very soon be a system of road transport right through to Cloncurry.

Mr. Chalk: They will take all the Mt. Isa business?

Mr. LONERGAN: I ask the Minister not to be facetious. I am not speaking about that, although I appreciate his help.

I conclude with those remarks and hope that the Minister for Transport and the Commissioner for Railways will take home heed of what I have said.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (4.40 p.m.): In supporting the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition I should like, at the outset, to express my surprise at the defence that has been presented by hon. members on the Government benches. This amendment was intended as an attack on the Government and was moved, in what we of the Opposition thought to be all good conscience, on behalf of the people of Queensland to express their displeasure at the Government's attitudes and policies, and particularly at its failure to finance the necessary social services and works on their behalf. But all we have heard from the Government benches in this debate—and, in fact, in one previous debate also—has been an attack levelled against the Australian Labour Party, both inside and outside of Parliament, relative to matters

that do not concern Opposition members generally, but that concern mainly myself and the former Leader of the Opposition the hon. member for Toowoomba West.

One would have thought that hon. members on the Government benches, having heard the case presented by members of the Australian Labour Party, would have come to the defence of the Treasurer and the Government. But I have sat here all day and all I have heard has been a speech by the hon. member for Ithaca in which he briefly, by innuendo, attacked his Government's failure to overcome the death toll on the road. Incidentally, I am in complete agreement with him in that matter. He indicted the Government for its failure to overcome this great problem. During the Government's nine years in office, road fatalities have gradually become one of the most serious features of community living in this city and State, but every attempt made by hon. members on this side to get some action to overcome this problem has been set aside by the Government.

Instead of defending his Government's policy, the hon. member for Kurilpa spent all his time in attacking the Lord Mayor of Brisbane. He also made statements that were completely erroneous in regard to the Government's assistance to the Brisbane City Council over the years. He mentioned how generous the Government had been in subsidising normal works and services in the Brisbane city area and, in fact, in other local authority areas as well.

If we examine the report of the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works for last year we see that the level of subsidies granted by this Government has increased only to a very minor extent in its period of nine years in office. In 1956-57 subsidies paid to local authorities were in the vicinity of \$7,500,000; in 1964-65 the amount had risen to only \$10,400,000. During that same period of nine years the Co-ordinator-General's estimate for his co-ordinated plan of development and works for Government, local authorities and semi-governmental authorities in Queensland had increased from \$101,000,000 to \$210,000,000. In other words, the works and services provided by the local authorities of Queensland during that period of nine years had doubled, due principally to inflationary trends in costs and necessary expansion because of increasing development and population, but there was a mere \$2,000,000 increase in the level of subsidies granted to those local authorities.

The hon. member for Gladstone has already reminded the Committee that subsidies to harbour boards have completely disappeared. The whittling away of the subsidy on sewerage schemes in Brisbane must have had a tremendous impact on the amount of sewerage that can be done in this city. Yet the hon. member for Kurilpa would use this debate to attack the Lord Mayor of Brisbane.

Although the present Lord Mayor of Brisbane may have become a controversial figure, at least he will go down in history as the Lord Mayor who has done more for Brisbane than any of his predecessors. Regardless of how he has gone about it, he has achieved results. That reminds me of an attack that was made during the last Brisbane City Council election. As part of their propaganda Labour's opponents during that campaign likened Clem Jones to Caesar. The Lord Mayor accepted that challenge, because one of Labour's very fine speakers at that time reminded the public that Caesar was the man who achieved the honour of being the first emperor to completely sewer the city of Rome. Perhaps there is that similarity because, if the Lord Mayor is given the opportunity, he will have Brisbane completely sewered, which no previous Lord Mayor has been able to do.

The hon. member for Flinders is a very kindly gentleman whom I greatly honour. He is well known to us all and well liked by most people. In his speech the hon. member found it necessary to attack the Government. In other words, the censure motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition was supported by the hon. member for Flinders in his numerous criticisms of the Railway Department. He said that the railway service on the northern line was inefficient. What is that but criticism by a Government member who, one would have thought, would have been active in his defence of the Government against this motion? Government members have engaged in criticism of the Australian Labour Party as a means of defending the Government against the censure motion.

Personalities have crept into the debate. I do not care about anything that happened to me. It was not unexpected; indeed, it was expected because of certain statements I made. No-one will ever hear me crying about it; no-one will ever hear me expressing regret for the nine years I spent in the service of the Australian Labour Party as Deputy Leader in this Parliament. I hope I was able to be of some assistance to numerous candidates, and to the Australian Labour Party, during that time. To the hon. member for Bulimba, as the Leader of the Opposition, and to the hon. member for Townsville North, as Deputy Leader, let me say that whilst I am allowed to sit on the A.L.P. benches in this Chamber I will assist them as much as possible. I hope they will be much more successful in bringing the A.L.P. back to the Government benches than were the former Leader of the Opposition and I.

There are a number of sections of this Budget which make very interesting reading. The Financial Statement is an indication of just how far the Government can go in its thinking and in financing the social services required by the people of the State and yet be unsuccessful in achieving the desired results. Right through the Financial Statement there is a sad story of the Government's

inability to secure additional finance to enable it to balance its Budget and at the same time provide the necessary services. An accurate examination of the budgetary position indicates that although at 30 June, 1966, there was a deficiency in the Consolidated Revenue Account of \$3,578,363, which is not a very great deficit, in cash balances available to the Treasurer of Queensland there was the sum of \$47,406,723. In fact, there is a credit balance of some \$35,000,000 in the Consolidated Revenue Account when we balance the cash balances against the accumulated deficit.

It may be said, and rightly so, that this money is not available to the Treasurer for spending on the works programme. In most cases it will not be available because special trust funds are involved. But they are utilised to balance the Consolidated Revenue Account so that it is not necessary at present to fund the deficit or deprive Consolidated Revenue this year of anything to pay off the tiresome deficit that has accumulated over two years.

To explain what has occurred I think it is necessary to go back to 1962-63, when I spoke about the surplus that the previous Treasurer showed as at 30 June, 1963. During that financial year the Commonwealth Government made available to the State some millions of dollars in non-repayable grants for employment purposes and the then Treasurer offset, or paid out of Consolidated Revenue, the sum of \$1,346,000 to pay off the tiresome accumulated deficit. In addition, he paid off four years' losses by the Commonwealth Savings Bank totalling \$635,302. He also used the money he had available that year to pay off capital losses, amounting to several hundred thousand pounds, incurred by the Railway Department in the closure of railway lines. In that year, in fact, he had an actual surplus in excess of \$2,000,000. Several years later the present Treasurer tells us he cannot do everything he wants to do, but he has budgeted for a small surplus. I have always said that when there is a shortage of money and we can expect good seasons in the following 12 months, we should budget for a deficit even though it may amount to several million dollars. We can budget for a deficit in one year if we are prepared to gamble on the seasons and the revenue-producing capacity of the following 12 months. I fail to see why the Treasurer has not done that in this case so as to provide for education, hospital facilities, hospital construction, and all the services required to protect the public, such as law and order, and public safety. In all these spheres there has been a withholding of finance that would have permitted the framing of an adequate programme.

I do not intend to go into education matters at this stage as I will have an opportunity to do so when the Estimates for that department are presented. However, it is well known that, compared with other States, Queensland is doing very little. Schools have certainly been built (under Labour's plans),

but they were academic shells without any facilities such as laboratories for science training. High schools have been built hastily, simply as academic shells, with an over-concentration on academic training. This is being done. The Commonwealth Government has now made special funds available for laboratories, but these facilities should have been provided many years ago. No new high school has an assembly hall in which to hold its own speech night and conduct art and music activities, which are just as important for our children as science and academic subjects. There are no facilities for these things in the new high schools because they have not been provided with assembly halls.

Mr. Aikens: There is a good one on the south side.

Mr. LLOYD: If there is, I should like to know where there is another, unless it is at the Kedron High School. There is certainly not one at Mitchelton or Everton Park. This much-needed facility has not been provided in many Queensland high schools.

Mr. Pizzey: How many did Labour build in 40 years?

Mr. LLOYD: I remind the Minister of the birthrate in 1946, the increase in the number of children attending school, and the need to graduate them from primary to secondary school. The Government has not improved the educational system to a standard comparable with that of other countries and other States. In the last nine years institutes of technology have been established in other States. It is only now, with assistance from the Commonwealth, that this Government has decided to establish an institute of technology in Queensland. South Australia has had two of them for more than six years, and New South Wales and Victoria have concentrated on this form of education which has been neglected by this Government. This year New South Wales will spend \$300,000,000 on education; Queensland will spend a little more than \$80,000,000. The Minister should not refer to what happened in 1946 or 1957. We have to look at the present position. Education is far too important a matter to be neglected because of a supposed lack of finance.

Mr. Aikens: You must admit that the Education portfolio was the Cinderella of the Labour Government.

Mr. LLOYD: I am the first to admit that Labour Governments could have done a great deal more for education. But that does not relieve this Government of its obligations. It has had nine years, and has failed. Not only its level of expenditure, but also the increase between 1957 and 1966, are the lowest of all States; so that this Government has a more shocking record under conditions of extreme pressure than Labour had.

It is important to consider the impact indirect forms of taxation will have on the marketing of production and on the cost of consumer goods, particularly in a State like Queensland. In all cases increased costs involve increased charges. Just as sales tax and payroll tax duplicate themselves, by the time goods reach the consumer the increased cost of transporting the goods to the market, whether the home market or the export market, has the same increasing, recurring impact as the goods go from the manufacturer to the wholesaler, to the retailer, to the consumer. There is a continuous, increasing snowballing effect with all of these forms of taxation. One of the most unfortunate features is that in the last few years there has been a search in all States for new avenues of raising revenue to enable those Governments to maintain themselves, while the Commonwealth Government is able to use tremendous financial resources on extravagant, sometimes unnecessary, projects, and, at the same time, starve the States for money. This will have a detrimental effect on Australia's capability to compete on world markets with primary and secondary production.

Let us now look at a comparison between State taxation and State expenditure on social services. I think these matters are particularly important. These figures prove conclusively the Opposition's contention that taxation in Queensland, apart from income tax, has been increasing from 1957 till the present at a rate far greater than is to be found in the other States, and that Queensland has been reducing expenditure on social services. State taxation has been increased, firstly, because insufficient money has been obtained from the Commonwealth Government, and secondly, to finance ordinary works and services. If money cannot be obtained from the Commonwealth Government, it must be obtained by some form of non-income taxation within the States.

In this case, the Government selected one of the most unfortunate features of State taxation; it chose taxation on motor vehicles as one means of improving its revenue position. In the year ended 30 June, 1965, Queenslanders paid in taxation on motor vehicles \$15.58 a head. The corresponding figures for the other States are—

	\$
Victoria	12.64
New South Wales	14.51
South Australia	13.61
Western Australia	12.31
Tasmania	13.77

At 30 June, 1965, the Queensland motorist was the most highly taxed of all motorists in the Commonwealth. In spite of that, the Government has again chosen motorists to provide another slice of revenue.

Let us now make a comparison with probate and succession duty and land tax. They are important matters because those

who pay land tax do not vote for the Australian Labour Party anyway, and the majority of people who have probate and succession duty to pay on large estates are also non-Labour voters. For the same year, the amounts per head of population paid in probate and succession duties were—

	\$
New South Wales	9.22
Victoria	9.68
Queensland	6.18
South Australia	6.33
Western Australia	3.8
Tasmania	5.45

Of all the States, Queensland showed one of the lowest figures of taxation in probate and succession duties.

The figures for land tax were—

	\$
New South Wales	7.15
Victoria	6.22
Queensland	2.37
South Australia	4.76
Western Australia	3.63
Tasmania	4.56

The people who usually support the Government parties are paying less in State taxation than are the working people. Over the years the Government has taxed liquor, betting, and motor-cars, and now has increased taxes on motor vehicles. Most people today have motor-cars. They have to be registered and the one hit most severely by increased registration is not the man who uses his car every day of the week but the worker who uses it to gain some extra pleasure at weekends and during holidays. He is the one who will be hurt, not the businessman or the wealthy grazier.

Those comparisons show that the Government has chosen selective forms of taxation as a means of gaining extra revenue. I realise that Queensland is not the most highly taxed State in the State field; but most certainly it is the third highest, and I want to say something about this in our relationship with the Commonwealth Government. Where one finds such a glaring example of a very low incidence of land taxation, a very low incidence of probate and succession duty, and a very high incidence of motor taxation, it is clear on which section of the community the Government has chosen to throw the greatest burden.

Let us look at the performance of the Government of Queensland since 1956-57 and compare it with the performance of the Governments in other Australian States. In that year the revenue per head of population from State taxation was—

	\$
New South Wales	26.38
Victoria	26.63
Queensland	24.64
South Australia	21.62
Western Australia	20.11
Tasmania	26.58

In the eight years between then and 1964-65 it has increased to—

	\$
New South Wales	52.22
Victoria	47.80
Queensland	42.61
South Australia	35.71
Western Australia	38.48
Tasmania	32.78

Despite that increase, in this important year when the State is gradually recovering from the effects of drought and it is necessary to give primary producers an incentive to rehabilitate their properties and their flocks and herds, the Government is budgeting for a surplus. Hon. members on this side of the Chamber have been criticised for making that comment, but the majority of people engaged in primary production, whether they are graziers, pineapple-growers, or cow-cockies, have been affected by the drought. Most people in the community believed that it was necessary to assist them in every possible way and that the Government would budget for a deficit, not for a surplus, even though a very small one.

