Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 18 OCTOBER 1968

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

QUESTIONS

Special Branch, Police Force

Mr. Tucker for **Mr. Houston,** pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) Is there a Special Branch in the Police Force of this State?

(2) Does it compile dossiers on (*a*) companies, (*b*) organisations and (*c*) individuals?

(3) If so, how many dossiers has it in each category?

(4) Who has access to the files and in what circumstances can they be used?

(5) For what reasons does the branch compile a dossier on a company, organisation or individual?

(6) How many men are in it and what are their ranks and qualifications for this type of work?

(7) How long has each been engaged in this class of work?

Answer:—

(1 to 7) "I am surprised that such a responsible member of the Opposition should direct this Question to me. He should know that the Special Branch of the Police Department was established in Queensland by a Labour Government in 1948 to assist in maintaining the security of Queensland and the Commonwealth. These objects and functions have not materially altered since its inception and, rather than jeopardise the security of the State and Commonwealth by endeavouring to publicly satisfy the Honourable Member's curiosity, I suggest he discuss the matter with responsible members of his Party such as the Member for Toowoomba West who was a Member of the Cabinet at that time."

Financial Structure of Companies in Alumina and Coal Industries

Mr. Tucker for **Mr. Houston,** pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Justice,—

What was (*a*) the profit, (*b*) the total capital expenditure and (*c*) the total paid-up capital of (i) Commonwealth Aluminium Corporation Pty. Ltd. for the years ended June 30, 1958 to 1968, (ii) Queensland Alumina Ltd. for the years ended June 30, 1965 to 1968, (iii) Thiess Peabody Mitsui Coal Pty. Ltd. for the years ended June 30, 1963 to 1968 and (iv) Utah Development Co. Pty. Ltd. for the years ended June 30, 1963 to 1968?

Answer:—

"All the information sought by the Honourable Member is available at the Companies Office and I suggest that he make his own research there."

Building Approvals, Townsville High School

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

What works and buildings proposed to be built by the parents and citizens' association of Townsville High School are held up pending departmental approval and when can it be expected that the approval, already far too long delayed, will be forthcoming?

Answer:—

"Advice has now been forwarded to the Department of Education concerning the lowest tender received for the supply and erection of shelter sheds at the Townsville State High School as proposed by the parents and citizens' association. No other proposals by the association are awaiting review by the Department of Works."

Wages of Groundsman, Townsville High School

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

(1) Does the parents and citizens' association of Townsville High School subsidise by $4 per week the wages of the school groundsman in order to retain his efficient services?

(2) Is this groundsman directed by the Education Department to work one day each week at certain primary schools and, if so, does the Department pay the $4 subsidy for such days and, if not, why not?

Answers:—

(1) "The wages and allowances for using equipment, paid to the groundsman of the Townsville State High School during his normal working hours, are in accordance with the determination made in the appropriate award by the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission of Queensland. Any additional payment made by the parents and citizens' association would be a local arrangement of which my Department is unaware."

(2) "The groundsman in question is required to work at several State primary schools in Townsville on one day per week, on a rotation basis. Any additional expense incurred by having to report to a primary school is met by the Department."

INQUIRY INTO LAND VALUATIONS, THURINGOWA SHIRE

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

(1) Will the inquiry into certain valuation matters relating to the Thuringowa Shire and the Townsville Golf Club be public? If so, when and where will it be held?

(2) Will interested people be permitted to give evidence or make submissions? If so, will this be adequately publicised through all news media in the Townsville area?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "I want to make it clear to the Honourable Member that the investigation being made by Mr. E. S. Williams, Q.C., is not concerned with the determination of objections or appeals made against valuations in the Shire of Thuringowa. Any party aggrieved by the amount of the valuation has a full remedy in law of objection and appeal and the Government does not propose to deprive the party of that remedy. I remind the Honourable Member of my undertaking to the House given on September 24 last. I pointed out that the Honourable Member for Townsville North had accused the Government of interference and direction in the working of the Valuer-General's Department. I also pointed out that he had indicated that public servants were involved in producing valuations that were not true valuations of properties in the shire. I said to the House that such charges were not going to pass my notice and that I proposed to take action to have the charges fully investigated and examined by a competent officer from outside the Valuer-General's Department. In terms of my undertaking Mr. Williams has now been appointed to carry out the investigation which I indicated. He has been appointed to examine and advise the Honourable the Premier and Minister for State Development—(1) Whether or not in his opinion the valuation made in respect of the area of the Shire of Thuringowa for the purposes of "*The Valuation of Land Acts,* 1944 *to* 1959" which was proclaimed to come into force on June 30, 1968, was made by those officers of the Valuer-General concerned therein—(*a*) *bona fide;* (*b*) by using the methods of expert valuers; (*c*) in accordance with the policy of the said Acts and no other policy; and (*d*) free of any improper instructions or interference, and, if not, in what respects. (2) The circumstances surrounding the respective valuations made of the lands of the Townsville Golf Club which were proclaimed to come into force on June 30, 1965, as part of the valuation of the area of the City of Townsville, and whether there was any partiality shown—(*a*) in the decision on the hearing of the objections made by the Townsville Golf Club to the valuations of its lands; or (*b*) in the settlement of the appeals to the Land Court which were made from the determinations of the Valuer-General in respect of the unimproved values of the said lands of the Townsville Golf Club, and, if so, in what respects. The procedure at the investigation will be a matter for Mr. Williams and will be determined by him after he has examined all relevant papers."

PENSIONS OF PATIENTS IN HOSPITAL GERIATRIC WARDS

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

(1) What happens to the fortnightly pensions paid to persons in geriatric wards of State hospitals who are incapable of administering their own affairs and have no interested relatives?

(2) If the money is paid into a trust fund, is money ever withdrawn to purchase the day-to-day wants of such people and, if so, how is it done and what methods are employed to ensure that money so withdrawn is wholly spent on the patient?

Answers:—

(1) "In the cases mentioned by the Honourable Member it is the usual practice to deposit the pension payments to the credit of the Patients Trust Account administered by the Hospitals Board."

(2) "Withdrawals from such account can be made as and when desired by the patient and are usually done at periodical intervals to meet his day-to-day requirements. Such payments are made either in cash or by cheque for which a receipt, witnessed usually by a member of the nursing staff, is obtained. Where a patient is incapable of obtaining his own requirements this is usually undertaken by senior responsible members of the nursing staff on his behalf. The procedure at each individual hospital in the State is not known in my Department; however the Trust Accounts are subject to an annual audit by inspectors of the Auditor-General's Department to ensure that all sums are correctly disbursed."

KARRALA HOUSE

(*a*) **Mr. McKechnie,** pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

(1) Has he read the article "The Reformation of Jane Doe, 13" in *Sunday Truth* of October 13?

(2) What are the circumstances of the admission of a journalist to Karrala?

(3) What steps were taken to protect the anonymity of the inmates?

(4) What is the nature of the special problems requiring treatment at Karrala?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "On Sunday September 29 *Truth* published an article which disinterred a stale old story that religious organisations to whom delinquent girls were committed for care, control and treatment used them as cheap labour in profit-making laundries. As Minister in charge of Children's Services, I felt I had a duty to defend the Salvation Army, the Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of Charity against a canard long since discarded by all except a few bigots in our midst. I therefore addressed a letter to the editor refuting this charge, which was published in the next issue. Following upon these exchanges, the journalist concerned, who at that point was revealed to be a Mr. Ken Blanch, sought entry to Karrala. It was reasonable to assume that he desired to make an honest objective assessment of what has to be done and is done at Karrala to regain control of girls who have become unmanageable—so unmanageable that they cannot be retained in a church home without endangering the safety, training and good behaviour of the other inmates. It was in the light of this assumption that access to Karrala was readily granted. Upon his arrival at Karrala, however, it became apparent that Mr. Blanch's principal interest lay in tracing the history of one particular girl who had proved to be extremely intractable over a long period. He was very well informed about this child. She had, however, been discharged from Karrala sometime before his visit. Notwithstanding this, he pursued his enquiries about Jane Doe (as he has named her) seeking detailed information about her, whilst showing only the most superficial and cursory interest in Karrala as a whole and in the extremely difficult tasks that must be undertaken there. In view of what he subsequently published it is apparent that his sole purpose in seeking admission to Karrala in the first place was merely to concoct a sensational 'human interest story' around this unfortunate girl, and not to give a factual, objective and balanced account of the work being done there. His lack of interest in the overall problems of youthful delinquency was emphasised by his flat rejection of my invitation to visit Westbrook on Sunday last."

(3) "I obtained from the Editor of *Truth* the necessary assurances in respect of anonymity before authorising entry into Karrala."

(4) "The personality problems which bring disturbed girls to Karrala include, amongst others—(*a*) serious irresponsibility in behaviour, (*b*) abnormally aggressive tendencies, (*c*) inability to recognise the rights of others. It must be remembered that all these girls have been committed to care and control by the courts. To illustrate more clearly the forms that their personality problems assume I propose to summarise a few case histories, omitting details which could lead to identification.

'Jane'

'Jane' at the age of 13 was running away from home and wandering the streets of the town where she lived. She was placed in a Children's Home from which she absconded and was found living in a flat with three men. On transfer to Kalimna, Toowong, she refused to conform and was sent to Karrala. A psychiatrist of the Division of Welfare and Guidance considered she would require a prolonged period of treatment. Her behaviour at Karrala House improved and she returned to Kalimna after approximately 2 months. Later she absconded taking other girls with her and on return proved intractable. She went to Karrala for a further period of treatment. Following this, she was returned to her mother subject to supervision by Welfare officers, and recent reports indicate an improvement in her behaviour.

'Jill'

'Jill' was in the care of the Department when she was placed with foster parents at about 14. She left school and commenced work at 15, but her employment record was not satisfactory. The Department then placed her in private accommodation. Later money was missing from her place of residence. 'Jill' was admitted to Kalimna, Toowong, whence she absconded and with former associates broke into a shop and stole a considerable amount of property. She was admitted to Karrala House where she was involved in a riotous incident, when chairs were smashed and windows broken, and the safety of other girls and the staff endangered. Ultimately, she was placed with her stepbrother and his wife. They were unable to control her. She recently appeared in court on charges of stealing and is now subject to Adult Probation.

'Jean'

'Jean' was first admitted to care in New South Wales at age 13 having been found on the beach drinking in the company of youths. She was admitted to an Institution, but following an assault on a member of the staff, was transferred to the Parramatta Girls' Home. After release, she was located in Toowoomba living with convicted criminals. Although only 15, she stated her age as 17 and was sent to gaol. When her correct age was discovered, she was placed in Karrala House. She said she had no intention of working and knew how to earn money without working. After a depressing record of discharge and return, she ultimately passed from the care of the Director at the age of 18. It should be obvious from the foregoing

that firm control over girls of this kind is necessary, not only for their own protection but also for the physical health and moral well-being of other young people with whom they may associate. The medical officers, nurses and other staff involved in the extremely difficult and thankless task of trying to re-socialise them are deserving of something better than being publicly pilloried for their pains and impeded in their work."

(*b*) **Mrs. Jordan,** pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

(1) In view of the interesting and enlightening "Open Day" held at Westbrook, the centre for delinquent boys, on October 13, will he arrange a similar "Open Day" at Karrala House, the centre for delinquent girls?

(2) In view of the pattern at Westbrook, where boys even in the remand section are not kept in solitary confinement even for twenty-four hours, why is a girl of twelve years, now turned thirteen, kept in solitary confinement or seclusion for eighty-eight days, as admitted by the Matron-in-Charge, Sister Kraut, and why is such lengthy punishment meted out to girls only?

(3) Will he arrange to have the system at Karrala overhauled and provide better lighting and toilet facilities, correspondence courses, as at Westbrook, for girls of school age, indoor games, handicrafts and sporting facilities for the inmates to replace the present stultifying lack of almost any facility?

Answers:—

(1) "The Honourable Member is surely not serious in suggesting that it would be possible to hold on an acre allotment at Karrala an Open Day similar to that conducted on the 900 acre farm at Westbrook last Sunday. Further, the Honourable Member is in error in assuming that Karrala and Westbrook are identical or serve identical purposes."

(2) "Children on remand are not retained in maximum security except for special reasons such as unmanageable behaviour or for self protection. Girls are sent to Karrala for behaviour which makes it impossible to treat them elsewhere. Only the worst anti-social types of girls are committed by the courts to the care and control of the Director, Department of Children's Services, and it is the most recalcitrant of these whose behaviour makes admission to Karrala unavoidable. The Honourable Member has evidently accepted as accurate the statements in *Sunday Truth* regarding 88 days of seclusion for a 13-year-old girl. I am advised that this is a gross distortion of the facts and that on each of these days, with the exception of 13, she spent a period mixing with the other girls and doing housework."

(3) "The problems at Karrala House are continuously under review. Existing lighting and toilet facilities are adequate. Indoor games are available and handicrafts and other facilities must be considered in relation to the safety of the girls. When girls recover to the point where they can benefit from formal education they are transferred from Karrala."

TENDERS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF OLD TOWN HALL SITE, BRISBANE

Mr. Miller, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Local Government,—

Further to his Answer to my Question on October 17, will he have investigated all aspects pertaining to the negotiations and arrangements existing between Brisbane City Council and Capital City Motels Pty. Ltd. and advise whether or not there has been a breach of tendering as provided by the Local Government Act?

Answer:—

"There is no material presently before me which could be regarded as evidence calling for an investigation of the nature sought."

HOUSING COMMISSION HOUSES, AMBERLEY

Mrs. Jordan, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

(1) (*a*) How many Housing Commission homes are to be built on the land presently being prepared at Amberley for R.A.A.F. personnel, (*b*) when will tenders be called and (*c*) when will the houses be ready for occupation?

(2) Are there further plans for an increased number of Housing Commission homes at Amberley and/or Leichhardt for a similar purpose in 1970-71?

Answers:—

(1) "151 houses are to be constructed. Tenders for construction of development works including roads and stormwater drainage will be called as soon as the necessary engineering documents are available. Tenders for house construction will be called when the estate works are sufficiently advanced. The completion dates of houses will depend on the factors I have mentioned and on the construction times required by building contractors."

(2) "No firm request for 1970-71 has yet been received from the Commonwealth."

LIGHTING OF RAILWAY BRAKE VANS

Mrs. Jordan, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Transport,—

(1) Are all brake vans now in use on Queensland Railways equipped with electric light?

(2) If not, how many brake vans on passenger, goods and livestock trains, respectively, are still dependent on kerosene hand-lamps?

(3) How many vans have electric light, on what types of trains is it provided and in what main areas do the trains, so equipped, run?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) "There are 488 brake vans equipped with electric light and 181 without electric light. All passenger trains are worked with brake vans equipped with electric light. The Commissioner for Railways has recently approved of the purchase of battery-operated electric lanterns for use by guards in vans not equipped with electric light. For trial purposes, a livestock brake van has been equipped with liquid petroleum gas."

THREE-YEAR TEACHER SCHOLARSHIPS

Mr. Melloy, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) When and to whom will three-year teacher scholarships be offered?

(2) What is the three-year course and does it contain any University subject?

(3) On what basis will the three-year and two-year scholarships be allotted?

(4) Is there still a salary bar for students accepting the two-year scholarship?

(5) Does the Department consider that the one extra year of Teachers' College is equivalent to two years' University study?

Answers:—

(1) "The extension of the length of primary teacher training to three years will be introduced in 1969 and will be applied to approximately one-third of the new intake for that year; it will be progressively increased to two-thirds of the 1970 intake and all of the 1971 intake."

(2) "The course will contain three related sections, namely education, general subjects and curriculum and methods of teaching. Students will also undertake adequate teaching practice. The course will be fully carried out in the Teachers' College; no University subjects are included."

(3) "Each candidate for a primary scholarship is being given the opportunity of indicating preference for a three-year or a two-year scholarship. Scholarships will be awarded on the basis of overall attainment as indicated by the order of merit lists."

(4) "Two-year scholarship-holders will be required to secure further academic qualifications before proceeding to a level corresponding to the present Class I."

(5) "The course is not planned in terms of University study."

BOONDALL STATE SCHOOL GROUNDS

Mr. Melloy, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

Will the construction of the four-lane highway on Sandgate Road involve the resumption of any portion of Boondall State School grounds? If so, to what extent and when will the grounds be affected?

Answer:—

"Resumption involves a three chord truncation of twenty-five feet along Roscommon Street and Sandgate Road which takes a total area of 0·6 perches. The scheme has been designed and the resumptions and the shifting of utilities are in hand and it is intended to start construction late this financial year."

CONTROL OF CREEPING LANTANA

Mr. Lonergan for **Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt,** pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Lands,—

What is the exact position at present regarding the availability of a suitable spray or bug for the control of creeping lantana?

Answer:—

"A very satisfactory control of Creeping Lantana can be obtained by two sprayings of Fenoprop which is available from the Department of Lands. That Department supplies this and other weed control formulations on an 'at cost to the Department' basis. The second spraying should be made when regrowth is active, generally from 3 to 7 months after the initial application. All spraying should be done when the plants are actively growing. Where the plant has been established for a considerable period, seedling regrowth may require a further application. A strong pasture such as Green Panic or a similar grass as recommended for a particular area, planted after the original treatment, will reduce seedling regrowth. Two sprayings of Tordon are also effective but the residual effects in the soil, particularly in respect of legumes, may be a disadvantage. The possibility of Biological control of this weed has not been explored, however, probably there are insects available in the Americas worthy

of investigation as a means of Biological control. In this connection an officer of the Department of Primary Industries recently investigated the various Lantana species existing in that region. The possibility of insect control is the next stage of investigation."

APPOINTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY OFFICER, MONTO

Mr. Lonergan for **Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt,** pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Primary Industries,—

As there is no animal husbandry officer at present stationed in Monto, when can an officer in replacement be expected?

Answer:—

"It is hoped to be able to appoint a replacement after the end of the year but is unlikely before then."

APPOINTMENT OF DENTIST, NORTH BURNETT HOSPITAL AREA

Mr. Lonergan for **Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt,** pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

(1) What District Hospitals Boards are at present unable to obtain a dentist?

(2) When will one be available to serve the North Burnett Hospital area, which includes the township of Monto?

Answers:—

(1) "Hospitals Boards, excluding those in the metropolitan area, where vacancies for full-time dentists exist, are as follows:—Cunnamulla and Quilpie, 1 position; Hughenden and Richmond, 1 position—but is being temporarily serviced on a part-time basis; Maryborough, 2 positions—one dentist has been appointed, but not yet taken up duty, the other position is vacant; Mt. Isa Itinerant Service, 1 position; Mt. Morgan, 1 position—temporary part-time service provided; Townsville, 2 positions—dentists have been appointed to fill these vacancies but have not yet taken up duty; Warwick, 1 position—but is being temporarily serviced on a part-time basis; Stanthorpe, 1 position—but is also being temporarily serviced on a part-time basis."

(2) "Dental clinics at Cracow and Eidsvold, which are under the control of the North Burnett Hospitals Board, are serviced on an itinerant basis by the dentist from Biloela. The dental clinic at Monto will be ready to commence functioning as soon as the drainage installations for this building are completed and connected to the town sewerage scheme. It is anticipated that a dentist will be available to commence duty at Monto on January 6, 1969."

SEPTIC SYSTEM AT NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL, WOODSTOCK

Mr. Coburn, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

When the new school is constructed at Woodstock, will a septic system be installed to replace the unhygienic and offensive pit system presently in use there?

Answer:—

"The practicability of providing a septic system in conjunction with the proposed new school building at Woodstock is at present under investigation by the District Architect of the Department of Works, Townsville."

CONSUMERS' SECURITY DEPOSIT, SOUTHERN ELECTRIC AUTHORITY

Mr. P. Wood, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

With reference to the Southern Electric Authority's practice of requiring a widow to advance a $4 security deposit following her husband's death, if he has not previously paid such a deposit,—

(1) Why is a widow required to pay a $4 security deposit when the Authority has always accepted her husband's account without demanding a deposit and when the account has always been satisfactory?

(2) In view of the embarrassment and the financial distress which may be caused by the Authority's requirement, will he take action to have the practice discontinued?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "I understand that the Southern Electric Authority has been in communication with the Honourable Member concerning this matter and has explained the position to him. In the case referred to by the Honourable Member, the deceased person was the consumer of electricity supplied originally to him by the Toowoomba Electric Light & Power Co. Ltd. The Toowoomba Company did not require security deposits from consumers. The Company's undertaking was taken over by the Southern Electric Authority in 1954. The Southern Electric Authority has always required security deposits from consumers. In cases of the kind referred to, the Authority did not require a security deposit immediately it took over the Toowoomba undertaking but only when there was an alteration of the electrical installation or a disconnection of supply for some reason or a change of consumer in the premises. In this case, because of the death of the person who was officially the consumer in the premises concerned, the Southern Electric Authority was obliged to require another person to become the consumer and become responsible for taking supply. At this time, the Authority according to its usual practice and because no deposit had been paid previously, asked for a

deposit of $4. The Authority has acted strictly within its legal right in requiring a security deposit in the case in question as a condition of giving electricity supply. Moreover, the Authority in giving supply is precluded by legislation from discriminating between persons using electricity for similar purposes. The Authority's practice is a common one in electricity supply and any move to stop it could not be justified."

EMPLOYMENT OF SUB-CONTRACTORS ON GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

Mr. Lonergan, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

(1) Has his attention been drawn to the large number of sub-contractors working on Government buildings throughout the State?

(2) As the ever-increasing use of sub-contractors poses a serious threat to the apprenticeship system, will he take steps to protect the interests of lads who desire to learn the carpentry trade by the insertion of a clause in all Government tenders that sub-contractors will not be permitted?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "Because of the complex nature of present day building construction it is not practicable to include a condition in the tender documents of the Department of Works prohibiting the employment of sub-contractors."

COAL MINING IN BLACKWATER AREA BY THIESS BROS. PTY. LTD.

Mr. Sherrington, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

(1) Is Thiess Bros. Pty. Ltd. carrying out coal mining operations within the company's authority to prospect 10C South of Blackwater?

(2) Has the company been granted a coal mining lease in respect of the area?

(3) If coal mining is being carried out there and no coal mining lease has been granted, by what authority are mining operations being carried out on an area in which a prospecting lease only is held?

(4) Do the operations referred to above constitute a coal mine or mine within the terms of the Coal Mining Act? If so, has the company or its agent made application to register the name of the mine as required under the Coal Mining Acts and on what date?

(5) If coal is produced from within a prospecting area prior to a coal mining lease being granted, are royalties payable on the coal?

(6) Are Thiess Bros. and the mine workers employed by them on the coal mining operations referred to above, liable to pay contributions to the pensions fund under the Coal and Oil Shale Mine Workers (Pensions) Acts? If so, from what date and have any such contributions been made?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "No."

(3) "Under the terms of Authority to Prospect 10C the Minister approved that the company be allowed to mine 10,000 tons of coal and export this amount to Japan for testing and evaluating purposes."

(4) "Yes. The name of the mine has not been registered but as approval to mine the coal was not given until October 7, 1968, the company has 30 days from that date within which to register the name."

(5) "No. Royalty is only payable on coal raised from a Coal Mining Lease. I would point out that coal raised from a prospecting title cannot be sold as it is still the property of the Crown. I would refer the Honourable Member to the Answer to (3) above."

(6) "No. See Answer to (5) above."

PROSPECTUS OF CUDGEN R.Z. LTD.

Mr. Sherrington, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

(1) Has he seen a prospectus issued by Cudgen R.Z. Ltd. on March 17, 1967?

(2) If so, has he read page 11, which states, *inter alia,* "after 1974 mining will continue in New South Wales and the Company will mine extensively high dune areas near Gympie," and "However as these leases are worked out both plants will operate further south and a third plant will be brought in to mine beach leases at Double Island Point"?

(3) Is he aware of the references on page 12 under the heading "Report on ore reserves in 90 mining tenements in Queensland and New South Wales" in which reference is made to A to P348 Gympie?

(4) Has he studied maps G and H under the headings "Mineral areas to be acquired by Cudgen R.Z. Ltd."? If so, will he inform the House whether in view of the Answer to my Question on September 10, that at that date the company did not hold any leases which would enable it to commence mining operations in the area, is the information contained in the prospectus not correct?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "Yes."

(3) "Yes."

(4) "The Answers given to the Honourable Member on September 10 were correct. For his information, I would refer him to the paragraph headed 'The Company' on page 6 of the prospectus and the paragraph headed 'Reserves and Prospecting Policy' on page 8 of the prospectus."

MINERS' PENSIONS

Mr. Sherrington, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

(1) Will the amount of $13.50 per week being paid by way of miner's pension to Robert Madders, Union Street, Torbanlea, be actually reduced to $12.50 per week as a direct consequence of the increase of $1.00 per week in the Commonwealth age pension being received by his wife?

(2) If so, what is the number of recipients who will have the amount paid to them by way of miner's pension actually reduced as a direct consequence of the new Government pension increases?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "127."

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON HARBOUR FACILITIES, GLADSTONE

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

(1) What has been the total public expenditure by way of loan or other means on harbour facilities at Gladstone for use by (*a*) Queensland Alumina Pty. Ltd., (*b*) Thiess Peabody Mitsui Pty. Ltd. and (*c*) Utah Development Co. Pty. Ltd.?

(2) To his knowledge, is any future expenditure on these facilities envisaged?

Answers:—

(1) "The expenditure incurred by the Gladstone Harbour Board in developing harbour facilities for use by the organisations mentioned has been as follows:—Queensland Alumina Pty. Ltd.—Causeway and bridge leading to South Trees Island—$1,621,500. Thiess Peabody Mitsui Pty. Ltd.—Reconstruction of the Harbour Board Coal Wharf at Auckland Point, $450,000; Conversion of the Harbour Board bulk loader at Auckland Point from a fixed-head loader to a travelling loader, $550,000; Stockpile slabs, conveyor extension and other miscellaneous works at Auckland Point, $111,500; Dredging the entrance channel to 31½ feet L.W.O.S.T.; Dredging the Harbour Board coal berth at Auckland Point to 37 feet L.W.O.S.T.; Dredging a swing basin at Auckland Point to 30 feet L.W.O.S.T., $1,060,000; Reclamation of land at Barney Point for lease to Thiess Peabody Mitsui, $307,000; Common road bridge access to the Barney Point Wharf head of Thiess Peabody Mitsui, $229,943; Total: $2,708,443. Utah Development Co. Pty. Ltd.—Improvement in the loading rate of the Harbour Board bulk loader at Auckland Point from 600 to 750 tons per hour—$100,000. In addition dredging of the entrance channel from 31½ feet to 34 feet for the benefit of Thiess Peabody Mitsui Pty. Ltd. and Utah Development Co. Pty. Ltd. was carried out at a cost of $1 million. Funds to meet this expenditure were provided to the Harbour Board by Mitsui and Co. (Aust.) Ltd. Although these works were developed for use by the organisations mentioned, they are owned by the Gladstone Harbour Board and are available for use by other users. As an example, all the development at the Auckland Point Wharf and bulk-coal loader and the deepening of the entrance channel to 31½ feet costing in all $2,171,500 which was for the immediate use of Thiess Peabody Mitsui Pty. Ltd., is being used by Utah Development Co. Pty. Ltd. now that T.P.M. have developed their own terminal at Barney Point. A further example is the causeway and bridge leading to South Trees Island which has provided access not only to the Queensland Alumina Wharf but also to any future harbour development which may take place south of that terminal."

(2) "No."

FIRE ESCAPE, MAGISTRATES COURT BUILDING, BRISBANE

Mr. Bennett, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Justice,—

(1) Has his attention been drawn to an article in *The Courier-Mail* of September 13, 1968, about the fire escape to the Magistrates Court building being sealed off, thus causing a fire trap?

(2) Did he look carefully at the accompanying photograph showing the locked and bolted door at the bottom of the fire escape leading from four courts on the top floor of the Brisbane Magistrates Court building and also showing strong wire mesh enclosing the verandahs, which would impede rescue work?

(3) Will not prisoners be trapped, as suggested in the article, in the neighbouring watch-house building?

(4) As one of the rooms on the top floor of this building is about to house the Supreme Court library, only recently threatened by fire, what action will he take to have the fire escape made accessible?

(5) Why is the fire escape locked and bolted, leaving all the people in the four courts in a potential fire trap and in a century-old building that is a fire hazard and has no lift?

(6) Who has the keys to the fire escape?

(7) Would it be the man who is supposed to sound the alarm in relation to any fires in the Supreme Court?

(8) What fire-escape regulations are involved and, if there are any, are they being observed?

(9) Will he appoint a permanent caretaker to safeguard the building and its occupants against the tragedy of a possible fire such as occurred in the Supreme Court?

Answer:—

"The Honourable Member is requested to direct his Question to the Honourable the Minister for Works and Housing within whose Department the administrative control of these matters lies."

CLINICAL TESTS FOR DRINK-DRIVING PROSECUTIONS

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to a statement by Mr. N. Langford, S.M., in *The Courier-Mail* of October 3, regarding breathalyser evidence, "A Medical Certificate on its own doesn't prove a single solitary thing except the blood-alcohol content of a person"?

(2) Were clinical tests taken by Government medical officers before the introduction of the breathalyser?

(3) Why cannot clinical tests be taken so as to produce relevant and material evidence to the Court?

(4) Have any instructions been given to the medical officers that no clinical tests are to be taken?

(5) In view of the number of dismissed complaints through insufficient evidence to support the breathalyser reading, what action does he propose to take?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "I am advised by the Government Medical Officer that clinical tests were taken by Government Medical Officers before the introduction of breathalyser tests and are still being taken where necessary."

(3) "The breathalyser is a scientific instrument and a clinical test is not considered necessary. Except in two instances the medical practitioner who conducted the test has been called to give evidence in these cases and this practice will continue."

(4) "The Government Medical Officer, Dr. D. G. Wilson, who has trained all Government Medical Officers in the operation of breathalyser instruments has advised them not to undertake clinical tests but to rely on the result of breathalyser or blood tests. However, if a Government Medical Officer considered that a clinical examination was necessary to exclude any other pathological condition, he would clinically examine the person concerned."

(5) "The Honourable Member is confusing the issue. I am not aware of any complaints having been dismissed through insufficient evidence to support a breathalyser reading. However, there have been instances where the Court has not been satisfied as to all the elements of the evidence of the defendant being under the influence of liquor at the material time but was satisfied that at the material time the concentration of alcohol in the defendant's blood equalled or exceeded 100 milligrams of alcohol to 100 millilitres of blood and has convicted the defendant of the lesser offence as provided in the legislation."

LICENSING OF TOW-TRUCK OPERATORS

Mr. Bennett, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) Is he aware that his predecessor in office over a long period had been conducting an investigation into the operations of tow-truck operators in Brisbane? If so, has the investigation been completed?

(2) Will a report on the investigation be given?

(3) Is it possible to conduct some system of licensing or registering of tow-truck operators in order to eliminate malpractices in the business?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "Reports have been submitted to the Minister in charge of Police from time to time."

(3) "The question of the introduction of a system of licensing or registration of tow-truck operators has been previously examined, and it was decided that no action be taken to introduce such a system."

Mr. GRAHAM (Mackay): Before asking the question standing in my name, may I have an explanation why it has been rephrased?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I understand that the hon. member was apprised by the Clerk Assistant and Sergeant at Arms earlier today that his question was disallowed for certain reasons. The question was not rephrased; two portions of it were disallowed. The hon. member has been apprised of this fact, and I do not intend to reiterate the reason why. I earnestly refer the hon. member to pages

350 to 354 of the Seventeenth Edition of Sir Erskine May's "Parliamentary Practice" covering the general rules on questions. I particularly refer him to the portion on page 352 under the heading "Examples of inadmissible questions". I think that he will find his answer there.

Mr. GRAHAM: I think you are bigoted, Mr. Speaker. I think you are biased.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! In view of the hon. member's remark. I disallow his question entirely. I also ask him to withdraw the remark.

Mr. GRAHAM: I refuse to withdraw it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I have no alternative but to order the hon. member, under the provisions of Standing Order No. 123A, to leave the Chamber.

Whereupon the hon. member for Mackay withdrew from the Chamber.

DRAINAGE OF HERBERTON STATE SCHOOL GROUNDS

Mr. Wallis-Smith, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

(1) In view of the need for drainage at Herberton State School playground to be completed before the seasonal rains and as the parents and citizens' association is prepared to top-dress and grass the area, will he give the work priority?

(2) When will the work commence?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "There has been delay in obtaining precast concrete sections for the drainage work. The last section has just been received and the work will be completed without delay."

TOBACCO PRODUCTION

Mr. Wallis-Smith, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Primary Industries,—

(1) Has a survey been completed in Queensland of the area to be planted with tobacco for the 1968-69 season?

(2) Will the Queensland quota be produced from the area planted?

(3) Is there any carry-over of tobacco leaf from the previous year? If so, what are the relative amounts of (*a*) quota leaf and (*b*) non-quota leaf?