Talk of deficits these days is so much nonsense; it was forgotten years ago. Every Government in Australia can afford to budget for a deficit, even if it has to be paid back at 10 per cent. by funding loans. For example, the new tax reimbursement formula was introduced in 1958 to assist Queensland, not South Australia. But although South Australia has expended much more money on all forms of services to the public than has Queensland, it has had consistent surpluses since 1960-61.

Western Australia, which receives very great advantages in financial assistance from the Commonwealth Government, has had consistent deficits since 1950. In fact, its deficits now amount to \$33,000,000 and have increased each year by about \$2,500,000. Western Australia does not seem to be worried about deficits. It seems to be more worried about getting on with the job of providing services for the people and for the State. I believe that Western Australia is far outstripping Queensland in all forms of development; it certainly is outstripping Queensland in its approaches to the Commonwealth Government for assistance. That is one thing for which the Government of Queensland can be indicted very severely by this Parliament.

Let us consider what the Treasurer has said in his Financial Statement. I think it is important that we should do so. On page 3 he said—

“I feel I should draw the Committee's attention to rising costs of interest and their effect on the State's Budget. In 1953-54, public debt services absorbed its lowest percentage of the revenue available in any post-war year i.e. 9.85 per cent. For the year just concluded the actual charge on revenue for debt services was 12.82 per cent.”

Let us look at one of the reasons for the increase in the servicing of Queensland's debt. It is rather significant that everything that Queensland has received from the Commonwealth Government under agreements negotiated between the present State Government and the Commonwealth Government has had a very detrimental effect on the budgeting of this State. For instance, if we compare the railway projects throughout Australia, and beef-road schemes as between Queensland and Western Australia, we get some idea of the impact of the servicing of the public debt on this State, about which the Treasurer has expressed some alarm.

I think these figures are rather important and should be included in "Hansard" as they indicate the impact of all these works, particularly that of the Mt. Isa railway reconstruction project on this State's budgetary position. This financial year it is expected that New South Wales will pay \$316,000 to the Commonwealth Government in debt charges upon loans made by the Commonwealth Government for railway projects from 1952 to 1967. Victoria also will pay to the Commonwealth Government \$316,000 on a total indebtedness by both States of in the vicinity of \$28,000,000. Queensland, with a total indebtedness for the Mt. Isa railway reconstruction of \$34,533,000, will repay to the Commonwealth Government \$2,867,000. South Australia, with a total indebtedness of \$24,000,000, will repay to the Commonwealth Government this year \$495,000. Western Australia—and this is the best example of all of how severely Queensland budgeting is hit by the type of agreement made between the Commonwealth and Queensland—will pay to the Commonwealth Government \$1,409,000 on a total indebtedness of \$57,944,000.

In other words, to service the indebtedness of the Queensland Government because it was forced into the position of financing the reconstruction of the Mt. Isa railway line, the Government has to repay its loan from the Federal Government's Loan Account at 5½ per cent. interest over a period of 20 years, whereas every other State in the Commonwealth had the opportunity of utilising the uniform railways legislation agreed upon between the States and the Commonwealth, and the opportunity of having sinking-fund repayments and its debt repayable over 53 years at an interest rate equivalent to Commonwealth bond rate. The result is that whereas Western Australia pays \$1,409,000 on an indebtedness of \$58,000,000, Queensland, with an indebtedness of \$34,500,000, has to pay this financial year \$2,867,000.

The same picture is presented with beef roads. A comparison between Queensland and Western Australia shows that Queensland will be paying to the Commonwealth Government this year \$366,000 as loan repayment, whereas in the case of Western Australia

there is no repayment at all to the Commonwealth of money that was made available for the construction of beef roads in that State.

The Treasurer's present concern about financing the public debt must become greater, because State expenditure in this direction is not going to stop with beef roads or the repayment for the reconstruction of the Mt. Isa railway line. The financial burden will grow worse with repayments for the brigalow lands scheme and other projects such as Weipa. Instead of spending \$2,400,000 in repayments, as we are this year, we might be in the position of no other State of the Commonwealth in that in the next 20 or 30 years we will be paying interest and capital redemption of \$4,500,000 a year. That money must come from somewhere, and no doubt it will come from the Consolidated Revenue Account. It will be a continuous drag on the State's budgeting.

When we consider the negotiations between the Commonwealth and the State, we find that all the way through this Government has failed in its attempts to protect the people against the insidious influence of the other States at Premiers' Conferences and Loan Council meetings. On this occasion I expected that the Treasurer would deliver some heavy blows at the Commonwealth Government for its failure to allow this State to receive much of this money by way of direct, non-repayable grants, but there was very little of that sort of thing coming from the Treasurer. This Government has failed to put forward an adequate case for the financing of beef roads or an increase in the amounts allocated by way of taxation reimbursement.

It cannot be said too often that there is an urgent need for a complete review of the Financial Agreement. There should be a special conference of all State Premiers to examine very carefully State and Commonwealth finances. Let me give the Committee some idea of the escalation, up and down, of the income tax revenue diverted to the States by the Commonwealth Government over the years. In 1947-48 the income tax revenue of the Commonwealth Government was \$645,800,000. The assistance given to the States under the Financial Agreement totalled \$169,276,000, or 26·2 per cent. By 1957-58 the figure had escalated to 46·4 per cent. of the Commonwealth's taxation revenue. That was the percentage given to the States in all forms of assistance, that is, by way of special-purpose grants, special-purpose loans, and all forms of special assistance, as well as taxation reimbursements. In 1957-58, of an income tax revenue of \$1,300,838,000 the assistance to the States had increased to \$603,354,000 or 46·4 per cent. In 1964-65 the figure decreased slightly to 45·2 per cent., and again in 1956-66 it decreased further to 44 per cent. when, of a total income tax revenue of \$2,682,800,000, the States received, in all forms of assistance, \$1,182,506,000.

What the States receive seems to depend largely on the policy of the Commonwealth Government. The taxation formula escalates to a greater extent than the actual financial assistance granted. In 1951-52 the proportion of income tax revenue was 23·9 per cent. It rose to 39·4 per cent. in 1962-63 and dropped to 32·1 per cent. in 1966-67. Income tax was originally the prerogative of the State Governments, and when it was taken over by the Commonwealth it was intended that there would be reimbursements to the States from uniform taxation. To enable the Commonwealth Government to pursue the war to a successful conclusion it was necessary to have uniform taxation, but it was never intended that in 1966-67 the States should receive only 32·1 per cent. of the total income tax collected.

It is essential that these matters should be considered. What, in fact, is the authority that provides the services for the people? Is it the Commonwealth Government that must pay for educational services, hospital services, for keeping law and order, and for public safety? All these things have to be provided by the State Government, and it is essential that the States should receive an adequate return from the Commonwealth Government in taxation reimbursement. But they are not getting it when they receive only 32·1 per cent., together with subsidies and special purpose grants.

Although the Commonwealth Government is not responsible for education, it may say to the States, "We will advance you 50 per cent. of the cost of special science laboratories in high schools if you build institutes of technology at Toowoomba and Rockhampton; we will give you sufficient money to cover the cost of construction so long as you build another university in Brisbane." The State's sovereignty has been completely destroyed. Conditions apply to many of these specific grants, and most of them are matching grants. This Government has quite openly stated that it has had difficulty in providing sufficient money to build universities and in providing other facilities to secure the full Commonwealth assistance in any one year. That happened several years ago, when the State Government was unable to spend sufficient money on the university to receive the full benefit of Commonwealth Government assistance.

There is a remarkable feature in that the escalation—up or down—in the amount of finance returned to the States in taxation reimbursements keeps very close to the amount required in any one year by the Commonwealth Government for special loans. In other words, when the Commonwealth Government has to finance the State's programme of works and housing and has to provide special loans from revenue, by way of transfer of a large sum of money to loan consolidation and investment reserve, we find that in that year there is a very low volume of taxation reimbursement for the State

Governments. For instance, in 1951-52, when the percentage figure of total taxation reimbursement was 23·9, the Commonwealth Government saw fit to take from its own revenue sources some \$305,000,000 and to place in loan consolidation and investment reserve an amount of \$305,000,000. That cost the Commonwealth Government nothing, as it came from revenue. It then lent that money to the State Governments to make up the short-fall in loan money available for their programmes for works and housing.

Again, in 1962-63 the percentage of income tax reimbursement was 39·4, and the amount taken from revenue by the Commonwealth Government to cover the shortfall in loan raisings to finance works and services in the States was absolutely nil. So that in 1951-52, when \$305,000,000 was required, only 23·9 per cent. was returned to the States by way of taxation reimbursement. When the Commonwealth Government needed none of the revenue to finance the total programme of State works and services, 39·4 per cent. was made available to the States by way of taxation reimbursement. In other words, the financial relationship between the States and the Commonwealth has deteriorated to such an extent that the Commonwealth Government is gradually usurping the powers of the State Governments.

In this Parliament we are not in a position to declare what works we will carry out, because we depend on the Commonwealth Government for financial assistance for all works we implement. All we can do is build a small dam, such as the Leslie Dam, costing \$2,000,000, and another small dam somewhere else. If we went ahead as we did with the Mt. Isa railway project, we would again become a serf of the Commonwealth Government, because in that case we had to pay high interest charges and agree to the adverse conditions of redemption demanded by the Commonwealth Government.

We have to pay for works and services and if we are to get sufficient money it is essential that the Premier discuss the matter with the other Premiers and with the Commonwealth Government because we have reached the stage, on the admission of the Treasurer, where, as a Government, we are no longer able to provide the adequate educational facilities required in these modern times, build sufficient roads in Brisbane to overcome our traffic problems without involving the State and the City of Brisbane in further debt, or create our own authority to build a dam to harness the headwaters of the Burdekin River, the Fitzroy River, or any other large river system in Queensland. All we can do is build small dams, small shells of high schools, and other things that are small. For large projects we must depend on the Commonwealth Government's accepting them as being important.

There is only one way that we can take some of this power from the Commonwealth Government, namely, by demanding an

immediate conference of representatives of all States and the Commonwealth, as is contemplated by the Commonwealth Constitution. The last time such a conference was held was in 1942, when the late John Curtin convened a conference of Premiers and Leaders of the Opposition from all States. They investigated amendments to the Australian Constitution. Although the agreement was unanimous, it was negated by the newly formed Liberal Party and the resulting referendums were defeated. Merely because one conference failed, that does not mean that another conference on this matter cannot succeed, particularly if the Premiers of all States are sufficiently strong in their demands.

Considering the small amounts received by State Governments in income tax reimbursement compared with other moneys which come from the Commonwealth Government, it seems that the practice is to make smaller taxation reimbursement grants and larger specific-purpose grants. In one category, a revenue grant is a specific-purpose grant and in another category it is a capital grant. There is a third category of specific-purpose grant, which includes loans.

It can therefore be seen that the relationship between the Commonwealth and the States has deteriorated over a long time. No longer is it a matter of the Commonwealth's collecting revenue and reimbursing the States, thus allowing them to use their powers to provide the works and services required. The present relationship now keeps the States at a low level of taxation reimbursement, and provides additional grants for special purposes. If one State is favoured, as Western Australia is, such a grant is made a revenue grant. If a State is not in favour, as apparently Queensland is not, it is made as a loan, under conditions that make it highly profitable to the Commonwealth Government.

In the provision of social services, this amendment is directed against the Government, and I believe it should have received greater consideration by Cabinet and hon. members on the Government benches. Not only does it concern increases in State taxation and the attitude of the State Government to the Commonwealth Government, but development generally. I have said before that the numerous agreements reached between the Government and branches of industry will not work to the benefit of future generations of Queenslanders. They are costly to the people, and do not produce sufficient revenue. It was not necessary for the Government to go to the extent that it did, and, for the relationship existing between the Commonwealth and the State Government and the manner in which it has manipulated Queensland's financial system, I believe that it should be subject to the greatest possible indictment.

In considering State taxation, it is particularly important to look at the industries of Queensland. The Government cannot

continue to increase all forms of indirect taxation. If that is done, it will become impossible to compete on world markets. This has already become apparent in the sugar industry. If we are to compete overseas, it is essential that costs of production be kept to a minimum. That can be done, even if industry is asked to pay the highest wages possible in relation to its prosperity. As far as possible, all other forms of taxation that increase the cost of production can be reduced. The added costs caused by increases in rail charges and other transport taxes will have a very great influence on the cost of a commodity at the point where it is produced. If producers cannot reduce the cost of their commodities, they will suffer what is now being felt in the sugar and dairying industries, where production costs are higher than the returns. Where those conditions exist, they must be given urgent attention.

All cases in which State taxation has an impact on the community, particularly the consumer, should be thoroughly examined. In the normal process of economics, an increase in costs by increasing charges is an inflationary method of defeating inflation, which can have a dangerous effect on the community. The best method of meeting the situation is to maintain production costs at as low a level as possible and provide to the consumer the cheapest possible commodity so that demand is maintained at the highest possible level.

In the field of Commonwealth-State financial relationships, since 1958 we have seen the disastrous effect that the newly negotiated agreement has had on main roads. Queensland has lost the favourable position that it occupied formerly and has lost considerable sums in roads grants, and it has not made up the leeway. It has also suffered severely as a result of the new taxation reimbursement formula. The 1958 agreement did not have any appreciable effect on the finances of Queensland immediately, but within two years the parlous employment position made it essential that the Commonwealth Government should make millions of pounds available to Queensland in non-repayable grants. Instead of the newly negotiated Financial Agreement giving a fair return to Queensland, it was found that the favourable features of the old formula negotiated by former Labour Governments were disappearing. The tax formula formerly contained a provision that the number of children in country areas in Queensland and other parts of Australia should be taken into account. That was replaced by a provision that took into account only increases in population and in wages costs. Queensland now has to receive an additional payment of £1,000,000 a year for the next five years to maintain an adequate level in comparison with the other States.

As I said earlier, it is strange that since the introduction of the 1958 tax formula agreement, South Australia, which no longer

is a claimant State, has been able to show a surplus every year since 1960-61, with the exception of one. The figures indicate that, per head of population, Western Australia and Tasmania are receiving very large grants from the Commonwealth Government, either by way of financial grants or specific purpose grants. Queensland is gradually becoming a borrower while other States are grantees, and moneys that usually were given to Queensland by way of grant under an improved taxation reimbursement formula now have to be borrowed and repaid out of Consolidated Revenue. Is it any wonder that the servicing of the public debt has had a tremendous effect on the Budget brought down by the Treasurer for the current financial year? I assure him that the effect will be even greater in the next five or six years—if he is still Treasurer.

These are very important matters to which the Government should be replying. It should say whether or not it is agreeable to the continuance of this state of affairs, in which the Commonwealth Government can dictate to the State Government and refuse to give it adequate moneys to enable it to provide services to the people. In Western Australia and Tasmania, which are claimant States, the expenditure on all forms of services—education, hospitals, law, and safety—is about \$4 a head higher than it is in Queensland. Those States are budgeting for a deficit, but Queensland is unable to bring itself up to the level of more prosperous States, such as Victoria and New South Wales. In view of that, I say that the Government should take very definite action. If it is not prepared to take that action, the Opposition has the responsibility of bringing the matter before the public in the hope that the Government will make at least some attempt to get financial justice for Queensland.

I do not believe in continually increasing forms of State taxation. Such a practice increases production costs and I do not think we should be doing that. An increase in land tax is all right—that does not increase production costs, but the Government is not prepared to tax its friends by increasing land tax as other States of the Commonwealth have done. Instead, the Government puts us in the position of continually chasing costs by increasing all forms of indirect taxation.

(Time expired.)

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) (5.41 p.m.): I rise to support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. It has been fully justified, and the Treasurer has given ample evidence that he is considerably embarrassed and particularly concerned at the forcible and convincing arguments that have been advanced by all speakers on the Opposition side. I should point out that 24 out of 26 members of the Opposition have dealt at great length with matters concerning

the welfare of this State. The other two members would have spoken had they not been unfortunately absent. The hon. member for Mourilyan sent his apologies today; he was not able to get on the plane from Innisfail, and the hon. member for Warrego is absent in his electorate attending a very important public function. The number of Labour speakers represents a far higher percentage of the debate than that contributed by members on the Government side, particularly if the length of the speeches is taken into consideration. Most Government members made short speeches compared with the length of those from this side of the Chamber.

I wish to state, briefly and sincerely, that I always have had, and still have, complete confidence in the integrity and honesty of purpose of our former Leader, Mr. John Duggan, and I express disgust and resentment at the unnecessary, scurrilous and positively unfair attacks made on him by the hon. member for Townsville South and, unfortunately, the hon. member for Bundaberg.

Confronted with this situation, the Australian Labour Party immediately took steps by constitutional means to elect a Leader and a Deputy Leader and, with 100 per cent. loyalty to them, we are determined to do everything possible to gain possession of the Treasury benches at as early a date as we can. We realise that we are confronted with scandalous gerrymandering of the electoral boundaries, and members of the Government are gloating over the problem that faces us.

Despite the speeches of Government members who claim that this Government has been so successful, the fact is that at the last State election almost as many electors in Queensland supported the Australian Labour Party policy as supported the Government's policy. The fraction of difference in votes is not worth recording, yet the fact remains that, with virtually the same number of votes, the Australian Labour Party has 26 representatives in this Parliament compared with the Government's 47. The Government ought to be heartily ashamed of the situation, and it should immediately have a redistribution of seats to restore justice in such a way that the Labour Party can gain representation in this Parliament, at least, according to the number of people who support it during elections.

We are asked by Government members to be appreciative of the fact that this is a good Government. By every standard by which they measured the government of the Labour Party they fall by the wayside. Even allowing for the reduction in the purchasing power of money, this Government has had much more available to it than the Labour Government. This Government has had increased revenue available to it from the tremendous increases in stamp duty, land tax, motor vehicle drivers' licences, which

increased from 7s. 6d. to 15s. and later to £1, excessive increases in motor-vehicle registration fees, tremendous income from T.A.B. revenue which the Labour Government did not have available to it, totalisator and betting tax increases, bookmakers' tax increases, harsh on-the-spot fines, liquor licensing fees increases and tremendous increases in transport fees. Despite all that increased revenue, what an inglorious record of failure has this Government! When Labour was in office a big increase in the public debt was regarded as bad government. I can remember prior to the 1929 period when the Opposition parties were complaining about the way the public debt was mounting. At that time it was said that that indicated that the Government was not able to administer the financial affairs of the State. When we examine the public debt today we find that the rate of increase exceeds the rate in the days of Labour Governments. In addition, there have been repeated deficits in the time of this Government. Indeed, it has become deficit-happy. It is therefore most strange that in a year when the Government claims that a drought has affected its finances it should budget for a surplus. Whether the drought has been an over-all record is questioned by some authorities in this State, although it has been a serious one. It is very hard to understand. When the hon. member for Mackay suggested that the Government would have been much fairer if it had imposed increases year by year, instead of rushing in this year with increased charges to budget for a surplus, the Treasurer ridiculed him. Was it not the same hon. gentlemen who, as Minister for Transport, told railwaymen, when speaking of the implementation of the Ford, Bacon and Davis report, "We will not give you the whole bottle of medicine at once, but a teaspoonful at a time." That was the basis of the argument of the hon. member for Mackay, so it was rather strange that the Treasurer should ridicule him.

The Government has a much worse record for deficits than the Labour Government, despite the problems that confronted the Labour Government during the war and in the post-war years. It has a worse record than the Labour Government for railway deficits—and "Hansard" records the many comparisons that have been made—despite the fact that 5,000 to 6,000 fewer men are now employed in the Railway Department. It has been clearly revealed that it is impossible for the present staff of the Railway Department to keep up with the work. One has only to travel in the trains to see the lack of paint and other maintenance. It makes one wonder about the condition of the rolling stock and the track generally throughout the State. Do not forget that the payment of, say, approximately \$2,000 a year to 5,000 or 6,000 men would represent \$10,000,000 or \$12,000,000 a year which the Railway Department has not had to pay. Despite that saving the Government has this record of deficits in the Railway Department.

Because of the increases of prices in this State, Queensland, which previously was the cheapest State in the Commonwealth in which to live, now has the highest cost of living in Australia.

I have already mentioned the income from the T.A.B. and the record State taxation this Government has levied. At the same time we have had a record surge of population to the capital city. When Labour was in office it was accused of bad government because of the number of people leaving the country areas for the cities. Today the number is continuously rising. Apparently this does not concern Country Party members, although they expressed great concern about it when the Labour Party was in office. We have the lowest population increase in Australia. A few years ago, under this Government, more people left the State than came here. The increase if any was the natural increase represented by the excess of births over deaths. Queensland has the lowest per-capita spending on education in Australia, but I will deal with that during the debate on the Education Estimates. We also have the lowest home-building rate, yet under Labour this State held the record for the highest percentage of home ownership in the Commonwealth. Today, the rate of home building in Queensland is the lowest in the Commonwealth. We also had extension and research officers in all departments concerned with primary production, but on a population basis we now have the smallest number. Allowing for the difference in size of the States, Queensland has the lowest proportion of irrigated area. By a stroke of good fortune the Government has sold coal to Japan, and there has been an expansion of the bauxite industry on Cape York Peninsula. However, that would have occurred if Labour had been in power. Oil development has also occurred, which would have taken place under Labour. At the same time, the Liberal and Country Parties throughout Australia have every reason to be ashamed of the slow oil exploration in Australia compared with other countries in the world where oil is found.

Apart from that of the hon. member for Flinders, the main protests against the Budget have come from some Liberal Party members. Very little criticism has come from Country Party members, yet there has been overwhelming community criticism of it. The Government has been criticised because of the unnecessary severity of the Budget and its unseemly haste to produce a surplus this year when, as pointed out by several hon. members on this side, we had hoped to see efforts to bring about a gradual recovery from the effects of the drought.

I now wish to place on record the comments of several prominent citizens about this Budget. Mr. C. B. Peter Bell, the President of the United Graziers' Association said—

"The Budget will hit the grazing industry, and the wool industry in particular cannot go on much longer trying to absorb rapidly spiralling costs."

Mr. H. V. Tozer, State President of the Australian Primary Producers' Union said—

"If our Government wants a primary industry it must stop taxing it out of existence."

Mr. J. G. Munro, President of the Queensland Taxpayers' Association said—

"The tax gatherers apparently have run riot."

Mr. Cyril Anderson, State President of the Long Distance Road Transport Association, said that Mr. Chalk's savage increases could easily rebound seriously against Queensland. He then said—

"We could now have the spectacle of a lot more Queensland produce by-passing this State and heading to Sydney.

"It will actually be cheaper now for a western grazier to send his wool direct to Sydney rather than have it road transported to the Brisbane sales.

"Surely the Country Party could not have been consulted fully before Mr. Chalk presented his budget."

As a matter of fact we in this Chamber need no proof of the fact that the Government Caucus is very rarely consulted about any measure of importance put before us.

Then we have the new taxes. Firstly there is the stamp duty of 1 per cent. on the registration of new motor vehicles and motor vehicle transfers, which is expected to return \$2,000,000 in a full year. There is the stamp duty of 3 per cent. of the premium on all workers' compensation policies from 1 November, which is expected to return \$375,000 in a full year.

Further evidence of the reaction of country people is to be found in "The Queensland Graingrower" of 12 October, 1966. It reads—

"Primary Producers Stunned and Angry at Harshness of State Budget

"Primary producers were stunned and angered by the harshness of the State Budget and the 15 per cent. increase on grain freights was the hardest of all to accept.

"The General President of the Queensland Grain Growers' Association, Mr. L. V. Price, stated this in his report which will be presented at the October meeting of State Council, in Toowoomba, today.

"The increase, Mr. Price said, would not only take an extra 1,000,000 to 1,500,000 dollars a year from grain growers in Queensland, but also would have such far reaching effects on the pooling system that he hesitated to forecast where it would end.

"Movement of grain over the Border was already causing the grain boards concern, and to think that that movement would not double or even treble was defying logic.

"The Queensland Government Railways had a monopoly on the haulage of grain controlled by the respective Boards within Queensland and with any monopoly must go responsibility to the industry.

"It was no secret, Mr. Price said, that grain haulage had been and still was a very lucrative business for the Railways and to impose an increase of such a magnitude when so many growers were trying to recover from severe drought gave a very hollow ring to the Government's words of sympathetic concern and led him to believe that Cabinet had been either ill-advised or had not sought advice at all."

That is severe condemnation of this Budget and it will become evident in the result of the Federal election on 26 November. This matter will take some explaining by Country Party members. It is rather strange that nearly all of the protests have come from members of the Australian Labour Party. Hon. members opposite talk of the freedom they have and claim they are not bound by Caucus decisions. We know of the reckless rebel group on the back bench. But few of the others are prepared to speak openly with clear clarion-like voices in opposition to the harshness of this Budget.

The Government is complacent about finishing the year with a deficit. The Opposition told the Treasurer he should have budgeted this year for a deficit rather than rush forward and impose these damaging and harsh forms of taxation which will further embarrass the man on the land.

We have received a tremendous number of protests from all over the State relative to the Government's denying the right to free hospitalisation. I join with those who are protesting and ask the Premier to advise the Minister for Health to rise tomorrow morning and make a definite statement to the people of this State that he will not interfere with or curtail the free hospitalisation privileges we enjoy at present. He has not done it so far so we have a right to be suspicious, remembering that we have a little coterie on Wickham Terrace which is endeavouring to dominate Government policy in this regard. At a council meeting this group declared that it was in favour of abolishing our free hospital system. That is a completely outrageous submission.

In the "Telegraph" of 20 October, 1966, there appears the following statement:—

"The State Government may impose a charge on outpatients at public hospitals in Queensland."

[*Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.15 p.m.*]

Mr. DAVIES: I hope that this suggestion does not prove to be well founded. From such Press statements it seems to me that a kite is being flown to gauge public reaction. I can assure

the Government that the public generally would consider any such action to be a scandalous breach of trust. An assurance was given that there would be no interference with the system of free hospitalisation in Queensland, and I hardly think that any Government would dare to tamper with what has become almost a tradition in this State.

It must be remembered that this system was not introduced suddenly. Over many years the Australian Labour Party endeavoured to evolve it, and in the end was successful. It is a wonderful thing for a family to know that if someone gets sick anywhere in the State he can be sent to hospital and, without any inquiry, pressure, or worry about finance, be admitted and have available to him the best of medical attention, and, if more specialised treatment is required, he will be moved quickly by ambulance or air transport to Brisbane or, as we have seen happen, to one of the southern capitals.

I recognise that the Government has not failed in its endeavour to make the best medical services available to those in need of them in this State. I think that that knowledge has a tremendous effect on the morale of the family of a person in need of medical treatment. I am sure that all hon. members know that the Queensland system means very much to the medical services in general, and I believe that the best medical men in this State would hate to see any interference with the free hospitalisation system. Specialist services are immediately available, and honorary specialists in the various public hospitals regard it as a great privilege to hold those appointments.