Answers:—

(1) "No."

(2) "The position will not be known until The Tobacco Leaf Marketing Board's survey is completed."

(3) "There was no tobacco leaf of quota grades left unsold from the 1967-68 crop. There are, however, some 30 to 40 tons of low-grade leaf which does not meet quota-grade standards still on hand."

WATER SUPPLY TO ABORIGINES AT KOAH, OAK FOREST, KOWROWA AND MANTAKA

Mr. Wallis-Smith, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Lands,—

(1) Further to the Answers to my Questions relative to water supply for Koah, Kowrowa, Mantaka and Oak Forest and as the Mareeba Shire Council has no plans, has he an alternative which would overcome the present water problem?

(2) If not, will he agree to my former request for a conference with a view to solving the problem?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "The Honourable Member is referred to my reply of September 25, 1968."

FEMALES EMPLOYED ON NIGHT SHIFTS BY RAILWAY DEPARTMENT

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

How many female railway employees, senior and junior, and in what classifications, work between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m.?

Answer:—

"There are no female Railway employees who work the hours between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. There are, however, a number of female employees who cease duty subsequent to 8 p.m. and commence duty prior to 6 a.m. The number varies from day to day but the average Monday to Friday would be 215 and cover classifications—office cleaners, station mistresses, gate keepers, waiting room attendants, stenotypists, carriage cleaners, Railway Refreshment Room employees."

ANNUAL REPORT OF COMMISSIONER FOR RAILWAYS

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

When will the annual report of the Commissioner for Railways for the year 1967-68 be presented to Parliament?

Answer:—

"The Annual Report of the Commissioner for Railways for the year 1967-68 will be tabled shortly."

FORM OF QUESTION

Mr. BENNETT (South Brisbane) having given notice of a question—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The latter part of the hon. member's question seeks an expression of opinion.

PAPER

The following paper was laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

Report of the Public Service Superannuation Board for the year 1967-68.

SUCCESSION AND PROBATE DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Succession and Probate Duties Act 1892 as subsequently amended from time to time in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(Mr. Smith, Windsor, in the chair)

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer) (11.49 a.m.): I move—

"That a Bill be introduced to amend the Succession and Probate Duties Act 1892 as subsequently amended from time to time in certain particulars."

This Bill contains only two clauses. Its sole purpose is to implement the concessions in succession duty provided in the current Budget.

The Bill applies to estates passing to a surviving spouse or the deceased's child or children under 21 years. Under present law, such estates are exempt from duty where the value is $10,000 or less. The Bill increases the exemption figure to $15,000.

Moreover, under the present law there is a gradual increase in the rate of duty on the value of estates lying between $10,000 and $14,000, so that the full schedule rate of duty is reached at $14,000. The Bill will increase this figure to $19,000. In other words, in the case of estates passing to a surviving spouse or the deceased's child or children under 21 years of age, the estate will now be exempt from duty where the value is $15,000 or less, and concessional rates of duty will apply where the value lies between $15,000 and $19,000. The full scale of duty will apply to such estates where the value is $19,000 or more.

I believe that the Committee will fully accept the principle that I have put forward. My idea is that the Committee take this Bill through the first-reading stage so that when the Budget debate is completed the second reading of the Bill can proceed and this relief can be applied.

I commend the Bill to hon. members.

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) (11.52 a.m.): The Opposition has no argument against the principles contained in the Bill. It recognises inflationary patterns that have continued over the last few years. It could rightly be said that this measure is a recognition of the inflation that has occurred. We believe that the time for such recognition is long overdue.

There is no doubt that previously, where an estate of $10,000 went to a surviving spouse or the deceased's children, the inflationary trend reduced the value of that sum. A very definite need existed for an increase in that sum, and this has now been provided for to the extent of raising it to $15,000.

The last occasion on which a similar measure was introduced was in 1963. If I remember correctly, on that occasion the exemption was raised from $8,000 to $10,000, and the reducing scale at that stage was $10,000 to $14,000. Previously it had been $8,000 to $9,500. Now we find that the Bill provides for a gradual increase to $19,000. This increase is in accord with that stated initially by the Treasurer, from $10,000 to $15,000.

The Opposition approves of the principle of the Bill, and it has no argument with it. We will look at the amendment as the Bill passes through the second-reading stage, but at this stage the Opposition is not against it.

Mr. WALSH (Bundaberg) (11.54 a.m.): I shall be very brief in speaking on this measure. I refer to the fact that some years ago the predecessor to the present Treasurer promised that there would be a consolidation of the various laws covering succession and probate duty, and in fact he brought a measure before the Chamber.

Mr. Coburn: It went through the first reading.

Mr. WALSH: It went through the first reading. The Government of the day went to the trouble of having it printed and of doing all the work that was necessary for its preparation. It sought legal advice, and no doubt a lot of time was spent by the officers charged with administering these laws in bringing about this consolidation. What happened to it, I do not know, but it would appear that somebody outside Government circles exerted influences and proposed that the measure should be dropped completely.

I should like to hear from the Treasurer if the Government has any intention of proceeding with the promise made in policy speeches years ago about getting on with the job of consolidating these laws.

Mr. Chalk: Sit down and I will tell you.

Mr. WALSH: I will accommodate the Treasurer, as he is in a generous mood. We have got him into that mood, but if

the matter had not been raised he would not have bothered getting to his feet to tell us about it.

I do not think the Treasurer will deny that the proposed amendments deal only with what has been already stated, that is, the inflationary nature of land values and money values. We have only to look at the Consolidated Revenue returns for succession and probate duty and land tax (which is involved in these calculations) to see that irrespective of the exemptions and concessions in land tax and probate duty that have been extended over a period, the receipts are certainly rising to great heights. I am sure the Treasurer will be frank enough to admit—if he is not prepared to do so I am happy to "take him on"—that he will not suffer any loss of revenue having regard to the inflationary value of land in particular. If six years ago a property was valued at £500 or £600, the same land today, because of the movement in residential development and so on, will probably be valued at $20,000 or, in ordinary residential areas, the value could be from $3,000 to $6,000. It cannot be denied that if in the meantime the owner of the property has died and the estate has been wound up, there has been a very substantial difference in the duty paid compared with what would have been paid five years ago.

While I concede that the Treasurer is giving some relief, I point out that he is certainly not going very far. He could give much more relief and still find, at the end of this financial year, that receipts from succession and probate duties are much higher than those of previous years.

Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) (11.58 a.m.): If ever legislation was overdue, this is it. It affects primary producers tremendously, because of inflationary trends and no section of the community is having a worse time than the farmers. They are obliged to invest considerable sums in their properties to make a living. Notwithstanding that, their net income, or real money, is decreasing every day, and their costs are increasing. When people die it is only natural that they should leave their properties to their families. On checking the Auditor-General's report I find that in 1966-67 succession duty alone totalled $11,327,236. Last year it totalled $15,999,135, an increase of $4,671,899. That is a tremendous increase in one year, caused mainly by inflated values. Properties must be passed on to the younger members of families.

Other figures from the Auditor-General's report are—

—	1966–67	1967–68	Increase
	$	$	$
Probate duty ..	680,961	988,213	307,252
Conveyances and mortgages ..	6,791,177	7,903,819	1,112,642
Total of all sources ..	33,390,861	43,544,942	10,393 381

In plain language that is an imposition on our primary producers, who are paying the major proportion of that money.

If they decide to give members of their families some portion of their estate they must pay gift duty, the figures for which are—

1966-67	1967-68	Increase
$	$	$
327,621	476,782	149,161

The Treasurer's proposal does not go far enough. This is striking a crippling blow at farmers, who are not even able to pass on the proceeds of a life's work to the members of their families.

The part played by State gift duty is small compared with that of the Commonwealth, whose rates are more than double those of the State. It has reached the stage where today everyone is in a straight-jacket. I cannot remember any time in our history when these unfair charges or impositions were so great, and never have they been felt so much by the people. The time has come when the Treasurer will have to look again at these charges and try to reduce them. If that is not done, I do not know how the farming community will carry on. Anybody in business must have a good deal of capital to make a living, and, as that amount of capital is taxed every time ownership is changed, these people are suffering greatly and whole estates are almost wiped out after each change takes place.

I congratulate the Treasurer on introducing this Bill, although I am not completely happy because I do not think he has gone far enough.

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer) (12.4 p.m.), in reply: First of all, I noted from the remarks of the Deputy Leader of the Oppositon that members of the Opposition are prepared to examine the Bill. That is what I would expect of them. There was no further comment from the hon. member in that direction.

The hon. member for Bundaberg raised a matter which, I say quite candidly, has been of some concern to me. True, my predecessor in the office of Treasurer, Mr. (now Sir Thomas) Hiley brought before this Parliament a Death Duties Assessment Bill which went through the introductory stage. I know a considerable amount of advice was tendered to him not only by people directly or indirectly affected but also, to a major degree, by the Queensland Law Society, the Taxpayers' Association of Queensland, and many other bodies.

When I assumed the responsibilities of Treasurer, I thought it was necessary to have a look at this piece of legislation which had been introduced and taken no further. I assure the hon. member for Bundaberg that I believe this to be a matter that must be tackled, although perhaps I do not go along with some of the viewpoints expressed, or

decisions made earlier, which were embodied in the Bill in the form in which it was originally introduced. In more recent times I have had officers working on this matter for some period, and I have, as it were, a new report on it. It is a major Bill and one that I certainly will not present to Parliament till I feel that I have done my "homework" thoroughly and am competent to make a recommendation to the Government on the way in which the original Bill should be amended and in what form it will be presented. I say to the hon. member for Bundaberg that I believe I will be back in the office of Treasurer after the next State election, and for that reason I believe I can give him an assurance that a Bill of this nature will be brought before Parliament.

The hon. member for Fassifern referred to inflationary trends brought about, I know, by increases in the cost structure of almost all commodities. It is true that estates today are of greater value, no doubt as a result of inflation, than they were years ago. On the other hand, I must say to the hon. member that when I presented the Budget I drew attention particularly to the fact that there had been a tightening-up in the Stamp Duties Office in the matter of succession and probate duties. This tightening-up in stamp-duty matters resulted in a considerable increase in revenue, although these receipts could be described as "oncers", to be received only in overtaking the backlog.

I think the legal fraternity would acknowledge that there has been a considerable speeding up in the work of the Stamp Duties Office. Whilst in the past there was a general lag in this office, the major portion of it has now been overcome, and it was those increased receipts that provided some of the "fat" that was available for extra spending last year.

Mr. Walsh: You caught a lot of little fish, but not one big one.

Mr. CHALK: I will accept that we caught a lot of little fish, but we did not, in collecting from them, get anything to which we were not entitled. A lot of little fish were getting through the net, and, without altering the rules or doing anything that was not within the ambit of the Act, the mesh was made a little smaller and more fish were caught.

I advise the hon. member for Fassifern that I am not unaware of the position of primary producers. I can say, however, that I have taken an interest in some of the estates that have passed through the office, and I have seen that not all large estates are those of primary producers. There are many people today, whether they be school-teachers or in other occupations, who, through capital investment, have built up very large estates. Whilst I have every sympathy for the primary producer, I must also recognise that I have to get revenue from somewhere. On the other hand, I assure the hon. member for Fassifern that what he said has not fallen on deaf ears, and I hope that, as time goes on, it will be possible to reduce taxation in the field of primary industries.

Mr. Muller: My point is that you are taking an unfair portion from people who are less able to afford it.

Mr. CHALK: If I may put it this way, an estate is the result of the activities of a person during his lifetime. The proportion that the Government takes falls equally on everybody for the amount that he or she has acquired during his or her lifetime. I fail to see that the Government is taking something fairly from one section of the community and treating another section of the community unfairly.

The only other point raised by the hon. member related to gift duty. There is always sentiment attached to the making of a gift to a member of a family or whoever may be concerned. Provided that the gift is a genuine one, not designed entirely to beat taxation, I do not think that the Government should be too severe on it. But one cannot legislate for only one class of person in the community, because, unfortunately, one finds very often that there are two classes—those who make a genuine gift, and those who make gifts for the purpose of avoiding taxation.

The points raised by the hon. member for Fassifern are points that I know concern everyone, particularly people in primary industries. If the finances of the State improve further as time goes on, I am prepared to consider the matters that the hon. member has raised.

Motion (Mr. Chalk) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Chalk, read a first time.

LAND TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Land Tax Acts 1915 to 1966 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(The Acting Chairman of Committees, Mr. Smith, Windsor, in the chair)

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer) (12.15 p.m.): I move—

"That a Bill be introduced to amend the Land Tax Acts 1915 to 1966 in certain particulars."

The purpose of introducing this Bill today is similar to that associated with the previous

Bill. This Bill also gives effect to concessions announced in the Financial Statement at present before the Committee of Supply.

Three thousand smaller landholders and primary producers, who would have been liable for tax in 1968-69, will be excluded from the field of land tax by this Bill. Without the measures proposed, the number of taxpayers for 1968-69 would have risen to about 14,800. The Bill will limit the number of taxpayers to about 11,800, a reduction of some 3,000.

The Bill proposes—

to increase levels of exemptions; to increase the minimum tax which the Commissioner may refrain from levying; to increase the figure governing liability for returns: and to ensure that the Commissioner has the authority to grant land tax clearances if adequate security is held to cover tax liability.

The statutory exemption, to which all individuals resident in Australia are entitled, is lifted from $6,000 to $7,000, whilst the special exemption to farmers and graziers who personally use their land for agricultural, dairying or grazing purposes is increased from $18,000 to $21,000.

The Commissioner is authorised by the Bill to refrain from issuing assessments under $6, as against the existing limit of $4. At current rate of tax, this will virtually exempt taxpayers the taxable value of whose land is less than $1,500.

Resident owners not exempt under the Land Tax Acts will not be required to lodge returns unless the unimproved value of freehold lands held is $8,500 or more. Companies and absentees will not be liable for returns if the value of their holdings is less than $1,500. These measures will do away with the need for the lodgment of a number of unnecessary returns.

With the exception of taxpayers claiming the special exemption of $21,000, taxpayers, whether they are residents, absentees or companies, will not be required to lodge individual returns unless tax will actually be payable by them.

The Bill does not vary the rates of tax, which remain the same as for 1967.

I will outline the benefits to be derived by taxpayers by the combination of the increases in exemption levels and the minimum tax to be levied. A resident owner will not receive an assessment unless he owns freehold land with an unimproved value of $8,500 or more. I should mention here that the provision of the Act still stands whereby a person who owns only one parcel of freehold land in Queensland under 48 perches in area, and who uses that land exclusively for his own residential use, is totally exempt from land tax irrespective of its value and is not required to lodge a return.

A farmer who personally works his lands will not be called upon to pay tax if the unimproved value of those lands is less than $22,500; nor will companies and absentees be levied whilst the unimproved value of their holdings is less than $1,500.

Farmers and other resident owners who will not be totally exempted by the Bill will benefit from reductions in taxable values following the application of the proposed greater exemptions.

Some 450 farmers who paid tax in 1967-68 will not receive assessments in 1968-69; approximately 1,750 other residents who paid tax in 1967-68 will not be taxed in 1968-69; and about 200 companies and 100 absentees with small holdings, who paid tax in 1967-68, will not be levied in the current year.

When this Government came into office in 1957, 24,680 taxpayers were involved in the payment of land tax. Compare this with an estimated 11,800 for the current year. It is our policy not to levy land tax on the small landholder, and it is expected that only about 6,700 resident owners will contribute to land tax revenue in the current year. This figure of 6,700 is less than one-third of the 22,500 residents who were paying land tax when this Government came into office. This year will see the smallest number of resident taxpayers paying land tax since it was introduced in 1915. The reduction in the number of resident taxpayers is the direct result of periodic reviews by the Government of exemption levels, which will now be five times those in force 10 years ago.

I think that the Committee will agree that the Bill does not interfere with the basic purpose of land tax, which is to discourage large aggregations of land, yet, in the face of rising values, it keeps beyond the range of land tax the wage-earners, small landholders and farmers.

There has for years been a feature of land tax which has caused some inconvenience to parties to a sale and their agents. This was the inability of the Land Tax Office to grant clearances from land tax in the early part of each financial year. On 15 August, 1967, I authorised the introduction of a scheme as an additional facility to taxpayers to enable land tax clearances to be granted, provided security is held by the Commissioner to cover tax liability. Section 37 of the Acts is now being amended to remove any legal doubts regarding the Commissioner's authority under that section to grant clearances if tax is not actually paid but is in fact secured by a cash deposit or a bank guarantee.