This attitude makes one think of those who went out centuries ago from the monasteries and wandered the countryside doing good. Many names come to mind, and reading of them acts as an inspiration to those who become familiar with their lives. I believe that our present free hospital system is the embodiment of all things for which the Christian religion stands; here is an example of the Christian spirit and the Christian church in action. I believe that the other States envy what we have, but could not overnight change to our system. Too much change would be required, and they could not do it suddenly; it would have to evolve gradually. The extension of this system by Australian Labour Party Governments (because no other Government has a desire to do it) throughout the Commonwealth is something for which we hope.

I hope that the fears of the A.L.P. prove to be without foundation, and I believe that the Minister has a duty to Parliament and the State to make a forthright statement on the attitude of the Government to free hospitalisation.

It was very interesting to listen to the hon. member for Flinders criticise the Minister for Transport in a very outspoken

way. In effect, it was a very savage attack on the Minister, because the hon. member charged him with giving deliberately misleading answers to his questions and spoke of inefficiency in the Railway Department. Possibly he was referring to the work that cannot be done by the smaller number of men, because, as I said, between 5,000 and 6,000 have been dismissed.

I thought, too, that more comment would have been made by hon. members on the Government benches on the section of the Financial Statement in which the Treasurer complains about the failure of the Commonwealth Government to respond to this State's appeal for financial help to offset the effects of the serious drought. I expected that members representing country electorates would have had more to say about the attitude of landholders towards future droughts. The comments of our former Governor, Sir Henry Abel Smith, and other people who move round the countryside indicate that some people suffered far more than did others. Members of the Opposition have a suspicion that there are too many people on the land who in good times do not avail themselves of the opportunity to store fodder and make the necessary water supplies available to enable them to meet their problems more easily. The effects of drought could be cushioned to a much greater degree than they are at present, I am sure. One very prominent landholder told me recently that, with the lush grass now available, he will be able to see a drought through much more easily than his neighbour who overstocks.

Mr. Rae: You must remember that many people have to overstock to enable them to meet their commitments, because the areas were too small originally.

Mr. DAVIES: The hon. member has had long experience on the land in western areas, and I think he would be the first to admit that one of the greatest problems in Queensland is the greed of those who overstock. I will leave it at that, but I should like to hear the hon. member for Gregory speak on that subject. He would, I hope, speak his mind very candidly.

The Treasurer said—

"I am pleased to acknowledge the assistance offered by the Commonwealth Government whereby that Government will recoup our extraordinary expenditure on drought relief to a level of \$9,250,000. However, I must repeat my earlier public expression of disappointment that the only aid afforded us towards the factor of loss of revenue by drought is \$2,750,000. As we have already lost in the vicinity of \$8,000,000 from this cause and I estimate that we shall lose a further \$9,000,000 from the same cause in 1966-67, I can only state that the help given in this direction is totally inadequate."

In consequence, he then excused himself for making certain extra charges on the community.

Mr. P. Wood: I hope he says that during the Federal election campaign.

Mr. DAVIES: That is a condemnation of the Federal Government. If the landholders are awake to this responsibility and sensitive to this neglect, we will see the answer in the ballot box on 26 November. Of course, an attempt will be made to draw red herrings across the trail and to disseminate false propaganda.

I wish to place on record very briefly a little about the work of the Blue Nursing Service in this State and its finances. I am the patron of the Maryborough group and its representative on the State Council, but I am not speaking for the Council on this occasion. The service is doing wonderful work, Christian work, in Queensland, and I place a few figures on record so that hon. members may read them later. Although the service has been in action for only a few years, it employs over 100 sisters. I should mention, too, that sisters of the Anglican church and the Roman Catholic church are also doing wonderful work in this type of work. Of the 100 sisters to whom I referred, more than 80 work full time. They travelled 623,594 miles this year, which is equal to a trip from Brisbane to Darwin each day. There are 18 centres from the southern border to Cairns and the most western centre is Mount Isa. A 60-bed hospital was opened recently in Cairns. There are over 200 beds in the State in the various homes and hospitals. We see the Christian church at work in this Blue Nursing Service. It is a charitable Christian order.

There are 40 cars in the State now owned by Blue Nurses. The sisters through the year made 285,724 calls, an average of 800 a day. Having regard to the extent of the work of this organisation, we might wonder today how we ever managed without it, but, like many movements, it has sprung up with Christian progress in the community.

One thousand patients are administered to every day; 11,000 patients are visited during the year. The work is strenuous but this organisation provides kindly care and help to every aged patient. The sisters radiate happiness, understanding and sympathy and they do not spare themselves in bringing help to those in real need. The cost of the organisation last year was \$240,693. The State provides \$60,300. I am emphasising these figures because we in Government often get the impression that we are doing everything ourselves. I will state the position frankly. We sometimes feel we are providing the whole of the money but, as I say, the State provides \$60,300 a year and the Commonwealth almost the same, \$60,550.

This is a free service but some patients here and there respond and throw in some contribution. By this means they provide \$36,712, which is greater than half of the subsidy of the State or the Commonwealth. The public, in response to an appeal throughout the State put in more than either the State or the Commonwealth, namely, \$63,329, and from further public donations the service obtained \$27,000, making a total public contribution of \$90,329, which is half as much again as either the State or Commonwealth payments.

In addition to that, certain organisations provide quite a number of the cars that are required. I am not speaking on behalf of the Blue Nursing Service. I belong to the organisation but I am speaking now as a member of this Parliament. The State subsidy is sincerely appreciated by the Blue Nursing Service but I say that it is not enough. I ask hon. members not to forget that the Blue Nurses do far more for the Government than the Government does for them because, if all those patients were thrown back onto the State, the State would have to find a much larger sum of money than it now donates to help the Blue Nurses.

The Commonwealth evidently realises that this is so. It is not generally known but it should be noted that, whereas the Commonwealth now matches the State grant, it is willing to go further and grant a subsidy for every nurse up to \$2,200. The State is only willing to grant \$900. There is a whisper—I have not got it authentically—that the Government is willing to increase its figure a little. At the moment the State and the Commonwealth grant is \$900, but the Commonwealth is willing to go to \$2,200. At least I am willing to give the Commonwealth Government a good mark there, but this State Government hides too much behind the Commonwealth's failure to provide services and refuses to accept responsibility for particular work.

I have another complaint to make. For the chronically ill the Commonwealth grants £1 a day and the State 16s. a day. Recently inspectors went around and classed 16 patients as not chronically ill, but the point is that these 16 patients are much better simply because of the loving care and the modern geriatric treatment given by the Blue Nursing Service. The Government says to these patients, "You can walk around now. This loving care has got you out of your bed," but they are still chronically sick and there is nowhere for them to go. The Blue Nursing Service is endeavouring to provide a home to cater for that type of person. The Blue Nursing Home loses the 16s. That is not right. The Government should look into it. These people appear to be much improved but they are still chronically ill. They respond to loving care and improve in health. So we see the difficulty that besets these people. Financially it is better to stand by and see them fade away because the State will continue to pay

the 16s. a day. But the Blue Nurses are too dedicated to their work to stand by and see them die. Their devotion must inspire everybody. There are thousands of people in the State who say every day, "God bless the Blue Nurses." The State Government attitude, to put it mildly, is not a fair one. I appeal to the Government to do something in this direction.

I pay tribute to the ladies auxiliaries throughout the State, including Mt. Isa where one was recently formed. At present there are eight in the State and they do a magnificent honorary job involving tremendous sacrifice in time and effort. The various auditors, secretaries and treasurers give their services free. I should hate to see the day when anyone tried to get on the band wagon in centres where there is no home or hospital by asking for payment for his services. In conclusion I will name some of the homes that have been established—"Greenhaven," "Lauriston," "Kewarra," "Salvin Park," "Pleasantville," "Gold Coast Garden Settlement," Cairns Hospital. The names will be familiar to many hon. members. I am pleased to know that many hon. members are very closely associated with the Blue Nursing Service or some similar organisation.

In the time remaining to me I wish to dwell on the subject of the water supplies of the State and lead up to the survey of the Mary River basin. It is one of the most important river basins in the State. We hear a great deal about the Burdekin and Fitzroy basins—rightly so—but very little about this very important valley which I believe to be possibly the richest valley in the State. It has tremendous potential. I should like to outline a few of my thoughts about water. First of all I shall read a statement that sounds very elementary but which contains a tremendous amount of thought. It appears in the January, 1964, edition of the "Journal of the Water Pollution Control Federation of the U.S.A." under the heading "Water"—

"It is the universal liquid of life and part of our very being. It is everywhere around us, in the air and earth. Without it we could not survive, nor could any plant, animal or other living thing.

"It is a final necessity for which man has devised no substitute.

"Water can be so abundant as to invite waste and neglect. It can be so scarce as to set man an earnest contest for its vital uses. It can produce crops, trees and grass—or the ugliness of raw gullies cut into an unprotected countryside.

"It is a miraculous gift of God, given to use for our refreshment and endless uses. But our neglect can waste it; our misuse can turn it into offensive sewers of pollution.

"Water tests our sense of responsibility to God and man. It asks for care, requires our self-discipline, and responds to management.

"This priceless water has been here before and by God's plan will be returned again and again for us to use according to our maturity, either with wisdom or with shameful neglect."

Sir William Hudson, a Commissioner of the Snowy Mountains Authority, who has a magnificent record of service in water conservation problems in this country, wants more irrigation schemes developed in North Queensland and Northern Australia. He is a very modest man and will go down in history as one of the best administrators and most knowledgeable men produced by this country. He would like to see dozens of Murrumbidgee schemes in North Australia. He said that two-thirds of the Australian rivers flow to the sea in the area north of Rockhampton and that half of the food produced in Australia comes from irrigated areas. During the post-war years a technical committee on hydrology was established in Australia by the Institute of Engineers. There were many other people who were interested in Professor Messel's appeal for the Nuclear Research Foundation, but it was difficult to get the public interested in water problems in Australia. An attempt was made to establish a water research foundation, which was eventually established in 1955, and now has 840 subscribers. It is interesting to note that all governments except the Federal Government and two governments of the smaller States subscribe to support this organisation which is doing a grand job. At the same time our Queensland organisation under Mr. Haig can carry out all the necessary research work for water conservation projects in this State. However, this foundation has spent \$14,800 in Queensland on research work at the university into the proper design and construction of small earth dams—in black earth, and red loam—to stabilise dam walls. There are tremendous problems associated with stabilisation of earth dams because of the inherent problems with these soils. Research has also been conducted into vegetated stabilisation of grassed waterways and farm dams to prevent washing. The research work attempted at the University of Queensland emphasises the drastic deficiency in Australia's scientific manpower, and in research and extension officers. There is a shortage of trained graduate engineers and scientists. Many more are required for research into ground water problems. The position is worse in Queensland than in other States—and research funds are entirely inadequate. It has been said that more valleys should be selected for complete experimentation to ascertain the runoff from rainfall during storms, using hyetographs to show rainfall as well as hydrographs which describe the water, its quality, the effect of wind currents and the general physical features of the country, but this is not done. There is tremendous complexity in agricultural problems, but the greatest problem of all is the lack of men and materials.

Years ago private dams of 20,000,000 gallons capacity were quite rare, but today dams with a capacity of 100,000,000 gallons are common. There are a few containing 300,000,000 gallons, and one in New South Wales contains 1,000,000,000 gallons. It is the largest in the country. In the North-west plains of New South Wales the same lack of knowledge is apparent. There is not a single instrumented catchment in the whole area although it is essential to collate data on evaporation, precipitation and stream flow.

Mr. Haigh, of our own department, says that up to 70 per cent. of water available for irrigation in Australia is north of the southern border of Queensland. He said that there is enough water to provide ultimate development of 10,000,000 to 12,000,000 irrigated acres, that is, 20,000 square miles, or 142 miles square.

Australia has no reliable estimate of how much water is now available. The other day we read a statement by Sir Harold Holt in which he admitted that he had no knowledge of the housing requirements in Australia. Here we have an admission that in Australia we have not sufficient knowledge of the water resources of the country. Mr. Bell, President of the United Graziers' Association, said in 1964 that a greater knowledge was needed in the planning of our water resources. The Australian Water Resources Council was established in 1962, and I hope will assist in securing the highest level of basic information on Australian water resources.

Two-thirds of the total area irrigated in Queensland is supplied from underground sources such as in the Burdekin Delta, Pioneer Valley, and Lower Burnett areas. Approximately 70 per cent. of Australia has a rainfall of less than 20 inches a year, and in parts it is as low as 4 or 5 inches. The total average annual flow of all the rivers in Australia is only 100,000,000 acre-feet compared with 72,000,000 acre-feet in the Nile, 474,000,000 acre-feet in the Mississippi, and 1,784 million acre-feet in the Amazon. Existing data on water is entirely inadequate. The average annual rainfall on the mainland of Australia is 16.5 inches compared with 26 inches for all the land areas of the world, and 29 inches in the United States of America.

It is necessary to know more about run-off from the various streams. We know that in scrub country a storm yielding from 2 to 3 inches, and sometimes more, would be needed before there would be a run-off because of absorption by humus, trees, and leaves, and lack of run-off prevents storage areas from being filled.

It is also necessary to know when and how much to irrigate. Water specialists have said that in the Burdekin irrigation area irrigation varies from 2 feet to 6 feet per acre per annum, with no significant difference in production. Very often

bore water is used for irrigation. There is no definite information in this State on these matters. There is little idea of the actual application of water to the land, even in areas where irrigation has been practised for some 60 years.

In this regard there is a summary by Mr. F. B. Haigh, whose conclusions were—

1. Improvement of investigation and design techniques so that areas are made more extensive, precise, and certain;
2. Reduce losses and waste;
3. Research on evaporation waters and remedies;
4. Improve efficiency of actual use of water; and
5. Greater knowledge of quality of water in different regions.

Two chemicals occurring in underground waters in the State are damaging to livestock at very low concentrations, measured at parts per million. They are fluorine and nitrate. Fluorine occurs in significant amounts in a number of aquifers in the Artesian Basin. The Animal Research Institute is developing satisfactory control measures to minimise the damage to livestock. It is interesting to read some of the reports in the Parliamentary Library on the effect this has on livestock in this State.

Evaporation is the worst enemy of water conservation in Queensland; the losses are between 15 per cent. and 50 per cent. of the safe yield from reservoirs. This problem is very serious in the North-west and could account for 25 per cent. to 50 per cent. of the annual yield from storages. The hopes of the C.S.I.R.O. with ethyl alcohol have not been realised, but there is a partial saving on large storages. Bore water supplies in the Great Artesian Basin result in loss of approximately 90 per cent. of available supplies, that is, a loss of some 140,000 acre-feet of water annually. In the last 80 years, 10,000 artesian bores have been put down. We can therefore imagine the evaporation problem in those areas.

It is not generally realised that if the speed of water is doubled its carrying capacity is increased 60 times. Run-off causes considerable problems, and the farmer has to determine its effect on the soil and decide whether to leave weeds and other type of growth or keep the whole area perfectly clean. He has to decide whether to plough in green crops. All sorts of problems have to be met, and not enough research is being done in this direction. Recently I saw a wheat crop that stood 5 feet high and had glorious heads of wheat. Its yield will be tremendous. The farmer who grew it had grown and ploughed in a green crop. There is a great difference between the results produced by mineral fertilizers and those by the ploughing in of green crops. This is a very big question on which one could talk at length, but time moves on

and I wish to make some reference to the Mary River and deal with a subject that should receive much more thought, namely water conservation and wastage.

It has been found that leaking pipes can cause a tremendous wastage of water, and in many parts of the world water has to be recovered and re-used. A classic example of this is the Ruhr Valley, where water is used and used over and over again, and a careful watch kept on it. That position will have to be faced in other parts of the world where the population is increasing. Food has to be produced to feed the greater numbers, and the water position will become far more serious than is at present realised.

The extent of the Mary River basin is not generally known. Although it is not a very large river, such as the Darling, Burdekin, or Flinders, which is the longest in Queensland, the rainfall throughout the whole basin is from 40 to 80 inches, which makes it one of the best watered areas in the State. I might mention a few facts to remind hon. members of the river's location. The Mary and its tributary Obi Obi Creek rise in the Conondale Range, in the 60 to 80 inch rainfall area. The Stanley River rises on the southern side. It is 21 miles from the Somerset Dam to the source of the Mary River. Woodford is 8 miles from the source in the Conondale Range, and Kilcoy is 12 miles from it. The Conondale Range is a continuation of the Jimna Range, which links with the D'Aguilar and Blackall Ranges. Landsborough is only 6 miles from the source of Obi Obi Creek; Crohamhurst, where the weather observatory is situated, is only 2 miles from it; and Peachester is 5 miles from it.

In the drainage area of the Mary River the following mean annual rainfalls were recorded from 1926 to 1955:—

	Inches
Miva	46·7
Kenilworth	55·5
Wide Bay Creek	34·8
Amamoor Creek	44·5
Kandanga Creek	44·0
Glastonbury Creek	44·9
Yabba Creek	42·5
Six Mile Creek	63·4
Obi Obi Creek	78·8
Tinana Creek	50·4

These are parts of the State that call for exploration and research into water supply possibilities, linked with much more experimental work in pasture development.

It may surprise some hon. members to know that Cooran, Cooroy and Pomona are in this basin. It has one of the most beautiful tablelands in Queensland, as the Montville and Mapleton areas are in the basin of this river, drained by Obi Obi Creek and the

Mary River, Yabba Creek, where recently a dam was constructed. Kenilworth, Imbil and Kilkivan are in this basin. Up on Munna Creek is Marodian, out from Tiaro. Some of the best cattle country in the State is in this area, but it has not been surveyed since 1909.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. DAVIES: This is of great interest to one of the most densely populated areas of the State. People in the Maryborough Statistical area use about 10 per cent. of all the petrol and oil used in the State, and I make no apology for placing these facts and figures on record.

The last surveyor to examine Munna Creek was J. F. Moran, in 1909. He said it was a very rich cattle area, and that the area around Marodian was one of the best parts of it. He said, too, that there were 24,000 acres of agricultural land suitable for irrigation, and that there were sites on Munna Creek suitable for the establishment of dams and weirs.

The Mary basin is also a very rich timber area, and the Maryborough mills have branch mills in the Amamoor and Kandanga districts also in which thinnings are being used. On the eastern side there are the Tuan and Toolara forestry areas, which are virtually linked. In 1948 a Labour Government planted the first trees in the Tuan area, which is now a magnificent forestry area, and next year thinnings will be taken out of it.

In the Mary River basin the annual value of primary production would be about \$10,500,000 from agriculture (including dairying, poultry, and bees), and about \$2,500,000 from pastoral activities. There is coal round Maryborough and minerals near Kilkivan and Biggenden, and the Mary River Research Trust has developed a good hybrid maize which is being grown near Gympie. A Mary River Trust should be formed. It is the most suitable area in the State for the development of small crops, possibly on a bigger scale than in the Redland Bay area, because, as hon. members know, the production of Brisbane's salad bowl—the Redland Bay and Sunnybank areas—is decreasing as a result of housing development.

Mr. Sherrington: It is a tragedy.

Mr. DAVIES: Yes, it is a tragedy, but no area is more suitable than the Mary Valley for development as a small-crops area, and I base that statement on authoritative information. Banana and pineapple-growing and bean crops are subjects that I could deal with at greater length, but I shall have to defer my comments on them till a later date.

I urge the Government to give every consideration to this important area. It is very rich, its potential is tremendous, and it has a rainfall better than that of any other river basin in the State. It could well become the most important river valley of the State.

Mr. Sullivan: Where is that?

Mr. DAVIES: I take it that the hon. member's question is serious. I am referring to the Mary Valley.

The Mary River flows into Hervey Bay, and this brings me to the possibility of developing an oyster industry there. A disease has struck the oyster banks in Georges River in New South Wales and, because of suburban development, estate agents are urging that the oyster leases be revoked. Hervey Bay has tremendous possibilities for oyster production because it contains the best oyster banks on the coast of Queensland. I urge the Government to send research officers to the area to carry out an investigation. Hervey Bay is just as suitable for oyster culture as Torres Strait is for pearl oyster culture. Linked with the development of the greatest fishing port in the State, it should provide the Government with a very good basis on which to develop a major industry in Maryborough. Very little action has been taken so far, and I urge the Government to move quickly. In this Hervey Bay area we see so much more than in other parts of the State from the tourist point of view. Fraser Island is 90 miles long, with a timber growth equal to that in any other part of Australia. There is a fresh-water lake with tumbling streams flowing down and providing an everlasting supply of fresh water. There is an aeroplane service from the mainland which takes one there in a few minutes.

(Time expired.)

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer) (7.56 p.m.), in reply: I suppose that this debate on the Budget is no different from any other debate that has taken place in this Chamber on the same subject. However, it is interesting to note, first of all, that 24 members of the Opposition and 21 members of the Government have taken part in the debate over the six days on which it has been held. When we consider that there are in this Chamber, in addition to myself, 12 other Ministers and the Speaker, who normally do not take part in a Budget debate, I think it can be said that the general interest that has been shown from both sides of the Committee can be regarded as fulfilling the requirements of a Budget debate.

From my own point of view, this being my first Budget, naturally I have approached it with some feelings of reserve and perhaps some underlying tension. After all, the State Government is the biggest business in the State and the immense nature of the State's financial undertaking is, I am sure, well realised by every hon. member in this Chamber. Therefore, the responsibility of the Treasurer in the financial management of the State is not a light one.

I believe that I made it clear in introducing the Budget that I desired to put before the public all of the issues as I saw

them. Indeed, I said that I endeavoured to make the Budget just a little simpler in the hope that it would be possible for the average citizen who desired to refer to it and the statements attached to it, to understand it.

I made no bones about the financial difficulties arising from drought, and I put the issues fairly and squarely. I made it quite clear that I thought there was a responsibility on the Government to endeavour to overcome some of the problems that faced us and, at the same time, I came forward with what I believe was a realistic approach to the problems that face us today.

The purpose of this debate, of course, is to consider the Budget in general. At a later stage members have the opportunity to consider the detailed Estimates of the various departments. In the course of a general debate, of course, there is on every occasion, a general tendency to introduce what might be termed a little of the parish pump. However, that is the prerogative of an hon. member, and from my point of view I do not disagree with it. On the other hand, I think it is important that every hon. member should, if he so desires, avail himself of the Budget debate as an opportunity to refer to the general finances of this State.

I hope that in my reply tonight I will be able to answer some of the points raised by hon. members relative to the Budget itself. I do not propose to become involved in some of the discussions that have taken place about particular departmental Estimates. There will be an opportunity to refer to those Estimates at a later stage of the Committee.

Some matters have been raised repeatedly by hon. members. I do not want anyone to feel that I have overlooked any points that have been raised by him, but let me say that for the sake of brevity I propose, in relation to a matter that has been raised by more than one hon. member, to reply to the first hon. member who mentioned it. I do not want any other hon. member to feel that I have bypassed his subsequent remarks on the subject.

The Leader of the Opposition moved a censure motion in the conventional form. I regard a censure motion as of very serious import, and consequently I listened very intently to the remarks of the new Leader. To ensure that I thoroughly understood each point he raised I spent some time reading the transcript of his speech. I realise that on this occasion the Leader of the Opposition was virtually thrown into the responsibility of leading this debate a few hours before he spoke, and therefore he was under some difficulty. Nevertheless, that was his responsibility. It is not for me to make any apologies on his behalf for any of his utterances. After fully examining the argument put forward by him, I cannot describe it as other than a certain amount of muddled thinking, based on misinterpretation of facts

and figures in the Budget and, indeed, in some places straight-out miscalculation. I do not say that in any spirit of personal criticism.

"Hansard" reveals that in recent years, while the Leader of the Opposition was a back-bencher, he was taken to task several times by my predecessor. In some instances he was given what might be described as kindly advice. I cannot keep offering him such advice, because he must remember that now that he is the Leader of the Opposition the thoughts put forward by him must be regarded by this Committee as the Opposition case. Therefore, he must do a lot more homework than previously if he is to avoid the glaring errors that he made in his speech. Time will not permit me to deal with all of these, but if I point to a number of matters he raised hon. members opposite will be forced to agree with me that his remarks were not based completely on fact.

To examine the first point, the Leader of the Opposition said the State received \$7,500,000 from the Commonwealth in 1965-66. This resulted in estimated receipts being \$4,411,867 in excess of the Budget. He then went on to say—and these are his exact words—"At the time he framed the Budget the Treasurer had at his disposal \$4,000,000 more than he anticipated. I believe he could have done more than he did".

Now, let us examine this statement. It was clearly set out in the Financial Statement, and shown in the Budget papers that the \$7,500,000 received from the Commonwealth in 1965-66 was a recoupment of actual expenditure on drought relief. The money was received and spent. How could I possibly have \$4,000,000 left at my disposal out of this sum when the Budget was framed? In any case, when a grant is given for recoupment of actual expenditure for a specific purpose, how can the grant become available for general purposes? There was no freedom of action in dealing with this grant. It was to be applied for a specific purpose. Let me say to the Committee that when a grant is made available for a particular purpose, it will always be expended by me in that way.

The hon. member went on to say that the Commonwealth grant on technical education, at \$189,280, was 14.8 per cent. of the total to be spent on technical education. He labelled that as a paltry sum. The Commonwealth scheme for assistance towards the recurrent expenditure for institutes of technology will commence from 1 January, 1967. This is a brand-new form of assistance and applies not to all technical courses but only those of a tertiary nature. The State expenditure on technical education applies to all courses in the institutes for a full year. The Commonwealth's \$189,280 is its share of tertiary courses for six months only. The basis of assistance is 1 Commonwealth to 1.85 State.

The Commonwealth is also assisting on a dollar-for-dollar basis towards all capital expenditure on the institutes. The amount expected for this purpose from the Commonwealth this year is \$1,379,703, yet the hon. member talked about \$189,208. The State welcomes this Commonwealth assistance, and I am sure that if the Leader of the Opposition had taken the trouble to glean the full facts of the matter before he made his utterances he would also surely have acknowledged the worth of the Commonwealth assistance. His own common sense must show him that the grants will substantially increase in 1967-68, when grants for a full year are received.

The next point arose when the Leader of the Opposition was speaking of the Commonwealth university grant of \$4,144,982 and remarked that the proposed expenditure on the university is less than that for last year, with 44.5 per cent. as against 45 per cent. of the expenditure coming from the Consolidated Revenue Fund. Once again this statement does not make sense, but I think that what he might be driving at is that the Commonwealth contribution to the university is proportionately less than it was last year. If this is his proposition, then the statement is not correct. The proportion of the contribution to the university for recurrent purposes has for many years been, and still is, 1 Commonwealth to 1.85 State, and fees. For capital grants and research grants, the ratio is 1:1.

It is not possible to make a simple comparison of figures appearing in the Estimates, because of the difficulty in reconciling university years with financial years. I can assure the Leader of the Opposition, however, that the formula for State and Commonwealth contribution to university costs has not altered.