Prior to August, 1967, the Commissioner could not grant a clearance from land tax on any parcel of land until he had issued an assessment and the tax had been paid. If there was legislation pending, he could not issue an assessment until the new rates and exemptions became law. If there was no legislation to be enacted, he could not issue an assessment until the vendor had lodged a satisfactory return. In 1966 no

assessments were issued until an amending Bill became law on 12 December of that year.

Under the scheme, a vendor who cares to lodge a bank guarantee or a cash deposit with the Land Tax Office may be granted a clearance on 1 July, if desired, or at any time during the year. The amount of security required is kept to the minimum sufficient to cover possible tax liability. A vendor may lodge security to cover tax on one specific block to be sold, or he may lodge such securities to enable clearances to be granted on any future sales. In 1967-68 one developer lodged security in the sum of $5,000 to cover a number of sales.

I should stress that nothing is being taken away; all existing practices relating to the granting of clearances will continue as before, but this additional procedure is available to those who desire to take advantage of it. The other amendments proposed in the Bill are merely the conversion of figures from pounds to dollars.

I commend the Bill to the Committee.

Mr. HANLON (Baroona) (12.26 p.m.): As with the previous measure introduced by the Treasurer relating to succession duties, I suppose it is true to say that this measure largely recognises the inflationary trend in land values and provides not so much a concession as a recognition of the additional income that would naturally flow to the Crown because of these inflationary factors, which cause considerable anguish, as we know, when the Valuer-General revalues land.

I suppose it is equally true to say that most people are not particularly concerned about land tax as a consequence of revaluation, as the Treasurer pointed out that last year the total number of residents paying land tax was 8,911 and, in all 14,353 companies, absentees and residents paid land tax. Looking at those figures it is evident that land tax, as such, does not affect the ordinary person in the community. Nevertheless, the impact of the inflationary trends in land values is no doubt represented in the measure presented by the Treasurer, and it indicates his recognition of them. When we look back we see that there has been a successive raising of the general exemptions. On this occasion, the exemptions have risen from $6,000 to $7,000 for urban land, and from $18,000 to $21,000 for rural land. On going back a decade we see just how rapidly it has been necessary to increase the exemption, and it becomes apparent that inflationary land values have considerable significance not only for the Treasurer from a revenue point of view, but for the community. I think the hon. member for Ithaca the other day asked someone the main cause of the increase in building costs, and the costs of owning a home. Probably the increase in land values is just as much responsible as is anything else.

The Opposition accepts the measure, because we feel that there is a need to raise the exemption as values rise. However, I point out that, with these concessions, which are estimated to cost $150,000 in a full year, the Treasurer will collect in land tax a sum almost identical to the amount collected last year.

Mr. Walsh: It probably will be more.

Mr. HANLON: If the trend follows the usual pattern, as the hon. member for Bundaberg has pointed out, the Treasurer will probably collect more.

Last year $4,741,000 was collected in land tax and the estimate for this year is $4,735,000. That is quite a big increase compared with the sum of $2,856,000 collected in land tax when the Government came to office. Hon. members will recall that when the Country-Liberal parties were in Opposition they probably cried more tears about land tax than about any other tax imposed at the State level. They swore on their hearts, their Bibles and everything else, that one of the first things they would abolish, one of the first injustices they would correct, was this horrible land tax which the Labour Government was imposing on the people of Queensland.

The story was considerably exaggerated. The Treasurer said that some 20,000 taxpayers were involved at that time. Because of the rapid inflation in land values and the lifting of the minimum tax payable, it has been possible to reduce, at little cost to the Crown, the number of actual payers of land tax. The Government soon lost interest in this after it assumed office. The number of taxpayers went down to about 10,000, then climbed to 13,000, and last year reached 14,353.

Back in 1965 the Opposition pointed out to the then Treasurer, Mr. Hiley, that by raising the minimum tax imposed from $4 to as high as $10 he would exempt quite a number of people who were previously compelled to pay land tax, but only a comparatively small amount which was not a great benefit to the Crown in quantum. But they had an obligation to pay tax. We pointed out that the lifting of the minimum from $4 to even $6 would reduce the number of taxpayers quite significantly without costing the Crown a great deal of money.

Table A, headed "Summary of Assessments made", contained in the 1968 Report of the Commissioner of Land Tax, shows that in the grade of taxable value from $1 to $1,999, 2,609 taxpayers paid $15,120, that in the $8,000 to $9,999 grade, 28,783 taxpayers paid $85,405, and it is not until we go down to the $10,000 to $49,999 grade that there is any significant amount of tax paid. In that bracket 3,767 taxpayers paid $1,250,037. That is where the Crown starts to reap in a benefit from land tax.

The Labour Party has never adopted the irresponsible attitude that was displayed by the Liberal-Country Party Opposition, namely, that land tax should be abolished. The Treasurer has changed his tune since those days. He now says that land tax is necessary to guard against extreme aggregation of land and possibly the non-use or misuse of land—to discourage people who are not using land in the interests of the community. But he did not say that when he was in Opposition. The Labour Party has always felt that it was fundamentally justified in imposing land tax, but there was no desire to impose on people who could ill afford to pay it taxation that was not justified on the basis on which it was operated.

It is interesting to note that the Premier of New South Wales, Mr. Askin, has pledged, in his Budget speech, to abolish over a period of three years, land tax payable by the primary producer, the person we would class as the man who is working land. I do not know whether, like some political promises, it will ever be put into effect. But it does indicate that, although New South Wales has some budgetary problems at the moment, some of the matters raised by the hon. member for Fassifern today concerning primary producers are being given recognition in that State. It is a challenge to this Government, particularly the Country Party section of it, to see if ways and means can be found to assist the primary producers who may be affected adversely by land tax and are not in a position to pay it, and are genuinely endeavouring to make appropriate use of their land.

The Opposition concedes that the exemptions listed by the Treasurer are realistic in that they recognise that inflation in land values is continuing. As has been the practice, they also continue to adjust exemption levels to maintain the amount of revenue being received by the Crown whilst freeing from the tax net a number of people who have been paying comparatively small amounts in land tax.

The Bill also does something else which is considered desirable: it serves to minimise the number of returns that have to be made. This removes some inconvenience to the people who have to submit them, and relieves the department of the necessity to process unnecessary documents for very little revenue return.

The Opposition will examine the Bill when it is printed. The Treasurer has indicated that it is confined to carrying out budgetary provisions and some machinery alterations. I had hoped that it would be possible to increase the minimum tax payable above the $6 indicated by the Treasurer. I think there is scope for that to be done without affecting the State's revenue. I should also like to see some more attention given to finding, if possible, some ways and means of lessening any impact that there might be on primary producers who, because of circumstances beyond their control, are not in a position to carry any additional taxation burden.

Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) (12.37 p.m.): In my opinion, the principles of this Bill are similar to those of the Bill that the Committee has just dealt with concerning probate and succession duties. My complaint in this case also is that the Treasurer has not gone far enough.

The statement by the hon. member for Baroona that the farmer is paying more land tax than he did in days gone by is not quite correct.

Mr. Hanlon: I did not say that.

Mr. MULLER: The hon. member said that, although primary producers have been arguing for years that they should be granted some relief, the total amount of tax paid by them was more than it used to be. Part of that statement is true. I also appreciate the hon. member's last point that someone should examine the increasing loads being placed upon the shoulders of primary producers. I appreciate that point, because there is a distinction between those who pay land tax on business holdings and primary producers. Those engaged in business are able to pass on their land tax, together with rates and other charges, to their customers. Farmers, however, have to carry such charges on decreasing incomes.

To disprove one point made by the hon. member for Baroona, I should like to mention my experience. Although I do not like to introduce personal matters, I shall do so now to give a clear illustration of what happens. Up till a few years ago I was paying land tax amounting to £183 a year. As a result of the granting of increased exemptions, a couple of years ago my land tax was wiped out and I paid nothing. I received only the concessions that all others received. Last year, to my surprise, I returned to the field of land tax. I rang the Commissioner of Land Tax and asked why, and he sent me a clear and sensible explanation. He said, "Your valuations have increased." I said, "Yes." I sold 1,280 acres of freehold land but, despite that, my total valuation increased and brought me back into the field of land tax.

There appears to be a race between the Treasurer and the Valuer-General. I know that it is difficult for the Valuer-General to get over this situation. There are people paying prices for land which, in my opinion, are inflated and, in addition to the element of inflation, the land is just too dear. This is, of course, hard to control, but while it continues primary producers are receiving very little land-tax relief. In my case, although I sold a block of land and now have less land than formerly, I have returned to paying land tax.

Officers of the Valuer-General's Department have been working in my electorate and in the Treasurer's electorate—the Treasurer probably knows a good deal more about

that than I do—and I understand that valuations in the Lockyer district have increased to $250 an acre within the last year or two. An awkward position has arisen. Some of the farmers have been growing potatoes and getting high prices for them. Valuers from the Valuer-General's Department have come along and put a high value or that land, and it is fairly difficult to dispute their valuation successfully in court.

A Bill to amend the Succession and Probate Duties Act has just received its first reading. When an increased value is placed on land, that eventually has an effect on probate and succession duties. The Treasurer gets it both ways: the farmer is hit while he is alive; his family is hit after he dies. Primary producers are hit very hard and, as the hon. member for Baroona said, this matter will have to be dealt with.

The farmer today does not hold large areas of land because he wants to. He holds enough to make an honest living (I am speaking of the small landholder). I do not object to the principle of land tax. With the Government's present policy of freeholding land, land tax must be maintained, because if there is anyone I detest it is the land-hog who wants to hold large areas of land for himself. If aggregations of land are to be prevented, land tax must be imposed; we cannot do without it. However, land tax is a real imposition on people who have only a living area, and I think that the Department of the Valuer-General will have to work in collusion with the Treasury to ensure that justice is done to those people.

If the Treasurer wishes to give the smaller landholders some relief—they are a very important section of the community—there is always a way of doing it. I believe that it can be done in this way: if a person is using his own land for agricultural purposes, he should not be brought into the field of land tax; nor should the value of his land be so inflated that it will attract payment of tax by those who inherit his estate, and thus provide an additional tax.

The proposed Bill provides an increased exemption, but I think that exemption should have been more than doubled. It does not keep pace with the increased valuations made from time to time by the Department of the Valuer-General. One has only to look at the newspapers to see how values have increased over a certain period. I do not suppose that many are as bad as the valuations in the Thuringowa Shire, but there are others that are bad.

The Treasurer will say, "Go to court and fight your case and justice will come your way." He should go into court and see the things that are thrown into the ring by the valuers, not by the person who is interested in getting a reduction. Generally high values throughout the district are against the man who lodges the claim for relief. Someone comes into a district and pays a ridiculously high price for land. It may be said that this occurs only in isolated cases, but they are not really isolated cases. People with plenty of money do not care a hang what price they pay for a piece of land. In many instances they buy it to absorb profits they have made from a city business, and the land is sold at much more than its actual value. Developmental expenses are allowed as a deduction for income-tax purposes, and some people actually pay more for land because it lends itself to development.

I know that the Treasurer is sympathetic to primary producers, and I hope that he will find it possible in the next year or two to give some relief in that direction.

Mr. WALSH (Bundaberg) (12.45 p.m.): One must concede to the hon. member for Fassifern his consistent advocacy of the welfare of primary producers. Listening to him today, my mind harked back through the years that I have been associated with him in this Chamber, when he persistently rose and made it appear that primary industries were so vitally affected by the imposition of land taxation during the Labour Government's regime.

Mr. Muller: I was right, too.

Mr. WALSH: I invite the hon. member for Fassifern—the Treasurer might also be interested—to read an analysis that was made way back in 1952, I think, of the value of various rural industries—sugar, wool, dairying, and other mixed farming—and the amount collected from them in land tax. He will see just how small the amount was.

Even in the case of the sugar industry, I can recall that the amount paid in land tax at about that time was in the vicinity of £14,000, and the great bulk of that was paid by sugar companies and those owning large plantations. This analysis revealed that very few sugar-farmers were paying any land tax.

I am not in any way trying to decry the arguments that have been put forward to recognise the hardship in cases where primary producers might own an area of land that brings them within the ambit of land taxation, but if one looks at the returns that have been submitted over the years, these have not been great in number. I ask the hon. member for Fassifern to look at the "Parliamentary Debates" of, I think, 1952, The man who made the speech to which I am referring probably with a little tuition, was the late Alex Skinner. For a man who had interested himself for most of his life in industrial matters, I felt that he made out a very effective case. I think it was in 1953 that he made his speech, although others were made prior to that.

I do not think the Treasurer really believes that he is hoodwinking any of us on this side who have given some thought to this matter, but I commend him for at least giving a little historical background of the incidence of land tax since this Government came to power. That, I think, is a good

thing for this Assembly, because new members are coming in from time to time and it is helpful to them. I will not say the same thing about some of the documents that the Treasurer tabled with his Financial Statement.

In this case, looking at the over-all picture, land values were pegged before 1950—and they had been pegged for almost 10 years under the National Security Regulations brought down by the Federal Government. There were no local authority valuations or valuations for other purposes. In 1952 the first wide-scale valuations in the metropolitan area took place and, of course, after a lapse of 10 years it was found that there was a considerable jump in values. In the case of an ordinary allotment valued at, say, £300, or $600, it would be reasonable to say that over that period of 10 years from 1942 to 1952 there would be a minimum increase of about 100 or 110 per cent. If the same allotment was valued today it would be valued at in the vicinity of $6,600. If it is only an ordinary residential area of 31 perches or thereabouts, one can appreciate that there is a vast field in which the taxing authority can give some relief.

I should hate to think that the Treasurer would be so empty-minded as to continue to assess land tax on the basis of values that have become inflated over the years. We know that in 1962, owing to the tremendous increase in valuations, the Government saw fit to introduce a measure entitled the Local Government (Rateable Value Adjustment) Act. That measure applied the formula of adding the old valuation to the new valuation and dividing the total by two and taking the result as the basis on which the local authority would be expected to determine the rate per dollar that would be assessed by it. Of course, that did not apply in the case of valuations for succession and probate duties. The Treasurer knows that, and I do not think that he would try to mislead the Committee that it did apply.

Many factors come into the picture when we look into the scope that is given to the Treasurer to grant this relief. One only has to look at the annual reports of the Auditor-General to see how valuations of land for taxable purposes have moved from year to year. I notice that in the report of the Auditor-General for 1966-67 it is stated on page 48—

> "The rate payable on land of a taxable value of $340,000 or more remained unchanged and on all other land less than $340,000 the rate was slightly reduced with the exception of a slightly higher tax now paid by Mutual Life Assurance Societies. The increase of $542,674 in the amount collected, compared with the previous year, is the result of increased values in certain Local Authority areas effective from 30th June, 1966. The taxable value of land at 30th June, 1966 was $255,587,258 compared with $220,767,044 at 30th June, 1965."

In other words, that was an increase of over $35,000,000 in an extensive field for the Treasurer, the Stamps Office, and, in this case, the Land Tax Office, to play on.

The Auditor-General's report for 1967-68 shows that the taxable value on land at 30 June, 1967, had risen to $258,937,280. As hon. members will realise, the values as determined for the Brisbane local authority area, which is one of the areas in which increased values come into consideration, are not affected by the Budget that has just been presented by the Treasurer. But let us see what will happen in the year after next.

I know that the Committee has before it other important legislation, so I shall content myself with putting the few points that I have made in "Hansard".

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer) (12.54 p.m.), in reply: There is very little to which I need reply on this measure. As the hon. member for Bundaberg has said, I should like to have a traffic Bill, which is quite an important measure, introduced today, and therefore I do not propose to take up very much time in replying to what the hon. members for Fassifern and Bundaberg have said.

It is true that land tax, like any other tax, is a problem, and that it hits many people. On the other hand, I endorse what the hon. member for Bundaberg said in that when one is in a responsible position—and at one time he was Treasurer of this State—one has an opportunity to see the various categories from which taxation is received.

Whilst I have sympathy with the point raised by the hon. member for Fassifern concerning primary producers, it is true that the great bulk of the money comes from other sources. It was stated that the Treasurer of Victoria had eliminated primary producers from the land tax range. The hon. member for Baroona referred to this matter. I quite expected that it would be raised. It happened just before I introduced my Budget and I had a very quick look at the situation. Candidly, the land tax position in Victoria is very different from the position in this State.

Mr. Walsh: There is a lot of freehold.

Mr. CHALK: That is quite true.

When talking about the concession that the Treasurer of Victoria introduced, we should not overlook the fact that although he reduced the tax in relation to primary producers he passed the burden onto other sections of the community in that State.