The Leader of the Opposition goes on. He speaks of transport fees this year being \$210,000 less than the estimate for last year. He comments on the high cost of the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau and suggests that the tourist industry, which gets \$5,000,000 a year out of the bureau, should pay for more of the propaganda material. I have studied the State transport fees in the Budget and I cannot find a difference of \$210,000 between any figures quoted in the Tables and the Budget figures. I cannot even find \$420,000 which, divided by two, would give the figure he was driving at. I am prepared to pass over this matter without comment. But I shall be interested at some time in the future to learn from the hon. member how he arrived at that figure.

His figure of \$5,000,000 for the Tourist Bureau no doubt alludes to the amount that the Tourist Bureau pays to its purveyors. He surely does not gauge the value of the tourist industry to Queensland by this figure. It is quite difficult to put a firm value on the worth of this industry, but unofficial estimates place the tourist industry as Queensland's fourth, with an annual turnover of

\$180,000,000 and increasing annually at a very rapid rate. Expenditure by the Tourist Bureau assists in no small measure towards the success of this very important State industry.

The hon. member spoke at length about land tax. The Government he says, took \$14,000,000 a year in land tax from the primary producer. Firstly, I should tell him that the figure is not \$14,000,000; it is \$4,500,000. He has apparently added land rents, freehold land sales, survey fees, and all other land revenue to the land tax figure to obtain his figure of \$14,000,000.

As far as the land tax is concerned, a reference to the Annual Report of the Commissioner for Land Tax will show that the tax on a resident primary producer in the year 1965-66 amounts to no more than \$165,250. If he reads this report—and as Leader of the Opposition I believe that is his responsibility—he will see that the weight of land tax falls mostly on the larger commercial companies in the city, such as oil companies and large retail stores.

Just where does he stand as Leader of the Opposition in the matter of land tax? Would he change this policy of taxing the big enterprises and wealthy aggregations? Would he place more land tax on the primary producer and less on the large commercial enterprises? First of all, he gave figures which cannot be reconciled and then, from his point of view, apparently he would prefer that a larger portion of this money come from other than large business interests.

He spoke also of the extra revenue expected from land tax this year and suggested that the State was in for another general revaluation.

Mr. Houston: Will you deny that?

Mr. CHALK: Does not the hon. member realise that revaluations are going on all the time under the constitution? Of course the trend of land values is upwards. What type of economy would we be living in if the value of land did not rise?

We have closely watched this position ever since we came to power. When we became the Government, the Government of hon. members opposite had 25,289 taxpayers paying land tax. We watched this position, and today the number has been reduced to 12,367. There is an indication that the Government is mindful of the situation. From the arguments of hon. members opposite, they want to tax the little fellow. If that is their policy, I will answer it in a moment.

The Leader of the Opposition went on to say that stamp duty of \$16,750,000 is the largest single item in the Budget. He said that no service is given for it and that the public get nothing at all from this form of taxation. I have heard a lot of hooley

spoken in this Chamber, but saying that is surely beyond the comprehension of most hon. members. Surely that is very shallow thinking for a once-great party. Where does the hon. member think the State gets its revenue? How are the State education services to be financed, and how do we provide free hospitals? What does he suggest, as Leader of the Opposition? Does he suggest that we should not levy stamp duty? If so, does he also suggest that we should not educate our children and that we should not care for our sick? If this is not his suggestion—and I cannot believe that it is—where does he suggest that we obtain the necessary revenue to finance these essential services? If, as the hon. member suggests, no service is given for this \$16,000,000, where does it go? The point is that that money has been spent, and spent wisely, and I suggest to the hon. member that he have second thoughts on the matter if he ever enters the Chamber again as Leader of the Opposition and is given the responsibility of criticising the Government in a Budget debate.

The hon. member went on to suggest that workers' compensation premiums are paid only to the State Government Insurance Office, which pays millions of dollars to the Government in lieu of income tax. In other words, he says that the State Government Insurance Office finances the State heavily.

Firstly, the State Government Insurance Office does not pay millions of dollars to the State in lieu of income tax. We expect that this year it will pay over \$1,000,000 for the first time in its history. This rapid increase in the rate of tax payable by the office is indicative of its tremendous growth in recent times, and is related directly to its increased annual surpluses. The fact that its earnings are increasing to such an extent that they attract so much tax should call for commendation, not criticism, from the Opposition. Let me say here and now that the State Government Insurance Office pays no more to the State in lieu of income tax than any other insurance office would pay to the Commonwealth Government in income tax. It is the State's endeavour to put the office on an equal basis with its competitors in the general insurance field, and not to give it any unfair advantages.

Furthermore, the State Government Insurance Office pays absolutely no income tax on the workers' compensation section of its operations. I repeat that no income tax at all is paid on workers' compensation transactions. Indeed, from the Government's point of view, workers' compensation is a form of social service rather than insurance, and I want to keep it that way.

When speaking on the 1 per cent. stamp duty on motor-vehicle transfers, the Leader of the Opposition said that I had put this into roads but had taken away the amount spent last year. According to him, there was nothing extra over all. First, the 1

per cent. stamp duty on motor-vehicle transfers is not going into roads. It was never intended to go into roads, and I have never said that it was. It is going towards the State's general revenue, as does all stamp duty, to assist in financing the many services that the State provides. What the Government did say in the Budget was that every penny of the increase in motor-vehicle registrations will go into roads, and the hon. member did not repeat the words of the Budget in this Chamber.

Finally, the Leader of the Opposition remarked that I was confused in saying that last year's deficit was due to the unanticipated drought and later that the drought was anticipated last year to the extent of \$3,862,000. He considers that the Government of the day had all the resources at its disposal and should have been able to anticipate with fair accuracy what the conditions would have been for a few months ahead. He accused the Government of having failed to do that.

After listening to the Leader of the Opposition and reading his speech on the censure motion, his whole case seems to me to be that I am confused. If he had listened carefully to my speech and read the Financial Statement more closely, he would have understood clearly what I said, which was that the 1965-66 Budget was framed in anticipation of a normal wet season in the early months of 1966. Had the wet season eventuated, it was the Government's estimate that the loss through drought would have been as provided for in the Budget—\$3,862,000. However, because there was no wet season in the early months of 1966, the loss was not \$3,862,000 but an estimated \$8,000,000.

That is the simple fact in simple words. If there is any confusion, it is in the mind of the Leader of the Opposition. His criticism was that the Government did not anticipate certain weather conditions. I ask the hon. member this question: if he had the full resources of the Weather Bureau at his disposal, could he predict with any degree of certainty whether it will rain tomorrow, quite apart from what the rainfall will be over the next six months? The Budget, which was framed in July, August and September, was based on the assumption of a return to a normal season by the following January. Would he not say now that this was a reasonable assumption to make at the time, or does he really believe that the Government should have foreseen that Queensland was approaching one of the most disastrous droughts in its history? If the hon. member claims to have powers of clairvoyance, he may rest on his laurels. For my part, I do not make any such claims.

Let me make one final comment to the Leader of the Opposition. He has launched his censure motion against the background of confusion and misinterpretation to which I have referred. I suggest to him that his

motion reflects his confusion and misinterpretation. The plain fact is that the Budget has been quite well received by the community generally, and I have no hesitation in saying to him that the Government rejects the amendment and proposes to vote against it.

Mr. Graham: Whom are you fooling?

Mr. CHALK: Nobody could fool the hon. member.

The hon. member for Baroona, who seconded the amendment, was, in my opinion, more reasoned in his approach. If his argument was not always logical, he was sufficiently informed to warrant a considered reply. The hon. member for Baroona, in any utterance he has made on any occasion in a Budget debate, has indicated that he has an appreciation of the financial situation or structure in this State.

In the first place, he was resentful of Budget impositions and talked of heavier State taxes in recent times. I put it to the hon. member that he must concede that the modern State shoulders a greater responsibility with respect to its services than was the case in other days. With all the changes taking place around us, the people are rightly demanding an improved standard of Government services. An excellent example of this is in the field of education. No longer is school a place to which children are sent until they turn 14 years of age. Governments are now providing facilities of a higher standard and for an expanded educational programme to cater for the ever-increasing number of children who proceed through to the secondary and tertiary levels of education.

As a further example, let us look also at the superannuation schemes that the Government provides for its employees. Compared with the scheme introduced by the present Government, the run-down State Public Service Superannuation Scheme of the Labour Government was a disgrace. But the improvement is not without much heavier cost to the Government.

And so the story goes on, in the fields of social services, hospitals, child welfare, and so on. The point I am making is that the Government faces not only increasing costs but also the cost of new, improved and expanded services. One cannot meet increased costs and the costs of new, improved and expanded services without greater revenue resources. If the argument is that revenues are to remain static—and that is what one might conclude from the remarks of the hon. member for Baroona—it follows that services also must remain static. One cannot have it both ways. This Government makes no bones about its position. It is committed to new, improved and expanded services and to provide the resources to ensure that its policy can be implemented. I wonder where Labour stands in the matter? If the words of the hon.

member for Barooka are to be accepted, are we to sit by, or are we to advance with the times? Are we to provide the services this State needs, or are we to draw a line and say to the people, "You cannot have more than this."

The hon. member used Table C 5 in an argument that the present Government has increased State taxation to a greater proportion of total revenue than Labour did. His statement is correct, but it is not an altogether fair criticism. It is true that in 1956-57 State taxes were 11.9 per cent. of total revenue whereas in 1965-66 the corresponding figure was 14.4 per cent. Included in the figure are the railways receipts for each year.

With railway receipts providing for the operating costs of the railways, we can fairly exclude them when we talk of the revenue requirement for Government services. With railway receipts excluded, we obtain a figure of 20.4 per cent. in 1956-57 and only 20 per cent. in 1965-66. Therefore, despite the increased demand for State services the Government had not imposed a greater proportion of the burden of financing these services on the shoulders of the Queensland taxpayer. The percentage of State tax in the over-all total is very similar to that of Labour in 1956-57.

The hon. member uses Table C 2 in claiming that State taxes have increased at a greater rate than tax reimbursement from the Commonwealth in the period 1956-57 to 1966-67. The relative percentage increases are 134.8 per cent. and 131.1 per cent. I feel that the very small difference in these large percentages does not prove his point at all. It looks to me as though he has calculated the percentage, found it to his advantage and used it in his speech. But in arriving at his conclusion he has omitted to take into account the fact that in the period there has been a very big lift in Commonwealth contribution to State services over and above the tax reimbursement grant.

If we take all Commonwealth payments to the State of a revenue nature, excluding drought payments, we have a truly comparable statement which gives the real measure of Commonwealth revenue assistance. This destroys his argument completely. It shows an increase of 134.8 per cent. in State taxation and 136.9 per cent. in all Commonwealth payments to revenue other than drought relief grants.

In addition, annual Commonwealth capital grants for universities have increased over the period from nothing to \$1,400,000; for institutes of technology, from nothing to \$1,379,703; for grants for science blocks and technical equipment, from nothing to \$2,883,200; and so on. In the days that the hon. member chose to speak of in his argument, we were receiving nothing. Today the large amounts I have mentioned are being

received from the Commonwealth Government. That is an indication that we are making progress and that huge expenditure is going on.

The hon. member accuses the Government of maladministration, inefficiency and failure in its representations to the Commonwealth for financial assistance. Every State has increased its taxation in 1966-67. If the hon. member's argument is correct, every State, including the Labour States of Tasmania and South Australia, has failed in its presentation. Does he make this criticism of his Labour colleagues in these States?

The hon. member then alleges that the proper approach to the Commonwealth would have been to accept the \$2,750,000 and budget for a deficit. Of course, budgeting for a deficit would be beautiful tactics for an armchair economist, but what would the State use for cash if it took this action? We already had heavy accumulated deficits arising from the effects of the drought, and we had reached the limit of our cash resources in financing such deficits.

The hon. member contrasts Queensland's approach with that of New South Wales and Victoria, but I would express an opinion that these States are now also in the same position as Queensland and will have reached the limit of their ability to finance further deficits.

Responsible public financial principles required that we face the position of accumulated deficits. We could not, in prudence, further proceed in financing by deficit, and I want to say that, as long as I remain Treasurer of this State, I will always follow sound financial principles, that is, to endeavour to balance our Budget. If we do not do that, what is the situation? It is very simple to take money away from the Loan Fund. Does the Opposition want less money spent on the development of the State? Does it want to run up deficits in our revenue and then have the situation where we lose in the sinking funds? I cannot follow the Opposition's reasoning.

The hon. member tried to contrast our attitude with what he refers to as the militant attitude of New South Wales last year in its dealings with the Commonwealth on drought relief. This, of course, from my point of view is nonsense. The approach to the Commonwealth last year was a joint effort by the Queensland and New South Wales Governments. It was preceded by conferences of officers of both Governments, and the final approach was a combined effort which was accepted by the Commonwealth.

The whole operation was carried through in a spirit of co-operation by the three Governments. Queensland and New South Wales received equal treatment and have continued to receive such equal treatment. How can the hon. member possibly say that

New South Wales made a stronger approach than we did? The amount we received for drought relief last year, taking all factors into consideration, was in keeping with what was received by New South Wales. That relates to money available for distribution for drought relief. But then the hon. member went further. As to this year's approach to the Commonwealth for drought relief, he said that I made my plea in August this year and, to use his words, I was "wiped off, like the little boy he is, in the eyes of the Federal Government".

Now, if the hon. member wants to get personal, I am willing to accommodate him. Is the hon. member so juvenile and peurile as to suggest that the getting of \$12,000,000 extra was a wipe-off for Queensland? To clarify the point in his mind, I repeat that this year Queensland will receive from the Commonwealth \$9,250,000 if the drought continues and relief measures require this sum, plus \$2,750,000 towards its revenues which have been hit by the drought.