The hon. member for Fassifern referred to my electorate of Lockyer. What happened there, and in the Fassifern and Somerset electorates has caused concern not only to primary producers but to all landholders in those areas. Without a completely new approach to land tax, we cannot get away

from the fact that people do pay high prices for land. They come to an area and, to be quite candid, in view of some of the prices paid for land in my electorate, I do not see how these people can ever hope to get a fair return on their investment. They will need seven good seasons out of seven.

Mr. Tucker: Why should we allow those people to become valuers?

Mr. CHALK: I was very clear in what I said. Whilst the Valuation of Land Act applies as it does, that position will remain. Perhaps we should look for another form of establishing how valuations shall be made. I was in this Chamber when that type of legislation was introduced. We had our debates and arguments within the Government parties, and no doubt the Opposition had its problems. I just do not know how we can stop people from coming into an area and paying these high prices. Possibly we should not stop them, but they are not doing primary industry any good. In fact, I doubt that they are doing anybody any good, including themselves.

Mr. Hanlon: Sometimes when a man realises he has paid too much he feels duty bound to get more than he paid for it when the next buyer comes along.

Mr. CHALK: That is so. It is a cycle.

I propose to look into one or two points that have been raised, and I will exercise the right to reply to them at the second-reading stage.

Motion (Mr. Chalk) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Chalk, read a first time.

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

TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

INITIATION

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Transport): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Traffic Acts 1949 to 1968 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(Mr. Carey, Albert, in the chair)

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Transport) (2.16 p.m.): I move—

"That a Bill be introduced to amend the Traffic Acts 1949 to 1968 in certain particulars."

I think that the Committee will be aware of some of the background of the reason for the introduction of this Bill. In introducing it at this stage, I should like to say that whenever an amendment to the Traffic Act is proposed in this Chamber there is usually considerable interest in it because all of us, within the limits of our experience, are traffic experts. Whenever matters concerning traffic are raised, either here or elsewhere, whether professionally or socially, there are as many experts as there are opinions to be found on the subject.

It has been the policy of this Government, in the administration and implementation of the Traffic Act in this State, to allow local governments to exercise considerable discretion in the control of traffic within their local government areas. The Local Government Association of Queensland has indicated to me that this is the policy that it wishes to see continued, and has represented to me that it wishes to have the present arrangements relative to the administration of traffic continued in their present form.

Mr. Hanlon: Has it made representations in this particular instance as well?

Mr. KNOX: Yes. The association has made very strong recommendations to me and I have had three conferences with it in the past fortnight. The matters that have come to a head in recent times and which are now the subject of this amendment will, I hope, fit into what has been the Government's policy since it took office.

I think I should outline some of the immediate background of the need for this amendment, because we should be aware of this background and what has happened. On about 25 September, Brisbane truck-drivers employed on the delivery and collection of merchandise and other goods in the City of Brisbane placed an industrial ban on such collection and delivery from midnight on 26 September in protest against the alleged reduction of loading-zone space as a result of the Brisbane City Council's change-over from tram to bus operation on certain routes.

To avoid the situation that was imminent at that time, the Lord Mayor met union representatives in conference, and on the Thursday afternoon of that week, in conference with them, he came to certain arrangements on the use of loading zones in the city. One of these arrangements was that there should be a system of identification of vehicles which the union felt should have exclusive use of loading zones, and the other was that some arrangement should be made regarding the exclusive use of loading zones.

I understand from the Lord Mayor that at that time he felt that he had the powers to do this, but after the conference, or during it —I am not sure which—he checked with the City Solicitor and found that he did not have the powers in this matter that he thought he

had. He telephoned me on that day and asked me if I had these powers because, if I had and would do what he requested, he would be able to handle the problem that had arisen. That conversation was at about 5.30 p.m. I asked him to ring me in about 15 minutes to give me time to consult my advisers and other officers who were not readily at hand. He rang me back and I had to advise him that I did not have the power to do what he requested. He then asked me if I would speak to the secretary of the Transport Workers' Union, Mr. Bevis, and this I agreed to do.

Eventually Mr. Bevis contacted me at Parliament House that evening. He told me his problem, and asked if I could do something about it. I explained that I had already consulted the Act and my advisers and had ascertained that I could not do what he requested, but that I would consider a submission if he gave it to me first thing the following day. This he agreed to do.

During the morning of the next day, before the submissions of the Transport Workers' Union reached me, the Retailers' Association made representations to me and presented a submission concerning loading zones which was not dissimilar from the request that the Transport Workers' Union had made. I agreed to chair a meeting between representatives of the Retailers' Association and the Transport Workers' Union that Friday afternoon. That meeting was quite an amicable one in which the delegates from both organisations agreed upon, and submitted to me, a case for more restricted use of loading zones and a system of identification of vehicles of those entitled to use loading zones. I agreed to place that submission before the Government for consideration to see what legislation could be agreed upon to implement their suggestions. That is the background to what happened.

I might say that the position was aggravated by the fact that a week or two before the issue arose there had been a strike of tramwaymen in this city during which there was a great increase in the number of private motor-cars in the city streets, and many drivers of these cars, unable to find metered parking space, parked in loading zones and found, much to their surprise, and for various reasons with which I am not completely familiar, that they did not receive parking tickets. I understand that there were some difficulties in the enforcement of parking regulations, and for this reason people found that they were able to park for unlimited periods in loading zones and get away with it. When the tramway strike finished and it became a little more difficult to find parking space because of the abolition of certain parking meters and loading zones to make room for bus stops, apparently people continued to park private cars in loading zones. This aggravated the situation considerably.

Naturally enough, I am somewhat in sympathy with the problems of those trying to deliver goods round the city, particularly when they find what appear to be private sedan cars parked in areas which have been provided, generally speaking, for the loading and unloading of goods or passengers.

Mr. Dewar: What about the case of the small businessman who does in fact deliver goods in a small sedan motor-car?

Mr. KNOX: He is quite entitled to use a loading zone as long as he is loading and unloading. If he just parks his car there, that, of course, is not a legitimate use of the loading zone. It was quite obvious to transport drivers in the city, who were going round the block looking for a space in a loading zone, that a car that was obviously locked up and in a loading zone for some time was not engaged in loading and unloading.

Mr. Hanlon: What is supposed to constitute a load for the purposes of the loading zone?

Mr. KNOX: I am not going to have an argument with the hon. member about that, because the matter has been before the Supreme Court.

Mr. Hanlon: That is what has led to the trouble.

Mr. KNOX: Many things of that type have added to the problem.

I suggested to the Lord Mayor—I made a public statement on this—that if loading zones are to be removed to make way for bus stops, which has happened and probably will continue to happen, it would seem to me that the restoration of the proportion of loading zones that existed previously should be dealt with as a matter of some urgency.

I believe that the proportion that was established in the City of Brisbane for loading zones as against parking zones was the result of a study by Wilbur Smith and Associates and others of the effective use of the kerb. That study was commissioned by the Brisbane City Council and, I think, by the Main Roads Department. So, if a certain number of loading zones are removed, the proportional need is not changed, and it would appear to me that the proportions should be restored, if that is practicable. However, that is just one of the other problems associated with loading zones that can be dealt with without amending the Act.

I thought it would be fair to give hon. members something of the history of this matter so that they will see it in perspective. The Government is anxious that the situation that has arisen and has come to a head does not continue for any longer than is necessary. It is anxious that all the parties involved in the problem should endeavour, by goodwill and co-operation, to find a solution to it. If the present legislation does not allow it, it is my endeavour this afternoon to amend the Act to enable it to be done. I hope that the amendments which I will put before the Committee—I am sure that hon. members hope so, too

—will allow further flexibility in regard to loading zones and result in some restrictions upon the use of loading zones, while at the same time retaining the power that local government has had in the past to exercise its discretion.

The result of all this is that today I am presenting to the Committee an amending Bill that will repeal the present definition of a loading zone and substitute a new definition that will have the following results:—

Firstly, in the new definition the existing loading zone, as we know it, will be retained.

Secondly, additional loading zones may be created in accordance with the requirements of the local authority, as it sees fit from time to time. These loading zones will be restricted as to the class or classes of vehicles, allied to the purpose for which they may be used as indicated on the official traffic sign. They may be restricted to loading and unloading goods; they may be restricted to picking up or setting down passengers; or, indeed, they may be restricted to both purposes.

In order to allow for a closer and easier policing of loading zones, assuming that these other types of loading zones are implemented, it is recommended in the amending Bill that the period of restrictive use for the purpose indicated on the sign will not exceed five minutes in the loading and unloading of passengers or 20 minutes in the loading and unloading of goods; or, if this is not thought to be adequate for a special type of purpose for which the loading sign is devised, such longer period as the local authority shall authorise, which will have to be indicated on the sign.

Mr. Tucker: This will all be the decision of the local authority?

Mr. KNOX: Yes, but the 20-minute and 5-minute periods will be provided for in the Act. It will be mandatory unless the local authority decides that there should be a longer period of time. If there is no other indication of the time, from now on it will be 5 minutes for passengers and 20 minutes for goods.

Mr. Hanlon: Drivers will have to take a course in rapid reading.

Mr. KNOX: We have thought of that. I will tell the hon. member something about it later. This is based on a background of experience, not only here but elsewhere. Hon. members will notice, if they go to the airport, that there is a 5-minute limit on the loading and unloading of passengers. Indeed, there was a case in Brisbane, which has been the subject of Supreme Court attention. Generally speaking, since then the local authorities have regarded 20 minutes as an adequate time for loading and unloading. In fact they were putting tickets on vehicles which exceeded the 20-minute limit. This is a practice which appears to have been in vogue for a little while. It seems a reasonable time, although I understand that in Sydney there is a 30-minute limit on loading-zone times.

Let me give an example. A loading zone of the type I have mentioned may be established in a local authority area. The official traffic sign could bear words to this effect—

"Loading Zone. Goods Only. No Parking. Motor Trucks and Utilities Only."

This, of course, is the addition of about two or three words to the existing sign. That is a pretty broad term. The way I have used it may not be the exact wording that will appear, but it will in fact be possible for a local authority to erect signs declaring that a loading zone is for motor trucks and motor utilities only, as defined in the Traffic Act. All those words will not be on it, but in effect it will mean that a very large proportion of vehicles will be entitled to be there, loading and unloading goods. Unless it was otherwise indicated by the local authority, they would have 20 minutes to use the loading zone.

Mr. Walsh: Is this expected to cover the full 24 hours of the day?

Mr. KNOX: No. Under the Act, the local authority already has power over the spread of hours of control or regulation of parking and loading within the 24-hour period. It could be 24 hours, 1 hour, 5 hours—whatever the local authority wants it to be.

Mr. Walsh: And for 5 or 5½ days a week?

Mr. KNOX: Whatever the local authority may wish in that regard.

Mr. Hanlon: That is the trouble with the signs now. In addition to what you have said, very often the signs have superimposed on them: "No Standing Any Time", "No Standing Between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m." or "4 p.m. and 6 p.m.", "Except for Buses or Taxis", or something else. It often develops into a novel.

Mr. KNOX: This is quite true, but there are special circumstances that just have to be met. In the interests of simplification, I do not think that we can eliminate all the possibilities that can arise. Local authorities are familiar with these possibilities because of representations made to them by individuals or groups in the community, whose wishes they try to accommodate. I think that is fair enough, but it does mean that one has to read the whole sign to discover whether or not one is entitled to use that space at that time of the day. It is very difficult to get simplification in this without denying people the right to kerbside space to people who should be entitled to it but who would not be numerous enough to warrant the whole city being blanketed with that type of sign.

The Main Roads Department is prepared to have discussions with the Brisbane City Council and try to standardise a type of

sign which, although it will not need additional wording to the extent that we are talking about here, will bear certain wording. The sign can be made distinguishable by the use of either particular wording or a certain colour so that it will be easily seen from a distance and the driver can identify the type of loading zone that he is approaching without having to stop and read the sign before entering the zone, as is presently the case.

To some degree we are limited by the standardisation of signs throughout Australia. It would appear that if we were to change the shape of the sign or put new or different wording on it, or put symbols on it, we would cause even more confusion than is caused already. A standard way of meeting the situation is to adopt certain colours. One colour is yellow, and the other is either red or green, which is normally used for loading zones. It could be put on the sign either as a bar or as a background, wide and clear enough to be seen from some distance away by the driver of a moving vehicle. No Act is required to enable this to be done; it is done under the standardisation of traffic signs.

The effect of the sign that I have been talking about will be that only motor trucks and motor utility trucks that come within the definition of those terms in the Act may lawfully enter such a loading zone for the specific purpose of loading and unloading goods. In other words, if a local authority designates a loading zone as the type available for motor trucks and motor utility trucks, only those vehicles may use it, and they can do so only when their drivers are loading or unloading goods. As well, the drivers must complete their operations, unless otherwise specified, within 20 minutes.

A provision like that would be one way of overcoming the problem that now arises. Once the driver has completed his duty of either loading or unloading his vehicle he must move out of the zone to make way for another vehicle, irrespective of whether the time limit has expired or not. That means that if he finishes his loading or unloading in less than 20 minutes he must leave the zone, because he is no longer doing the job that the sign allows him to do.

We do not want the situation to arise where a motor truck or a motor utility truck is parked in a loading zone. This does occur. The driver of a truck drops the tailboard and gives the impression that he is either loading or unloading when in fact he is doing something else. This, of course, restricts the use of the loading zone to other potential users of it. Once the driver of the vehicle has completed his lawful purpose he should drive the vehicle away. If he does not, he will be committing an offence. Provision for this situation, too, is being made in the Bill. The occupancy of the loading zone is, therefore, either lawful or unlawful, according to the particular restrictions printed on the sign and the purpose for which the loading zone is set aside.

This leads me to the definition of the word "parking", which is also dealt with in the Bill. The present definition reads—

> " 'Parking'—The standing of a vehicle, whether occupied or not, otherwise than temporarily for the purpose of and while actually engaged in loading or unloading goods or passengers: Provided that, in relation to parking in a metered space, during fixed hours the term 'Parking' means the standing of a vehicle, whether engaged in loading or unloading goods or passengers, or not."

The Bill will repeal that definition and substitute the following one:—

> " 'Parking'—The standing of a vehicle, whether occupied or not, otherwise than temporarily for the purpose of and whilst actually engaged in picking up or setting down passengers or in loading or unloading goods:
>
> Provided that, in relation to parking in a metered space, during fixed hours, the term 'Parking' includes the standing of a vehicle, whether or not engaged in picking up or setting down passengers or in loading or unloading goods, and in relation to parking in a loading zone during the hours during which regulated parking is operative, the term 'Parking' includes—
>
> (a) the standing continuously of a vehicle—
>
> (i) whilst actually engaged in picking up or setting down passengers, for any period exceeding five minutes or, if any longer period is indicated by the official traffic sign whereby the loading zone is defined for the picking up or setting down passengers, exceeding that period; or
>
> (ii) whilst actually engaged in loading or unloading goods, for any period exceeding twenty minutes or, if any longer period is indicated by the official traffic sign whereby the loading zone is defined for the loading or unloading goods, exceeding that period;"

Mr. Hanlon: When you say "passengers", do you mean from a commercial vehicle?

Mr. KNOX: From any vehicle.

Mr. Hanlon: Even a private car dropping passengers?

Mr. KNOX: That is right. If the loading zone is of such type as to allow passengers to be dropped at it, any type of vehicle that has passengers in it could well drop them. That would cover a sedan car, or even a truck dropping a passenger off.

The definition continues—

> "(b) if the loading zone is set aside as indicated by the official traffic sign whereby the loading zone is defined for

the standing therein of vehicles of a specified class, the standing of any vehicle other than a vehicle of the specified class whether or not engaged in picking up or setting down passengers or loading or unloading goods;

(c) if the loading zone is set aside as indicated by the official traffic sign whereby the loading zone is defined for the standing therein of vehicles whilst engaged in a specified purpose, the standing of any vehicle for a purpose other than a specified purpose whether or not engaged in picking up or setting down passengers or loading or unloading goods;"

There will be a longer and more involved definition of "parking", because it will be necessary to establish whether or not a vehicle is loading or unloading, or simply parking. That will be determined in these three different ways—

1. When the vehicle exceeds the time limit for that particular type of loading zone;

2. If it is the wrong class of vehicle in that loading zone; and

3. If it is not indeed loading or unloading, whether it is within the time or outside the time.

This, of course, will make it a lot easier for enforcement officers than is presently the case. They now have to wait a considerable time, because of precedents and cases that have been decided in court, before they can effectively ticket a person who may in fact not be using the loading zone for the purpose for which it was originally designed.