I admit that I am not satisfied with the \$2,750,000 towards our lost revenues. I have said so on many occasions, to the Commonwealth, to the Press, and in my Financial Statement. But to say that a promise of \$12,000,000 on top of the \$7,500,000 last year was a "wipe-off," to my way of thinking is silly. They are nothing more than extravagant, stupid words, which detract from the case the hon. member put forward. During this lapse he went on to say that he could not accept that the drought was the cause of the accumulated deficits and concluded that the fault lay in the State's presentation of its case to the Commonwealth.

The plain fact is, of course, that the loss of revenue through drought exceeds the accumulated deficit. This fact has been explained and examined many times in this Chamber, and it should not require further demonstration by me. I trust that the hon. member does not so cloud his vision with political prejudice that he cannot see the wood for trees.

Finally, the hon. member accused the Premier and Sir Thomas Hiley of letting Queensland down in the negotiation of the 1959 Financial Assistance Grants formula. He alleged that poor negotiations on the 1959 formula cost Queensland some \$8,000,000 to \$9,000,000, the amount now required to balance the Budget. He compared Queensland's lot with that of South Australia, since the agreement up to 1964-65.

During the period mentioned by the hon. member, it is true that—

Queensland's grant increased from \$63,789,000 to \$101,111,000, an increase of 58.5 per cent.;

South Australia's grant increased from \$48,469,000 to \$78,155,000, admittedly an increase of 61.2 per cent.

First of all, even if he were right, I could not give the hon. member too many marks for being wise in hindsight. Anyone can be clever after the event. As far as we were concerned, we did very well. The fact is, however, that he is not correct. The reason for the 2.7 per cent. disparity in the increase to each State during that period was that the rate of South Australia's population increase was ahead of Queensland's, not that the formula was bad.

Under the present formula negotiated in 1965, the hon. member graciously admits that Queensland has done better. I'll say we have! This formula builds into our base figure an additional \$2,000,000 each and every year. It is estimated that over the five-year period of the current agreement, Queensland will receive an added sum totalling no less than \$36,000,000. What a triumph in negotiations by the Premier and Sir Thomas Hiley, the two people he accuses of letting Queensland down in the 1959 formula! This is fact, not the fiction that he indulges in with respect to the 1959 agreement.

Against this total background, the support for the censure motion seems little more valid, if any, than the case submitted by the hon. member's Leader. If the case is examined in the light of logic, it crumbles to the ground.

The hon. member for Barcoo spoke at length about the increases in railway passenger fares and freights. Let me tell him a few facts—

We had not increased fares and freights since 1960;

This is only the second increase in fares and freights made by this Government in its nine years of office;

I suggest that the honourable member compare this with Labour's record where there were, in the last ten years of its office, six increases in railway passenger fares and nine increases in freight charges to country people;

From 1 October, 1960, to 30 April, 1966 the increase in the minimum average wages paid was 20.16 per cent. The proposed freight increases range from 7½ per cent. to 15 per cent., while the fare increases average 20 per cent. for country and 25 per cent. for suburban.

I suggest that the honourable member digest that information and re-think his position.

The hon. member for Burnett suggests that I should not have imposed further taxes on our primary industries. He doubted whether primary industry could stand them. Let me say to him that I am not unaware of the position of primary producers and I believe the Budget does reflect the Government's concern for them. However, he cannot have his cake and eat it. What would he suggest as an alternative to the increases

contained in the Budget? We could have a cut back in services; for example, a deferment of the new dairy subsidy scheme. However, we were not prepared to leave services static, and we had no alternative but to seek further revenues.

I believe that we have spread the extra impost on a broad and general basis. I tried to do it in such a way as to be fair to all. I note that the hon. member suggested a 10c a lb. tax on margarine. But irrespective of the merits of the case, it is not constitutionally possible for a State to impose such a tax. What is the good of coming here and suggesting something that is completely illogical? I am fair in my criticism, whether I am dealing with a hon. member of this side of the Chamber or on the other side.

The hon. member also asked for Government assistance for suppliers to the Walla-ville sugar mill who are required to pay a levy of 40c a ton on cane delivered to the mill. I say to the hon. member that the Government already has a scheme of assistance for cane farmers who are affected by drought and who are called upon to meet special mill levies.

Suppliers to the mill that he mentioned are at present participating in the scheme. If he has any particular cases in mind I am prepared to listen to him, and I suggest that he contact the General Manager of the Agricultural Bank to ascertain whether those concerned qualify for assistance.

The hon. member for Cairns was concerned at the 1 per cent. stamp duty on motor vehicle transfers. He said that the extra £60 freight on a car to Cairns means an extra £6 stamp duty. I do not know what the hon. member's strong point is, but it definitely is not mathematics. One per cent. of £60 is not, and never has been, £6; actually it is 12s. or \$1.20. The hon. member should not come into this Chamber and try to teach me mathematics. In view of the regularity of the simple errors from which the Opposition advances its argument, I wonder if it is really a case of the Opposition's using any means to flog a dead horse.

I say to the hon. member that full details of the tax will be advised in due course. However, it is a tax common to all States and one which, I believe, was originated by none other than the Labour Government of New South Wales. We have already considered the case of freight on vehicles in drawing our proposed legislation.

The hon. member also raised the question of the boat harbour at Cairns, and spoke at some length on the matter of harbour dredging at Cairns. Up to date any proposal supported by the local boating fraternity has been sited on the Cairns foreshore. Such a proposal would require extensive dredging and rock-wall protection, and was generally far too expensive for the number of craft

to be accommodated. Proposals for deepening the approach channel to Cairns Harbour could offer an opportunity for a foreshore boat harbour to be built within acceptable cost limits. Tenders received for the harbour deepening in 1965 were rejected as being too costly. This scheme for channel improvement is being reviewed at present to determine whether tenders should be re-invited. Surely the hon. member does not want the Government to waste money. We have an assessment of cost, and consequently we had to turn the tenders down.

The hon. member for Chatsworth, on the occasion of his first contribution to a Budget debate, made a very thoughtful speech. I thought he put the issues very well and it was a very creditable performance indeed. Most Opposition members with many Budget debates behind them would be doing themselves a service if they took the time to re-read his comments.

I suspect that the hon. member for Tablelands was goaded into a reply. He said that if the Opposition had been in power they would have added to the deficit rather than impose the increased charges contained in the Budget. However, he had just finished discussing borrowing for toll roads and his conclusion on that subject was, "I think we are going to the other extreme if we borrow anywhere and everywhere from all who are willing to lend to us, without seeming to care about when it will be repaid". How can he have it both ways?

I presume he understands what adding to a State deficit means. I presume he realises that the State has no printing press and that if it cannot balance its Budget it must borrow the cash temporarily from its Trust Funds or its Loan Fund. So we find his policy is that we do not borrow indiscriminately for capital works—a policy with which I thoroughly agree—but go into debt over our heads to live from day to day—a policy with which I do not agree. I say "his policy" advisedly, for surely it cannot be the official Labour Party view.

I turn now to the remarks of the hon. member for Ipswich West. "Make no mistake about it", she said, "this is a time of recession". She went on to say, "Unemployment is bad". She then said, "Over the years that the Country-Liberal Government has been in office the standard of living of the people has declined". Let me counsel her that she does not do any good for herself, her party or Queensland by calamity-howling. She should at least refer to the facts before making such statements.

For her enlightenment, let me give the Committee these facts—

The percentage of unemployed to the total work-force at 30 September, 1966, was 1.2—a very low percentage indeed in the light of Queensland's drought-affected economy;

There is now one motor vehicle to every three persons in Queensland, in contrast to one to every 4.4 persons in 1957, when Labour was in office;

The number of television-viewers' licences has increased from 142,422 in 1961-62 to 277,182 in 1965-66;

Production of hot-water systems has increased from 16,905 in 1958-59 to 19,617 in 1965-66;

Production of clay building-bricks has increased from 62,900,000 in 1958-59 to 105,800,000 in 1965-66.

Are these the effects of a recession? I give the hon. member for Ipswich West credit for having some ability, because she fought a hard battle in her electorate; but surely she should not come into this Chamber and talk such twaddle. I am always prepared to listen to a well-based case, but if someone comes in here howling about things that are not factual, I believe that that person can be described only as a "knocker" of the State.

Though admitting that she was not very knowledgeable on the subject of finance, she levelled the criticism that Queensland had got a poor deal in its dealings with the Commonwealth at the Loan Council meeting and that the other States had done better. I say to the hon. member that I agree with her that she has no knowledge of finance. I suggest that she should have a quiet chat with the hon. member for Baroona, who has acknowledged that Queensland has scored well under the Financial Assistance Agreement negotiated in 1965.

As to the Loan Council deliberations, I am sure that no State is satisfied with the size of the whole cake. Queensland in particular is not satisfied with its share of the distribution of the cake. But it has been said many times before that Queensland can improve its share only at the expense of the other States, and it is illogical to presume that any other State will willingly forgo something it has already. We have increased by various means the low percentage share that Queensland was getting—a legacy from previous Labour Governments—from 11.58 per cent. to 12.65 per cent. which, in terms of money, means an additional \$6,879,000 per annum to the State. I am not satisfied with that percentage, and it will be my constant endeavour to improve Queensland's relative position. However, to suggest that this Government has not made dramatic improvements in the State's position, in comparison with the dismal position under Labour, is to beg the question. I am sure that the hon. member did not really believe what she said.

When speaking of local government finances, the hon. member remarked that from present indications it would seem that local authorities are going to have a much harder task to fill their loan quotas, and

that local government should be given greater assistance by the Commonwealth and State Governments. In reply, let me say to the hon. member that I believe that this year will be a difficult one for the larger semi-governmental bodies to raise their loan allocations. This is an Australia-wide problem, and every avenue will have to be explored by the authorities to find a solution.

I might add, however, that last year also was a very difficult year, yet Queensland again, for the ninth year in succession, raised 100 per cent. of its semi-governmental debenture allocation. In addition, the smaller local bodies—that is, those with programmes under \$200,000—raised almost \$18,000,000, which was 35.6 per cent. above the previous year's figure and represented an increase almost double the Australian average.

I do not wish to minimise the problem this year—it is a very real one—but I do say that our record to date has been a proud one. I might say, for the record, that our raising record for the first quarter of the current financial year is slightly better than that for the corresponding period last year. Thus, at least, we are off to a good start.

The hon. member for Wynnum, I can only conclude after reading his speech twice, had a "few bob" each way. He alternated between praise and criticism, and at times I wondered whether he was speaking for or against the amendment. Of course, this is one of the difficulties all Opposition speakers had. If they spoke of things as they really were, praise would have to flow. The hon. member was, I believe, honest enough to realise this.

However, there was one point of criticism which I should correct. He complained that, while I was asking the citizens of the State to pull in their belts, my own department's expenditure last year was \$4,000,000 more than was appropriated and that the appropriation had increased a further \$5,000,000 this year. I will give him the benefit of the doubt, as a new member, and say that he has not properly understood the Budget papers. The Estimates for the Treasury clearly set out that the increase in expenditure over appropriation last year was on drought relief measures. Indeed, this fact was specifically referred to in the Budget speech, and the whole of the additional expenditure was recouped by the Commonwealth Government.

Similarly, for the current year we have provided for further drought relief expenditure, and in addition, there is a provision of \$2,000,000 for increases in Public Service awards, the details of which had not been completed when the Budget went to Press. I stated all this fully in my speech. I suggest to the hon. member—and I make the suggestion in a kindly fashion—that he check on these matters before making such statements or he will find that I will not be so charitable in future.

The hon. member for Fassifern, as he always does, made a forthright contribution to the debate. He made three main points of criticism which I feel I should answer. These points were—

1. It was a "go ahead" Budget at the expense of primary producers; in other words, primary producers shared too much of the extra taxation burden in the Budget;
2. There was nothing in the Budget for primary producers; and
3. Too little money was made available for water conservation.

I want to say to the hon. member that the Treasurer has to match his expenditure with his income, and that if additional expenditure was required additional taxation was unavoidable.

As to his first point, I believe the Government has spread the extra taxation as equitably as possible. I think the hon. member will appreciate that it would be quite improper to put all the extra impost on one section of the community and to excuse primary producers. I ask him this question: if we do not obtain our money from the sources we intend to use, where would we have obtained the extra money required to provide the things that we have promised the primary producer?

We have made provision for the expenditure of \$750,000 for the commencement of the special scheme for the dairying industry; we have provided \$9,250,000 for drought relief for primary producers; we have a record level of expenditure in the Department of Primary Industries—\$5,500,000 from Consolidated Revenue, an increase of 23.1 per cent. over last year, as against an average increase of 8.6 per cent. for all State services. In addition, there is a supplementary grant from Consolidated Revenue of \$367,000 to the Stock Fund to permit a record expenditure from that fund, despite the drought, which has caused a falling off in its receipts. From Trust Funds we propose to spend \$7,685,335 as against \$6,827,483 last year. In the Trust Fund detail I would draw special attention to the Agricultural Extension Services Fund, where a tremendous expansion of over 200 per cent. has been planned for the coming year.

I think the hon. member's tongue on this occasion must have run away from him. If he seriously considered what has been set out in the Budget he would agree that we have made a fair contribution.

I believe that on this occasion the hon. member for Salisbury was at his vitriolic worst. I remember reading about an old engine running short of steam. The stage was reached at which the driver had to stop the engine if he wanted to blow the whistle. The hon. member is like that engine. He cannot do two things at once. Once he gets on his feet and starts to talk, his capacity to think (if he has such a capacity) deserts him.