Mr. Dewar: Isn't it also important to protect the man in the street who may be wrongly accused?

Mr. KNOX: That is quite so. This will give him a very clear definition of his rights in relation to loading zones. That has not been clear in the past, because some people have used loading zones in such a way as to exclude others who should be able to use them—whether they are trucks or sedan cars —and are entitled to load and unload goods or passengers. They find in the loading zone a vehicle that is not doing that, although legally, under the present circumstances, it has a right to be there. That is the complaint of the Transport Workers' Union, the retailers and the Lord Mayor, in that this in fact does not allow the effective use of loading zones as they are presently defined.

Mr. P. Wood: Is there some doubt about what constitutes loading and unloading?

Mr. KNOX: There is, indeed. This, of of course, has been the subject of Supreme Court decisions, too.

It will be observed that the new definition, in effect, prohibits vehicles that are not authorised by the terms of the traffic sign from entering upon the loading zones specially set aside for the use of the vehicles of the class, and for the purpose, indicated.

The Bill adds an additional paragraph to section 44B (4) which deals with the powers of local authorities with respect to regulated parking. It empowers the local authority to prescribe in respect of any loading zone in its area the periods for which a vehicle may stand for a particular purpose, and authorises the variation of the period for different purposes and different loading zones. This amendment, in effect, gives the local authority the statutory power to vary the 5-minute limitation for passengers and the 20-minute limitation for goods set out in the definition of "loading zone".

The over-all effect of the Bill is to give local authorities throughout the State, which of course includes the Brisbane City Council, very wide powers to establish loading zones in their areas and regulate the loading and unloading of goods and the picking-up and setting-down of passengers in accordance with the requirements of all sections of the community. In other words, local authorities will be the masters of their own destinies in this field of civic administration.

Practical application of the provisions of the Bill, as far as the Brisbane City Council is concerned, will, I believe, overcome the dissatisfaction recently expressed by the Transport Workers' Union, and any other section of the community that is now experiencing some difficulties.

In essence, the purpose of the Bill is to enlarge the powers of local authorities throughout the State and thus enable them to control, by their own by-laws, loading-zone facilities within their own areas. By the proper implementation and organisation of these powers no-one, as a legitimate goods carrier, would be excluded in the discharge of his business responsibilities. But it will relieve existing difficulties. I imagine that local authorities, in the exercise of this additional power, will convert, where they feel it is necessary, the existing type of loading zone to meet demands in their areas, and will also introduce loading zones for people only, which do not exist at the moment, for hotels, theatres and other places of public amusement and public gathering.

Mr. Tucker: Are local authorities forced to institute this?

Mr. KNOX: No.

Mr. Tucker: They can ignore it completely?

Mr. KNOX: That is right. They may keep the existing loading zones, as is, without any alteration at all. The only mandatory provision to be introduced—and this will be uniform throughout the State—is that there will be a 5-minute time limit for picking up and dropping passengers, and a 20-minute time limit for picking up and dropping goods. That will be mandatory. The type of

loading zone and where the loading zones go will be at the discretion of the local authorities. They need not alter them at all. If they wish to keep the existing balance and the existing types of loading zone, they may do so.

Mr. Bennett: Why did you side-step the issue between the council and the union?

Mr. KNOX: I am not too sure what issue the hon. member is referring to. There appear to be quite a number of issues between the city council and the union whose members are employees of the Brisbane City Council. I have no doubt that when they are in trouble they will come to the hon. member for advice.

Mr. Ramsden: When you say that these 5-minute and 20-minute periods will be mandatory, is that unless otherwise signed? Or is it mandatory, full stop?

Mr. KNOX: Unless otherwise signed for a longer period. It cannot be for a shorter period. In other words, the minimum is five minutes for passengers and 20 minutes for goods. The local authority cannot reduce that period, but it can extend it.

I was mentioning the Brisbane City Council and its desire to meet the problem by converting existing loading zones to a type of loading zone exclusively for the use of, say, motor trucks or motor utilities, or both, which are defined fairly clearly in the Traffic Act. It will exclude, of course, private motorists from parking within that type of loading zone. This is not unreasonable, because the purpose of the loading zones is to allow, in effect, for the loading of goods and passengers. I have no doubt that the city council will also place outside picture theatres, motels, certain emporiums and other places, near taxi ranks, and so on, suitable loading zones for the loading and unloading of passengers. This will allow, I believe, both the people who deliver and pick up goods and those who wish to drop and pick up passengers to use the type of loading zone which meets their needs.

Because no doubt hon. members have some views about this and will want to know this, anyway, I have some registration details. As at 30 September, 1968, the following numbers of vehicles, in the categories mentioned, were registered at the Main Roads Department—

Cars and station wagons	457,000
Utilities	101,000
Trucks and prime-movers	58,000
Trailers	108,000
Buses	3,000
Ambulances	462
Motor-cycles	15,600
Tractors	18,000

Mr. Bennett: What about horses and drays? There are some of them.

Mr. KNOX: They are given a go, too, under the Act. Some places even have camels. In its submissions to me of 27 September, the Transport Workers' Union asked that vehicle stickers be issued to commercial vehicles for ready identification.

Mr. R. Jones: It would be a bit hard to put them on the rump of a horse.

Mr. KNOX: There are all sorts of places on which it is hard to affix stickers. The request had a measure of support from the representatives of the Retailers' Association, although, after discussion, they did agree that stickers might not be practicable. They felt that a system of identification might well be considered, and they made a request for such a system.

There are two authorities that might be able to implement a system of identification—the State authority, which would be the Main Roads Department, and the relevant local authority. Fairly exhaustive inquiries into the practicability of doing this in this State were made, and it was seen that there are some problems attached to it. I shall canvass these so that the Committee understands the background to the decision. The type of registration label issued in this State by the Main Roads Department and displayed on the windscreen is common in character and design to all classes of registered vehicle in this State. The same sticker is used throughout the State. To alter the existing administration relative to these stickers would be a very costly matter for the Main Roads Department and vehicle-owners. Indeed, there are 230,000 vehicles registered in Queensland as commercial vehicles, and this number includes quite a number of sedan cars, as well as trucks, utilities and other vehicles which obviously look like commercial vehicles. There are many vehicles that do not look like goods-carrying vehicles but are registered as commercial vehicles.

Of the 230,000 registered commercial vehicles in the State, only about 90,000 have their origin of registration in Brisbane. It is possible that the figure may be somewhat higher than 90,000 for vehicles that operate frequently in and around Brisbane because of registrations in centres near to Brisbane of vehicles that operate to and from Brisbane. Those vehicles are, however, not a major portion of the 230,000 commercial vehicles registered in the State. In addition, there are many commercial vehicles which come across the border because our capital city is so close to it, and these vehicles are outside the jurisdiction of the State in the issuing of stickers or other means of identification. Nevertheless, they come to Brisbane regularly and use its loading zones.

Inquiries were made in Sydney and Melbourne. Sydney has a system which is not working satisfactorily, and major changes in it are contemplated. Sydney has the same problems as we have here, but it

has them to a greater degree. As yet Melbourne has not such a system, although demands are being made for one.

If such a system is to involve the Main Roads Department, the difficulties of it, apart from the costs of administration, are such that, if started now, it would take approximately 15 to 18 months to implement throughout the State. In addition, there would have to be many regulations governing issuing, re-issuing and cancelling identification on existing registration labels, because the purposes for which people have vehicles change, and, indeed, the type of registration changes.

I was amazed to discover that 1,000 changes a day are made in the types of registration in this State, and about 40 per cent. of those registrations are of commercial vehicles. Some registrations are changed from commercial to some other type, and others are changed from some other type to commercial. There would therefore be a tremendous number of regulations covering issuing, re-issuing, cancelling and revoking all types of registrations in addition to those already in operation, and there would be many people who would never require them if the City of Brisbane decided to have this type of identification. All those people would, of course, be subjected to that type of annoyance when they do not need identification because they never come near Brisbane.

The alternative is for the local authority to issue its own form of identification. This is still more complicated because it would still be necessary to know who wants to use loading zones. There would have to be a form of application, or some way in which identification could be issued and withdrawn.

Mr. Walsh: They might even come from Cairns to Bundaberg.

Mr. KNOX: They might, indeed. The Local Authorities' Association has expressed to me the view that local authorities do not wish to have imposed on them the authority to issue forms of identification. This quite clearly would be impracticable and administratively difficult for them, as it would be for the Department of Main Roads, in a State of Queensland's size and with its distribution of population, and particularly with the distribution of its commercial vehicles, most of which are outside the metropolitan area, not within it, as is the case in Sydney and Melbourne, and with the proximity of the City of Brisbane to the border between Queensland and New South Wales. So that practical difficulties arise with either the State or the local authority having a system of identification, more particularly in regard to interstate vehicles, which have already been a problem in Sydney.

I think all hon. members will agree that sectionalised legislation of that type is very undesirable and that any amendments of the Traffic Act should apply throughout the State. A system of identification by stickers would lead to considerable confusion, in addition to requiring an excessive amount of regulation, administration and policing. As I have said, I have conferred with representatives of the local authorities, and they do not wish to have this imposed on them as something that they would have to carry out. It is for this reason that it is intended to broaden as much as possible the opportunities for the local authority to have loading zones of a type that will cater for the problems that have arisen without necessitating identification by a type of sticker, pass or anything else that might have to be carried.

If a local authority has a loading zone that is called a motor truck and motor utility truck loading zone, as far as the Government can discover, that will cover every vehicle that I believe would be entitled to use that type of loading zone. In other words, it covers not only what look like trucks or utility trucks but also motor-bikes and motor-scooters that are converted for the purpose of carrying goods, station sedans, or station wagons that are converted for carrying goods or are used principally for carrying goods, or the converted Mini Minors that are used by wholesalers and distributors in the city for carrying quite a number of goods in racks in the back.

All the possibilities that one can think of seem to be covered by a definition of that type, and I would counsel the Brisbane City Council, if it wishes to solve the problem that it had on its hands a couple of weeks ago with the Transport Workers' Union, to consider the conversion of as many as is desirable of the present loading zones to this new type of loading zone, with the additional provision of time limits on loading and unloading and the creation of an offence for parking in that area if one does not meet the requirements of the definition of that loading zone.

Mr. Bennett: Who is going to police it?

Mr. KNOX: The existing policing authority. The Brisbane City Council does that now with its own policing authorities.

I believe that the proposed amendments will meet the problems that face the Brisbane City Council at present, or, indeed, the problems of any other local authority that may be in a similar situation. I commend them to the Committee, and I hope, as I said earlier, that the authorities who are having difficulties will sincerely endeavour, if the amendments are agreed to, to make them work.

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) (3 p.m.): I indicate on behalf of the Opposition that we intend to allow this legislation to go through the introductory stage, because it is quite obvious that we have to take a serious look at all sections of it. As I listened this afternoon some parts of it were rather confusing to me, and I feel that the Opposition should meet in committee and

iron it out amongst ourselves before we decide what we shall do at the second-reading stage.

It might be, of course, that there are some sections of the Bill to which we may be opposed, but, as I say, we are prepared at this stage to let it go through so that we can have a look at it. We are not opposed to the principle of it, because we feel it is very necessary that legislation should be brought down to solve some of the very pressing problems that have arisen in this city and in other cities throughout the State.

It is only lately that this has become a hot industrial issue. The Treasurer indicated this morning that this was something we had to do very quickly; that it was very pressing. When I look at our records and records submitted to me by the Transport Workers' Union, I find that, in fact, such moves were initiated as far back as 29 June, 1960. It has therefore taken the Government more than eight years to move in this direction. Yet the Government now indicates that it is in a hurry.

On 29 June, 1960, an approach was made to the Honourable K. J. Morris, who was then in charge of traffic as a Minister in this Government. It was pointed out then that there was great necessity to do something about loading zones in the city, for the very reasons that exist today. I do not agree with the Minister that it was because of the recent strike that this matter suddenly came forward. The problem has been with us for years.

Mr. Knox: That was not my opinion; it was Mr. Bevis's opinion.

Mr. TUCKER: The Minister's records will show that over that long period of eight years his Government failed to come to grips with this problem, or to grapple with it in any way. As a matter of fact, on 12 July, 1960, Mr. Morris met a deputation from the Transport Workers' Union, which put forward the union's ideas. I have volumes of correspondence here, and I have no doubt that there are volumes of correspondence in the Minister's office, both from the Transport Workers' Union to his office and from his office to the Union.

Again, on 1 April, 1963, correspondence was forwarded to the transport authorities urgently requesting the introduction of legislation for commercial-vehicle stickers. As the Minister has said in the course of his remarks this afternoon, the Transport Workers' Union felt that these stickers were the answer. I suppose this could be debatable because, as the Minister says, it is not the answer. We know it has been operating in Sydney for quite a long time. I am not going to attempt to debate that point this afternoon. The Minister says it is not operating efficiently in Sydney and that perhaps there will be a change. That may be true. Nevertheless, the Transport Workers' Union has been concerned with this matter for a long time, and they have asked the Government to take some action on it.

It was suggested, in the first instance, that loading zones be marked as commercial-vehicle loading zones. Then it was asked that stickers be placed on all commercial vehicles. This does not mean only those operated by Transport Workers' Union members. It was requested that commercial vehicles be defined and that stickers be placed on them and that, after the loading zones were defined, they be rigidly policed because private vehicles frequently use them for long periods. It is quite frustrating. I think every member of this Chamber will know that at times one may try to enter a loading zone only to find vehicles stationary there for quite a long time, thus completely impeding its use for the purpose for which it was provided.

The Transport Workers' Union had good reason for making these submissions, because its members were frustrated in trying to find spaces for their commercial vehicles while delivering goods. Private cars were cluttering up loading zones, and on many occasions the commercial vehicles had to be double-parked, thus exposing their drivers to the risk of being fined for committing a traffic breach while they delivered their wares. The alternative was to drive around and find another place, which might be a long way from the warehouse or the shop that they are taking their wares to, thus entailing a long walk in delivering the goods. I believe that there is some merit in the submission by the Transport Workers' Union.

The suggestions contained in the union's submission would not necessarily interfere with the rights of private motorists. I have always felt that private motorists had the right to enter loading zones to pick up or put down passengers without parking in any way, and I do not see how that could interfere with the operations of commercial vehicles. Usually private motorists can find vacant metered parking areas somewhere in the city close to where they want to go, whereas the drivers of commercial vehicles cannot. A great many of the commercial vehicles are at least 10 to 14 feet long, and this precludes them from using a metered parking space, even though a vacant one might be very close to where the driver wants to go. It is quite obvious that many commercial vehicles cannot be accommodated in metered parking areas.

It has been rightly submitted by the Transport Workers' Union that taxis have ranks in which to put down and pick up passengers and that bus ranks exist at which this may be done also. Therefore, I suppose that the Transport Workers' Union has some justification for saying that there should be zones that commercial vehicles can enter without having private vehicles parked therein, thus

frustrating union members in their work. We certainly do not see private vehicles parked on taxi ranks and bus ranks.

Mr. Knox: I am afraid they do occasionally.

Mr. TUCKER: I suppose they do, but not very often. Usually the offender is dealt with very quickly. We know that there would be an outcry and some quick police action if the motorist stayed there.

The Minister said that certain specific things can be done, but the local authority may do certain other things if it wishes or it need not comply with the law as it stands at the present time.

Mr. Knox: It has to comply with the law.

Mr. TUCKER: It may not alter the present situation within its city. This feature worries me a trifle. I feel that the very thing the Minister said he did not want to occur will occur because of this. The Minister said that certain things must happen and certain other things may happen. The local authority in Brisbane may adopt certain measures within the City of Brisbane; the local authority in Ipswich may adopt other measures in Ipswich; and the local authority in Toowoomba may adopt yet another type of measure. I mention those three cities in particular, because I believe that transport workers are easily able to drive from one to another of them during a day to deliver goods. It is possible for a transport worker to deliver goods in Toowoomba in the morning and find a set of rules different to the set that is laid down in Ipswich. He could well be in Ipswich at lunch-time. By 3 p.m. or 4 p.m. he could well be in Brisbane and find yet another set of rules.

Mr. Knox: The rules would be the same. He may find some additional types of loading zones.

Mr. TUCKER: That is begging the question to a certain extent. As the Minister has said, certain things can be altered by the local authorities, so he must agree that there could be variations in rules among the cities. I am not sure that this is very good. I have chosen Brisbane, Toowoomba and Ipswich as examples, but if we take the example of a journey from Brisbane to Cairns, goodness knows what would be found in the cities that are travelled through on that journey. It may not be as bad as I visualise, nevertheless this could be partially sectional legislation which, the Minister has said he abhors. I believe he may be creating sectional legislation by the Bill he has introduced today.

I will not debate this matter at length. As I said a moment ago, I will wait until I examine the Bill to see if my argument is valid. It may not be, nevertheless I believe this is a point that we will have to examine.

In one instance the Minister said that this was a joint recommendation by the Transport Workers' Union and the Retailers' Association, and that the retailers later broke down their representations to a certain degree when he told them that some of the submissions they made would not operate satisfactorily.

Mr. Knox: No. The retailers and the Transport Workers' Union met. The Transport Workers' Union and the retailers were both very keen on stickers. I chaired the meeting and I pointed out to them that the stickers may not be the answer because of practical problems. They said, "We would like a system of identification, not necessarily stickers".

Mr. TUCKER: When they left the Minister, they felt that was still the answer?

Mr. Knox: Yes.

Mr. TUCKER: I thought the Minister had shifted his ground.

Mr. Knox: No.

Mr. TUCKER: I was told that the Retailers' Association and the Transport Workers' Union were in complete agreement in this instance.

Mr. Knox: That is right. They were unanimous; they did not change.

Mr. TUCKER: We acknowledge that something has to be done in this matter. We are not opposed to the principle of introducing legislation to try to grapple with the problem, although at the second-reading stage we could oppose the way in which the principle is being implemented. I stress that, because that will give us the right, to a certain degree, to look at these provisions and, if necessary, to oppose them at that stage.

Mr. MILLER (Ithaca) (3.13 p.m.): I rise to support the proposed Bill. I do not rise, as the Minister has suggested, as one who considers himself an expert, but rather as one who is concerned about the members of the Transport Workers' Union, who have a problem in trying to park their vehicles in the City of Brisbane.

This legislation is designed to overcome the problem created by the parking of private vehicles in loading zones. If I understand the legislation correctly, there are four classifications—

Classification (a) will be for vehicles that are at the present time using loading zones; that is, any motor vehicle whatsoever.

Classification (b) will be for trucks and utilities, loading or unloading;

Classification (c) will be for taxis or private vehicles dropping or picking up passengers; and

Classification (d) will be for special areas set aside by the Brisbane City Council for purposes such as ready-mixed concrete trucks, which require special arrangements relating to time in parking areas.

I suggest that the Lord Mayor will first discontinue classification (a), because it is causing the problem at present. Any motor vehicle

under classification (a), loading or unloading, can park under the terms of classification (a), so the Lord Mayor will be forced to abandon it.

Under classification (b) we have motor trucks and motor utilities. I think the Minister has suggested that this classification will also cover motor-bikes, motor-scooters, motor-cars, or any type of vehicle that carries goods. I fail to see why it should be necessary to specify motor trucks and motor utilities on the sign. If this covers all types of vehicles, why not refer to motor vehicles loading or unloading? Why the need to refer to motor trucks or motor utilities?

Under this legislation a station wagon will be classified as a commercial vehicle, whether or not it is a commercial vehicle, provided it is loading or unloading. A motor-car could be registered as a commercial vehicle. A person could legitimately take his car to town to unload something. Take, for instance, a member of the building trade. Because of the high cost of motor transport, more and more of these people are doing away with one vehicle, the utility, and are using their private cars, with trailers, for commercial work. These people drive their cars to town to pick up equipment or materials, which is put into the boot. But they cannot park in a loading zone because they are using motor-cars. Yet a person who is using a station wagon that is not registered for commercial use will be able to park in the loading zone, claiming that he is loading or unloading. Surely this will not overcome the problem facing us. We are concerned with private vehicles parking in loading zones set aside for loading and unloading commercial vehicles. This legislation will not overcome this problem.

Mr. Sherrington: A while ago you said you supported it. Now you are arguing against it.

Mr. MILLER: I support it. I support the principle of setting aside these loading zones. I also support the idea of loading zones with a limit of five minutes for a car to pull in and unload passengers. At present a car can be parked in a loading zone for 20 minutes. I support this move.

I also support the move to have special areas set aside for the vehicles such as ready-mixed-cement trucks. At present, the Lord Mayor has no power to provide such special parking areas near building sites.

Mr. Bennett: What is to stop him?

Mr. MILLER: He has no power under the present legislation to do it, so I support the Minister in this. But I do not believe that the Minister is going far enough. We will have to identify commercial vehicles and we will have to face up to this problem. I hope that the Minister will see fit to register or classify commercial vehicles so that they can use these loading zones.

I should like to mention that loading zones cannot be used at night for parking. There are many of these zones in this city. People are being booked every night of the week because the sign says that they cannot use them at night. For what reason, I do not know.

The dispute about what is "loading" and what is "unloading" points to the need to register or identify all commercial vehicles. If a car or station wagon can pull into a loading zone and unload a packet of cigarettes, and this is recognised legally as unloading the station wagon, it is time that we looked closely at the need to identify commercial vehicles.

Mr. DEWAR (Wavell) (3.20 p.m.): My friend and former colleague, the hon. member for Ithaca, happened to get the call before I did, and then proceeded to present and say all the things I had told him that I was going to say.

Mr. MILLER: I rise to a point of order. That is not the case.

Mr. DEWAR: There are one or two points that I want to make. In the first place, I agree with the Minister for Transport when he said, inter alia, that when the Traffic Act comes before the Chamber there are always a lot of experts in it. I realise that I am somewhat vulnerable in this debate because I was the Minister in charge of traffic from 1962 to 1963, I think it was, and this matter was never brought to my notice. Strangely enough, it was brought to my attention two years ago, and I realised just how farcical this situation is. I say to the Minister that if this is the type of work that the experts do, it is high time that he came to the Chamber a bit more often and got some good advice.

I bring to the notice of the Committee a traffic problem in Moggill Road. A few hundred yards past the Brisbane Boys' College there is a one-way road branching to the left, on the port side of the Taringa State School. Outbound traffic can also go round on the starboard side of the school, as also does inbound traffic. In peak hours, traffic leaving the city travelling outbound and taking the one-way track on the port side of the school has to wait in long lanes because those drivers who were smart enough to go to the starboard side of the school have right of way. If this is the best that the experts can do, it is high time we got some new experts. Obviously, as a layman put it to me, the thing to do is to make each a one-way street and thus remove the bottle-neck. Late each afternoon traffic leaving the city and moving up the one-way track has to wait in a long queue to give right-of-way to those who went round the right-hand side of the school. I promised this man that I would raise the matter here at the first available opportunity, and this I have now done.

What has been said by the hon. member for Ithaca is very true. It is something that concerns me greatly, hence my interjection when the Minister was speaking. I share with the Minister and the hon. member for Ithaca, despite the interpretation placed by Opposition members on what the hon. member said, the view that there is a grave need to have something done not only in the interests of the members of the Transport Workers' Union but also of commerce at large. Ability to dispose of goods quickly is the life-blood of business operations in any industry, particularly those that require the use of delivery points in the city many times a day. There is therefore a great need to solve this problem that the Minister said was raised with him by the Lord Mayor and which, as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition indicated, was placed before Mr. Morris, as he then was, eight or nine years ago.

I am in full agreement with what is proposed to be done. I am concerned, as I indicated by interjection, for the many small businessmen who use for business purposes their one and only vehicle. It may be a sedan car or a station wagon, which is a type of vehicle that is used regularly as a family car. Even the humble panel van, according to what the Minister said, could be excluded because it is not a motor-truck or vehicle. When an attempt is made to make things foolproof by including the things required, all other things are automatically excluded. It is therefore dangerous to try to identify clearly the things wanted because, by implication, all others are excluded. There are many other types of vehicles that could be used for delivering goods which automatically may be ruled out by the man responsible for administering the traffic code of the city simply because they are not in a specified category.

I sound that warning because I believe that matter should be considered. We should be concerned, too, to make it possible for a user of a loading zone to deliver goods other than by motor-truck or utility truck, while at the same time not opening the door to the smart guy who is driving a vehicle of that type and, in effect, is not using it for a legitimate purpose.

However, the person about whom I am most concerned is the man who may be delivering goods by means of a sedan car, panel van, or station sedan or station wagon, and who, having gone to deliver his goods, returns to find—I take it this is what would happen—a ticket under his windscreen wiper. From what I know of the system, that man would have to go to court to prove his innocence, and that is why I am so greatly concerned. I am not able at this stage to offer a suggestion as to how that difficulty might be overcome, but I do ask that due consideration be given to the distinct likelihood that, unless the regulation is written carefully, many people who are using these loading zones legitimately and for the prescribed purpose may, while so doing, come back and find a ticket on their windscreen and have to go to court, thus involving themselves in legal fees, lost time, and so on, to prove their complete innocence. It is not right or just that it should be made either difficult or expensive for people who have not transgressed the law to prove that they have not.

Mr. Bennett: That is happening every day under this Government.

Mr. DEWAR: I will leave it to the hon. member to prove that. I am concerned only with the man who finds himself in these circumstances. Hundreds of people every day of every week in this city will be using loading zones legitimately whose vehicles may not conform to the type of vehicle that the man on patrol is expecting them to use. They could be placed in the position to which I have referred.

There is one other point that I wish to make. I have made it before, but it may have more effect on this occasion. I find it very difficult to accept the farcical situation that every day in this city huge trucks belonging to transport operators come right into the main streets to pick up and deliver goods. If any thinking is more antiquated than that, I should like to know what it is. We still allow huge 8- and 10-ton vehicles to drive down the main streets and back out of depots and hold up all traffic.

Another point that irks me, as one of the alleged experts, is that almost every morning between half past 8 and 9 o'clock the free flow of traffic from the Ann Street area down Edward Street, a one-way street, is completely nullified. Times without number, between Adelaide Street and Queen Street, the motorist is confronted with a truck backing out of the lane. I cannot identify the lane clearly, but it is about half way between Adelaide Street and Queen Street and is, I think, on each side of Edward Street.

Mr. Thackeray: Next to Rothwell's store?

Mr. DEWAR: I did not want to name any firms that might be concerned. Trucks are backing out of or driving into this laneway, and the whole of this one-way, allegedly quick-moving traffic is brought to a standstill. I am sure that every member of this Chamber has driven down there at this time and knows what I am talking about. This has happened to me many times over a long period of years and it is all related to the fact that we try to set up a perfect set of circumstances that will make possible free-flowing traffic but at the same time allow things that completely negative this free flow.

I mention this so that the experts we are supposed to have will look at these things and act with rhyme and reason to bring about some balance. We would then not find ourselves on the one hand acting

to bring about a positive result, and, on the other, doing nothing about something that is completely negating our purpose.

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) (3.31 p.m.): As my colleague the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has said, the Opposition realises that the time is long past when legislation should have been introduced to overcome problems related to the delivery of goods in this city. At this point of time the Opposition has indicated that its committee and caucus will give serious consideration to these matters that have been detailed by the Minister. In his introductory speech, the Minister said that it has always been Government policy in traffic matters to allow local government to use its discretion. Perhaps the Minister's memory might be very short but mine certainly is not. It is not very long since the Brisbane City Council and this Government were locked in bitter controversy over the question of one-way traffic streets in this city. Alderman Groom, who was then the Lord Mayor, was bitterly critical of interference by Mr. K. J. Morris and the Traffic Commission in traffic matters. We all remember that on that occasion the then Lord Mayor criticised the installation of traffic lights and described them as "hideous yellow gibblets".

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: He was wrong, wasn't he?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Time may have proved him wrong, but at that time the council of the day was ridden over roughshod by the then Minister for Labour and Industry, Mr. Morris. Unfortunately for him, the Liberal Party has now ridden roughshod over the same Mr. Morris.

It was because of the controversy that followed this problem that Mr. Morris then made his most famous statement, that is, that from then on he was going to give it and they could take it.

Mr. Knox: You are not quoting his actual words.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: If the Minister wishes, I will quote the actual words that Mr. Morris used. It states in a Press cutting that I have here that Mr. Morris said that 95 per cent. of the opposition to one-way streets had come from the council. He said that he had remained silent "because I thought the council were my friends, but from now on I am going to give it and they can take it."

For the Minister to say this afternoon, in his pious way, that it has always been the policy of the Government to allow local government to use its discretion is completely ludicrous, in view of what happened on that occasion. Article after article appeared in the newspapers about the battle between Mr. Morris and the then Lord Mayor, Alderman Groom.

If I understood the Minister correctly, the only provisions of the Bill that will have universal application throughout the State are those that provide that the loading and unloading of passengers will be limited to five minutes, and the loading and unloading of goods to 20 minutes.

Mr. Knox: It is the only one that is mandatory.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: That is only a play on words. These are the only two principles that all local authorities throughout the State will apply. All the other provisions, such as those relating to what constitutes a loading zone and a commercial vehicle, are within the discretion of the local authorities. It is because of that that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition indicated that only a serious study of the Bill could determine the Opposition's attitude to it in that regard. I believe that all sorts of problems could arise unless standard practices are adopted throughout the State.

Only a few days ago I received a telephone call from a person in my electorate who earns his living by growing flowers. He is in the habit of using his ordinary sedan car to transport the flowers to the city. He does this for two reasons. Possibly the main one is that he is not wealthy enough to be able to run a commercial vehicle as well as his private vehicle. It could well be that one local authority would give his sedan the classification of a commercial vehicle and permit him to use the loading zones, whereas another local authority could refuse him permission to use loading zones.

The Opposition feels that this Bill will not help to solve the problem that revolves around the question of making as uniform as possible the laws to be applied by the local authorities throughout the State. If motorists are to be governed by determinations and interpretations made by the various local authorities, only confusion will arise and clashes will develop between motorists and the Police Department, or whoever may be in charge of policing the regulations for the time being. The Opposition feels that unless there is a sort of universality about a measure of this type, it will not achieve the purpose for which it was intended. Admittedly, most of the trouble possibly arises in the Brisbane metropolitan area. Perhaps in some of the small country towns problems of the same magnitude have not arisen. The position in Brisbane may be aggravated with the change-over to buses. It will become even more acute with a greater demand for kerbside use by passenger vehicles and public transport vehicles. Over the years there has been a gradual influx of private cars to the inner city. Loading zones, which in the main were designed primarily for the speedy and efficient handling of commercial products, have become gradually congested because of what I have outlined.

Unless the Minister can positively attack this problem and impose some restrictions to ensure that there are sufficient loading zones throughout the city to adequately service the various places requiring this type of unloading, and unless those zones are held for the use of commercial vehicles and the law is framed in such a way that they cannot be used for a whole host of other things, I believe that the Minister will be defeating the purpose that he is setting out to achieve.

We feel that this legislation does little, if anything, to lighten the problem raised by the Retailers' Association and the Transport Workers' Union. However, until we have made a detailed study of it to see how it will be applied, we are prepared to withhold any further comment.

Mr. CHINCHEN (Mt. Gravatt) (3.42 p.m.): I think we should all realise that this problem cannot be entirely overcome by legislation. The Minister is apparently trying to give greater flexibility to local authorities, which at the present time control traffic matters. This measure will allow them a greater area to move in.

We should realise that the difficulties in Brisbane were caused purely by the reduction in the number of loading zones. The Lord Mayor and his officers, in their wisdom, decided to reduce the number of loading zones to provide more parking space for buses. The problem cannot be overcome unless the local authority—in this case the Brisbane City Council—increases the number of loading zones and then polices them. It does not matter what we say, or what the signs say. We must accept that if the zones are not policed there will be no relief.

Mr. Bennett: Can you tell us why the Government dumped responsibility for traffic onto the local authorities?

Mr. CHINCHEN: I think it will be realised that the local authority would be much closer to the problem. It would know where the zones are required, and how many are required for passengers, car-parking, bus-parking, and so on. If we have a sensible local authority, the proposed legislation will be a great help

I often wonder if the Brisbane City Council is sensible in these matters. Buses are coming onto our streets in great numbers but no suggestion has been made about providing a bus terminal to help overcome this problem. They will be strung out along the streets.

Mr. Bennett: Are you a "tram man"?

Mr. CHINCHEN: I freely admit that I am a "bus man", provided that they are controlled in the right way.

Steps should be taken immediately by the Brisbane City Council to ensure that a bus terminal is provided, as Wilbur Smith suggested, right at the railway station, to facilitate co-ordination of rail and bus services. That would help greatly to get many buses off our busy streets. The big factor about giving to local authorities the power to inspect is that it is important if it is used sensibly.