He started off by accusing me of gross discourtesy to the Committee in that I was not present for the whole of the debate. It is true that I was not present for all the debate. Let me remind the hon. member that, during the course of the debate, the Premier was absent overseas on an important mission for the State. I filled the dual offices of Acting Premier and Treasurer and this, of necessity, made my absence from the Chamber unavoidable. Again, in this period, preliminary negotiations and arrangements for the visit of the President of the United States of America fell on my shoulders. In these circumstances I feel I need offer no apology to the Committee. I believe that sensible and decent members on both sides appreciate the position, and that is all that really matters.

The hon. member continued his tirade. He seems to see some mystical point of difference between our policy speech at the last election and the Budget. He said that people were misled into voting for the Government—that the Government cannot be trusted. Of course, this is all an indication of the hon. member's inability to think and talk at the same time. He took the biggest hiding of his life at the last election. The fact that hurts him is that the people can, and do, trust this Government. They know what is good for them.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I rise to a point of order. I do not mind what the Treasurer says as long as he is truthful, but he said that I took the greatest beating of my life at the last election. In fact, I had the largest majority of any member in this Chamber.

Mr. CHALK: The hon. member seems to want to confuse himself. His party took the greatest hiding in its life; that is the point. After nine years of honest and decent administration the people had no desire for a change, and so they returned this Government.

What hurts the hon. member is that the Budget faces up to certain problems. The Government decided to press ahead with its progressive policies, even if it meant some tightening of the belt. The fact is that the ordinary, thinking citizen—the vast majority of electors are ordinary, thinking citizens—accepts the Budget as realistic. The average citizen has never been better off than under this Government.

Despite the fearful drought, mining and secondary industry are flourishing. Latest unemployment figures show a very low level indeed. In many respects we are showing a rate of economic improvement above the Australian average. The census just concluded shows that between 1961 and 1966 we had a higher annual rate of population growth than that in New South Wales, and a rate only .08 per cent. less than that in Victoria. In the intercensal period we

obtained 14.4 per cent. of the six-State growth in population. Those are the things that really tell.

The hon. member seems to see some point of criticism in that Government members at times criticise the Government. This is one matter that the hon. member can never understand; he cannot understand when hon. members on this side criticise the Government. If a member of the A.L.P. ever dared to criticise a Labour Government he would have his head cut off as Benson did. He cannot possibly understand how an hon. member on this side has the right to stand up and criticise the Government. The hon. member then criticised the increase in rail fares and freights. This is the second revision that we have made in the fare and freight structure in our tenth Budget. He then said that oil was being pumped past two refineries.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I rise to a point of order. I said that the greatest farce in the people's eyes was when Moonie oil was being pumped past two refineries.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind hon. members on my left that interjections are becoming far too numerous.

Mr. CHALK: The hon. member said that oil was being pumped past two oil refineries.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I have already taken a point of order on this. I do not know why the Minister cannot be truthful.

Mr. CHALK: I will accept the hon. members' statement, but I will later read the proof to him personally. In one part of it he said that oil has passed two refineries; but what a lot of rot it was to say that the only people making money out of Moonie oil are the shareholders. I am sure that the hon. member has heard of mining royalties. Oil is estimated this year to produce royalties totalling \$1,000,000. Has the hon. member heard of the employment that has been provided for Queensland workers by the use of the total output of Queensland crudes in Queensland refineries? I am at a loss to know on what basis the hon. member made his statements in this Chamber.

The hon. member then went on to the classic statement of all times. I was interested to hear his views on water conservation. He said that the hon. member for Fassifern was the only member of the Government with whose views he would agree on water conservation. What are the views of the hon. member for Fassifern on water conservation? Let us see what they were. The hon. member for Fassifern said he would spend less money on education and more on water conservation. Does the hon. member for Salisbury want to spend less money on education? In other words, he has advocated a reduction in the Education Estimates. He cannot get away from that.

Mr. Sherrington: You are a liar.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Salisbury has used an unparliamentary term in calling the Treasurer a liar. I ask him to withdraw the remark.

Mr. Bromley: He is.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the hon. member for Norman. I ask the hon. member for Salisbury to withdraw his remark and apologise.

Mr. Sherrington: I am quite prepared to withdraw and apologise, but I suggest that the Treasurer should stick to the truth.

Mr. CHALK: I only said that the hon. member stated quite clearly that he agreed with the views of the hon. member for Fassifern on water conservation, and the hon. member for Fassifern said that he believed water conservation should take precedence over education. The hon. member for Salisbury cannot have it both ways. However, I am quite prepared to accept the hon. members' views.

The hon. member for Townsville North referred to the Government's inability to interest the Federal Government in special capital projects. Now, this is one assertion where the hon. member, or for that matter any member of the Opposition, can really get into deep water. The truth of the matter, of course, is that this Government has been highly successful in interesting the Federal Government in capital projects in Queensland. I need only mention schemes like the Beef-Cattle Roads, the Fitzroy Brigalow Land Development, the Coal Loading Facilities at Gladstone, the Mount Isa Railway Project, and the Weipa Harbour Development. All of these things with one exception were started during the time of this Government.

Those are the things we have achieved. I know there are many more things that need to be done. But I believe that during the period that this Government has been in power we have been able to make considerably more progress than was achieved during the time Labour was in office.

The hon. member further said that I sought to blame the Commonwealth Government for the "savage" sectional taxation that I was imposing on the people of Queensland. Further on he said, "They (the people of Queensland) realise that the fault lies in Government's inability to present a good case for Queensland, with the result that we have to raise our own revenue." Firstly, let me say that, as far as I can remember, he is the only member of the Committee who used the word "savage". I know and acknowledge that members have criticised the tax increases, but by no stretch of the imagination could the increases be called "savage." "Savage" to me indicates astronomical and burdensome tax increases. This I flatly refute.

Here I can only repeat the answer that I gave in my reply to the hon. member for Baroona in regard to increased taxes. The State faces the responsibility of providing the services demanded by the people. We had no alternative but to provide the finances or not to provide the services. It is true that I asked the Commonwealth Government for more money and it is true that I criticised the \$2,750,000 that we are receiving. The point is that I endeavoured to my utmost to get more money and the decision I had to make was whether to continue with the improvements we wanted to provide or whether we should stand still.

Next the hon. member got on to the question of foreign investment and said, "Our heritage in this State is being slowly frittered away by a Government that is completely unable to manage the State as it should be managed." When one hears garbage like this, one feels like bursting into the song, "Tell me the old, old story". It is the constant cry of Labour that any foreign investment automatically means the sale of the State's natural assets. Indeed, the opposite is the case. Foreign investment can really be the means of the appreciation of the State's natural assets. That is what foreign investment has meant for Queensland. I ask the hon. member to seek from his colleague the hon. member for Port Curtis his view on the matter of foreign capital and the development of a township. Ask him what foreign investment has meant to Gladstone.

Before I elaborate on that theme, let us put the question of capital in its proper perspective. When this Government came to power in 1957 we found Queensland lying still like a sleeping giant. What it badly needed was capital development. The potential was there. We all knew that. Labour knew it, but what did it do? It was not prepared to bring into Queensland British or American capital, or even capital from southern States. We immediately decided that Queensland must throw off this lethargic approach to overseas capital. What good was it to possess natural assets if the Government did not have the wherewithal to develop them?

We invited capital to establish industry. We obtained two oil refineries; hon. members opposite could not get one. We have large dredging operations proceeding at Weipa, and look also at what is happening at Gladstone. The hon. member for Port Curtis cannot deny that. These are things that are happening in our midst because capital has come to this country.

When we add to these projects other developmental works such as the 15,000-ton grain storage plant, the establishment of a mineral sands site, and other substantial projects, I ask the hon. member for Townsville North to ask his colleague, the hon. member for Port Curtis, what he thinks of

capital investment, be it foreign or Australian. I know what the reply of the hon. member for Port Curtis will be.

I say to the hon. member for Townsville North that, far from frittering away our heritage, the Government is beginning to justify it—to make something out of it and allow Queensland to take its proper place in the Commonwealth of Australia.

The hon. member for Port Curtis seems to be quite concerned about criticism of Labour administration and the effect of that administration in causing some of our present problems. He says that the present Government never blames itself for many of its problems. He seems peeved that an uncontrollable happening such as the recent disastrous drought is advanced by the Government in explanation of a financial difficulty. The Government did not hunt round for excuses. What it has said is fairly and squarely the position.

The hon. member compared the total Commonwealth payments received by Queensland with those made available to other States, and remarked that South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania receive more than Queensland. I shall complete his statement. Queensland receives more per head than do New South Wales and Victoria. What the hon. member can draw from this whole recital is a mystery to me. He should realise that the Financial Assistance Grant formula, which accounts for the greater part of this payment, is based on more than just the number of heads in a State. Consideration is given to factors affecting the cost of providing the services to those heads, for example, long lines of communication, sparsity of population, and so on. I cannot see what benefit the hon. member can obtain from that argument.

The hon. members for Balonne, Mirani, Burke and Cook have all criticised freight increases as being unnecessarily burdensome to the people in the areas they represent. I ask them if they believe that freight rates should remain static in the face of increased costs borne by the Railway Department. We have not increased freights since 1960, so that our approach on this occasion was quite reasonable.

I should now like to deal quickly with some of the remarks made today. The hon. member for Rockhampton North criticised the Government on its railway administration. He said that because of the introduction of three weeks' leave, service leave had been taken from railway employees. He knows as well as I do that the decision to grant three weeks' leave was a decision of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. He knows the basis on which service leave was previously granted; he knows the interpretation of it given by the Railway Department; he knows that that interpretation was upheld by the Industrial Commission; he knows that the union

returned to the Commission for a re-determination, and that again the decision was confirmed. We do not intend to interfere with a decision of the Industrial Commission.

Now let us look at what the hon. member for Mackay said. He made several sweeping statements to which I wish I had time to reply. He said that he would have preferred a 5 per cent. increase in fares and freight rates each year. In other words, he suggests an increase of 5 per cent. this year and a further 5 per cent. next year. On that basis, there would be an accumulation of 30 per cent. Secondly, freight would have been charged on the additional 5 per cent. that went in each year, so it would have been compound interest. From 1960 to 1966, the Government has allowed members of the community to keep in their own pockets and purses the money that the hon. member suggests it should have taken away from them. I cannot see any sense in the reasoning that he put forward.

The hon. member also criticised the free hospitals set-up and accused the Government of taking something away. The hon. member knows only too well that he would like the Government to do something of that type. As far as I am concerned, Government policy is a matter for the Government.

The hon. member for Brisbane said that statesmanship was needed in the field of finance and then said, "What about a State petrol tax? What about a capital-gains tax? What about an excess-profits tax?" The hon. member must recognise the State's constitutional limitations. He must know that such taxes are clearly beyond the State's legal powers.

He spoke about the present position and said that workers are being taxed because they drive their motor-cars to work. The fact that the workers have motor-cars shows that the economy of the State is good, because they did not have them when Labour was in office.

His final criticism was of what he termed the concession to Mount Isa Mines Ltd. Let me make it clear. The concessional freight given to Mount Isa Mines Ltd. is given on the basis that vast quantities of freight are handled in train-load lots. That concession was granted originally by a Labour Government, and when freight rates were increased by 10 per cent. in 1951, the freight charges paid by Mount Isa Mines Ltd. were not increased. In this instance the Government has increased the company's freight charges by 15 per cent., and because of that it has been accused by the Labour Party of giving Mount Isa Mines Ltd. a special concession. On its own argument, it stands condemned.

I shall conclude by dealing with one further point. I inform the Committee that

the Government has been approached by the wheat industry relative to increases in freight charges on wheat. I have ascertained that the price structure of wheat in Australia is based on the cost on 1 January each year. Because of that, I believe that Queensland should follow the pattern set in other States, and the increase in freight on wheat will apply from 1 January, 1967, not from 1 November, 1966, so that the increase will be spread evenly over the whole industry.

I have endeavoured to deal briefly with, and reply to, the points raised by hon. members during the debate. I am sorry that my time has almost expired, but I think I have indicated to the Committee that the Budget has been based on a fair approach and that the Government has been prepared to grapple with the financial problems of the State. I believe that the Budget will produce the finance necessary to enable the great progress that Queensland has made under the administration of the Country-Liberal Government to continue. For the reasons I have stated, I am not prepared to accept the amendment.

Question—That the Item "Aide-de-Camp, \$3,700" be reduced to \$3,698 (Mr. Houston's amendment)—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 22

Bennett
Bromley
Byrne
Davies
Dean
Donald
Duggan
Graham
Hanlon
Hanson
Houston
Inch
Lloyd

Melloy
Newton
O'Donnell
Sherrington
Thackeray
Tucker
Wood, P.

Tellers:

Jones, R.
Jordan

NOES, 29

Bjelke-Petersen
Carrin
Crippell
Culik
Chinchen
Cory
Dewar
Fletcher
Hewitt, W. D.
Hodges
Hughes
Jones, V. E.
Kaus
Knox
Lee
Lonergan

Murray
Newbery
Nicklin
Pilbeam
Pizzey
Rae
Ramsden
Richter
Row
Sullivan
Tooth

Tellers:

Wood, E. G. W.
Lickiss

PAIRS

Dufficy
Mann
Harris
Wallis-Smith

Armstrong
Delamothe
Hewitt, N. T. E.
Wharton

Resolved in the negative.

Item (Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor) agreed to.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 9.33 p.m.