I should like to know from the Minister if it would be possible for the local authority, under the suggested amendment, to say "Only trucks and utilities". The Minister indicated that "trucks and utilities" under, I think, the Traffic Act, takes in a very broad field of goods-carrying vehicles. I understand that any term can be used by a local authority, in which case it could simply say "Trucks and utilities and nothing else". If this is the case, there will be a big problem. I know what the Minister thinks of this. He thinks that the large range of vehicles under the Traffic Act, which covers motor vehicles and trucks and utilities, should all be allowed to go into the loading zone because they are goods-carrying vehicles. But perhaps the local authority might decide otherwise and say "Trucks and utilities only". This could be a problem.

On the other hand, have local authorities sufficient power—they probably have—to say "Transport Workers' Union drivers only". This amendment is sufficiently broad, I think, to allow even this to happen. I do not for a moment think that it would happen, but how far can a local authority go in these matters?

The Brisbane City Council has not shown us that it is tackling this traffic problem when we consider that, at this moment—and this is the only capital city where this happens, to my knowledge—our wide roads, such as Cavendish Road, Logan Road, and Ipswich Road, are not laned. I cannot understand this. We talk about wanting to move traffic, yet we allow slow-moving vehicles to move into a large road like Ipswich Road and go to the centre, and the driver is scared to move over to the left because he does not know what is beside his vehicle. It trundles along for a mile or a mile and a-half with a single line of vehicles behind it, when three vehicles abreast could be moving along that part of the road. In Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide and Perth, all these wide roads are laned. But that is not so here.

Mr. Bennett: To travel in the centre of the road is a traffic offence.

Mr. CHINCHEN: This happens, and the hon. member knows it happens. It would not happen if the wide roads were laned. There would be a free flow of traffic and people could move. We do not see these things happening in this city.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr. CHINCHEN: I am indicating the attitude of the Brisbane City Council to traffic. I am worried that a strange view will be taken of "loading". I think that the bus areas will be increased enormously. Maybe this is necessary. I think that, in the ultimate, the loading zones will be changed and increased. We will find that private

parking will be restricted enormously, forcing people into the car parks run by the Brisbane City Council. I think that this will be the ultimate. Maybe there is no other answer. I have not yet seen a common-sense approach to these problems, and I am worried about these powers going into hands such as those of the Brisbane City Council.

We know full well that this broadening is necessary, as was explained by the Minister, because there are illegal signs all over the city such as "P.M.G. Vehicles Only" and individual parking spaces in Spring Hill. But the amendment suggests apparently that the council will be allowed to do these things legally. This makes sense, but we must still keep in mind that this will not overcome the problem that is being experienced by transport drivers at this moment. What is required is more spaces for these vehicles and some supervision of them.

I am wondering if, at the present time, there is authority for local authorities to provide parking meters for goods-carrying vehicles. I do not say that there will be a charge for these at all—I think that there should be—but if there is a parking meter which could be sprung, by hand would do, it would stop the type of fellow who gets out of his van and goes around selling for half an hour, an hour and a-half, or two hours. This is what is taking place today. If he sprung the meter and it was an offence to do it twice, the area would be controlled and the man on the motor-cycle could then watch these meters to see how long people were there. If they are there over 20 minutes they are fined.

The alternative is that a man would have to stand there from the moment somebody got out of his vehicle until he drove away again. This is virtually an impossibility. Nobody can control these things by using inspectors only. There must be some other aid, and I suggest a free meter.

The local authority might want to know who will pay for these meters. I do not think they will get effective use of these loading zones unless they are metered, even at a small charge. Perhaps 1c would be enough. Perhaps industry could carry this. It will be pretty hard on people delivering all day having to feed meters, but I think there should be some way of indicating how long each person has been there. Perhaps there is power for local authorities to meter loading zones. If that is the case, they would be wise to introduce such a scheme.

The question of identification, which seems to be worrying the Transport Workers' Union, appears to me to be of little importance. Surely a truck or a utility is a truck or a utility. The whole question is whether it is loading or unloading.

Mr. Bennett: What is the definition of "truck"?

Mr. CHINCHEN: If the hon. member consults the Traffic Act, he will find the definition.

Mr. Bennett: I have it here.

Mr. CHINCHEN: If a vehicle looks like a truck and is carrying goods, that is good enough for me. The hon. member for South Brisbane will find what he seeks in the Act.

Affixing a sticker on a vehicle will give the impression, "I can park in a loading zone". That will not be the case; vehicles must be parked in loading zones only to load and unload. If a vehicle is a commercial vehicle and it is loaded with goods, why the need for a sticker? What is the point of that? I can see no point at all in it, unless the idea is to restrict the use of loading zones to members of the Transport Workers' Union, which would be a shocking thing and could not be sanctioned by anybody.

Mr. Miller: A lot of utilities are owned by private users.

Mr. CHINCHEN: If a utility is used to take on or unload goods, it should be able to park in a loading zone.

Mr. Miller: What would metered zones be for?

Mr. CHINCHEN: The hon. member for Ithaca made his speech; now I am making mine.

I think that the suggestions outlined by the Minister are sound. Local authorities could be given flexibility in determining the signs that they require and the times for which parking is permitted.

I do not agree with what the Minister said about the use of colour. If colour is to be used, it should be used on a Commonwealth-wide basis. If in Brisbane green meant one thing and red meant something else, that would be good enough, but there would be confusion if Brisbane people went to Sydney and found there a whole conglomeration of colour that meant something else. The same confusion would exist for people coming from Sydney to Brisbane, and the result would be more people driving round and round the block. Any scheme of this nature must of necessity be implemented on a Commonwealth-wide basis so that it would be understood by all.

I feel that this legislation will aid local authorities. It will not overcome the problem unless local authorities make sure that they have adequate space for the unloading of goods and passengers and are able to ensure by some means, preferably timing devices, that loading zones in use are freed at the earliest possible moment.

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West) (3.53 p.m.): In the first place, I want to apologise in advance to the Minister if I misinterpret what he said. I did not have the opportunity of hearing him introduce the Bill, and I am

basing my understanding of his comments on the contributions of other speakers. I missed hearing him because I was involved in traffic congestion and took over 40 minutes to travel from the police depot to Parliament House. If I do therefore unwittingly misinterpret what the Minister said, I ask him to accept my apology for it and I shall reserve the right to amend my statements at the second-reading stage.

It seems to me from what I have heard and read that this situation arose in Brisbane, and that what is proposed by the Bill will have State-wide application. Brisbane is the only city in the State which has a tramway system, and its proposed abolition has brought the necessity to augment bus services. This in turn has meant excessive demands on existing bus-loading zones, and the local authority has been compelled to provide additional bus stops and deny to members of the Transport Workers' Union, and others who have to deliver goods or passengers to certain places, ready access to loading zones.

It seems to me that the Lord Mayor, when industrial action became probable, thought that he would be able to extricate himself and the council from a difficult situation by the labelling of certain vehicles, and thus avert industrial action. That seemed to be a happy solution, because it put the problem on the Government's plate. The Government very adroitly tried to trump the ace of the Lord Mayor by putting the matter back into the lap of the local authorities.

I should not mind so much if it was only a question of this card game between the Lord Mayor and the Government; but it has become a card game between the Government and every municipality throughout the State in which the problem did not exist previously. There is a threat of the problem extending to municipal areas, and the very logical explanation offered by the secretary of the Transport Workers' Union is that in cities adjacent to Brisbane, such as Ipswich, Gatton, and Toowoomba, and on the North Coast and the South Coast, varying conditions may be imposed by local authorities and it will be very difficult for a driver who loads in Brisbane to know exactly what are his obligations and entitlements. Consequently, I suggest that the Government's proposal will only confuse the situation and compound the problem that has arisen.

If the interjection made earlier by the hon. member for South Brisbane was in line with what I thought he intended to convey, I agree with him. I was somewhat surprised by the alacrity with which local authorities in Queensland originally accepted the Government's invitation to assume the responsibility for traffic. Frankly, if I had been in office in the municipal sphere, I do not think that I would have been very happy about accepting an obligation to serve meter tickets on people who breach the parking regulations. Not very much prestige, political glamour or expectancy of political support comes from consistently applying penalties to a section of the people. I do not think it is conducive to a very happy electoral feeling when people are the recipients of a series of penalties for offences that they do not think, in conscience, they have committed. Although they have committed a technical breach, they do not think it should be met by the imposition of a minimum fine of $2 or more, and I think it is only reasonable to expect such a situation to arise.

Surely, with the mobility of modern transport, the theme, the action and the policy ought to be directed towards achieving uniformity throughout Australia. The Standards Association of Australia, the Uniform Traffic Code and other things of that sort have made some contributions towards uniformity. No doubt the Minister for Transport has also made some useful contributions towards uniformity, and I think that any action taken to that end is commendable. It appears to me that the proposed amendments are only going to make it more difficult for the motorist to know precisely what will happen when he goes to various parts of the State; they will encourage doubt in his mind.

It will be said, no doubt, that people in Brisbane live their normal lives in very much the same way as do people in other parts of the State. No doubt they do. But, because of the traffic congestion that has occurred, shopping areas have been developed at various key and strategic points in the suburbs. People make surveys and sell the idea to the larger chain store organisations and the larger departmental stores, which then develop shopping complexes at various strategic points to obviate the need for people to come to the city for the heavy bulk goods that they require. That has much to commend it; but unless some steps are taken in another direction, it may contribute to a dead heart in the city later. That is a problem that has to be watched. It has happened to some extent in Sydney; it could happen in Brisbane. I believe that the Government or some other suitable authority must take action to avoid it.

My principal reason for entering the debate is that the problem that we are now discussing has caused a good deal of comment in the city in which I reside and which I, together with Mr. Peter Wood, represent in State Parliament, and because there is a threat of the problems linked with the Transport Workers' Union extending to Toowoomba.

Toowoomba is an acknowledged decentralised area. People from various parts of the Darling Downs come to Toowoomba to conduct their business. It might be said, "Well, Toowoomba ought to do what Brisbane has done, and have shopping centres on the suburban outskirts of the city to meet the requirements of the residents of Toowoomba." Some shopping centres of that type have already been established at places such as Rangeville and Newtown and in

other parts of Toowoomba. They meet the requirements of people living there for groceries, fruit, meat, and so on, to some degree.

But there are people who come in from the country and have many jobs to do. If they can park in some area in which the authorities make some parking space available, that is all right, but it becomes necessary, when they come in from the country, to pick up certain heavy loads. It has been the practice for people to arrange with the stores concerned to get their cars and pick up these loads. They say, "I am going to get my car now. Can I come to this space in front of your store, and will one of your assistants come out and put the groceries and heavy goods into my car so that I can go away?" That practice is availed of very extensively, and if anything is going to hit against the opportunity for people to continue to do that sort of thing, I do not think it is a very appropriate step to take.

I want to make it abundantly clear that I have more than a measure of sympathy for the truck-drivers in the Transport Workers' Union. There is nothing more frustrating in heavy, slow-moving vehicles, containing goods of considerable weight and large dimensions, than to be not able to find an appropriate loading space in which to unload. I would be the last to suggest that, at some stage or another, it might be necessary to have staggered hours. The moment anyone, particularly if he is a Labour politician, starts talking about staggered hours, he is not very popular. I do not see anything basically wrong with it in principle, from Labour's point of view, provided there are adequate penalties.

I am not saying that there should be an "open slather" for people to work in stores on Friday nights and generally to increase the employment of people outside the present recognised trading hours, but I do feel that if we carry this thing to its logical conclusion there would not be any race meetings. People who complain about having to work on Saturday morning, Saturday afternoon, or Saturday night, have no compunction about going to the races, or the pictures, or other forms of entertainment, or having a beer outside the prescribed hours. They have no compunction about taking the week-end off and going to the South Coast or the North Coast, where they expect, when they reach their destination, to get petrol, ice creams and soft drinks for their children. These things are available on Saturday afternoons and Sundays, but if some people are asked to provide a service at such times they get very upset about it.

If anyone, even if it is a Labour member of Parliament, suggests at any stage that at some point the sheer physical problem of congestion might necessitate the unloading of bulk goods outside the present recognised and prescribed hours of business, I do not think it is beyond the realms of possibility. We have it at the markets; we have people coming in there in the very early hours of the morning; we have it in the baking trade, and we have it where milk is distributed.

As I say, I do not want to be accused of being an advocate of proliferation of this sort of thing. At the same time, I think it is only a question of time before, because of sheer inability to cope with this concentration of traffic, including heavy traffic, in our densely-populated traffic areas, there will have to be some sort of regulation, and legislation of this kind is not likely to provide the cure-all for it.

I leave it at that, without laying myself open to any accusation of wanting to make things more difficult for the people concerned. As I say, I have a very great sympathy for the truck-driver and would go out of my way to meet him and his union in trying to find an acceptable solution. But in the process of giving effect to this—and I think this ought to be said here and elsewhere on many occasions—whether it be the Transport Workers' Union, the Retailers' Association or any other pressure group in the community, we are rather prone to forget the ordinary Browns, Smiths and Joneses in the community.

We have a tendency to circumscribe and restrict the rights of John Citizen in all sorts of directions. I do not want to see John Citizen becoming a nuisance unnecessarily or in any way intruding into areas or loading zones to which he is not reasonably entitled to have access—I am not suggesting that for one moment—but where there is legitimate reason for him to have access and to legitimately load or unload some commodity which cannot be conveniently transported to some point other than the loading zone near the premises concerned, I do not think we want to be too hard in depriving the ordinary citizen of the opportunity of having the facility provided.

I hope that, in the process, we do not manacle the local authorities in such a way that they cannot do these things. If we are going to permit local authorities to have a wide discretion and flexibility, subject only to the two mandatory principles outlined by the Minister, then possibly all sorts of conflicting regulations will arise, according to the thinking of people who temporarily might be the representatives of the citizens in the municipal and shire areas.

I want to have a look at this measure and read the Minister's introductory speech when I have the opportunity of seeing the proof. If I have an obligation to amend my views—I do not think I will have relative to my own reaction to the measure—but if I have misinterpreted or misunderstood the Minister's remarks in any way, I hope that he will be gracious enough to accept from me an assurance that I will alter my statements and attitude accordingly.

This is an occasion on which we should state the general position and emphasise that this measure originated in Brisbane because of a problem that is peculiar to this city. Of course, traffic density is a universal problem. This is a Brisbane problem and it has become a game of chess between the Transport Workers' Union, which is the meat in the sandwich in the matter, the Lord Mayor, who is doing an adroit sidestep but seems to be outdone by a very skilful leap in the air in the best ballet form by the Minister for Transport and his Government, while the public are interested spectators to this very interesting exhibition of verbal, legislative and administrative enactment.

I hope that the real people involved, the members of the Transport Workers' Union, are not dissatisfied. I hope, too, that the person for whom I have a great deal of sympathy—and I think that we should recognise his entitlement to sympathy—is not adversely affected. I refer, of course, to John Citizen.

Mr. BENNETT (South Brisbane) (4.7 p.m.): The Minister has shown clearly that his Government has a congested and chaotic attitude to traffic in this State. Admittedly, this measure has been precipitated by the dispute that arose between the State Transport Workers' Union and the Brisbane City Council. In relation to that dispute I unhesitatingly say that my sympathies were wholeheartedly and entirely with the Transport Workers' Union.

If the necessity arose for the council to acquire additional kerb space for bus stops, then that space should not have been acquired at the expense of loading zones and the genuine operators of trucks, who, before the changes were made, had to walk long distances to deliver or pick up the goods and wares they were handling. I have no hesitation at all in saying that the attitude of the union was perfectly justified, and I certainly hope that a solution satisfactory to the union is obtained, even though the Government has in effect refused to shoulder its responsibility of ensuring that justice is done.

As the hon. member for Toowoomba West has pointed out, the Government is now introducing legislation to unload the squawking traffic baby that has been placed partially back in its lap after it was unloaded by the Government a few years ago. Why on earth traffic should not be the prime responsibility of the State Government, I would not know. If the nation had a uniform traffic law, it would be the responsibility of the Federal Government, but, as the law stands at present, control of traffic is the obligation of the State Government. Why on earth it should refuse to shoulder its responsibilities, I would not know. Like the hon. member for Toowoomba West, I was very amazed to find that local authorities, and in particular, the Brisbane City Council, were prepared to accept, without equivocation and without conditions, the sole responsibility for traffic provisions throughout the State's local authority areas. Surely they must have known that they could not cope with all the demands and obligations involved. Time has proved—and a fair amount of time has elapsed since this obligation was laid at their door—that local authorities cannot cope with the problems. They have not the financial resources to do so. People in Brisbane become acquainted with the local traffic regulations. But in the neighbouring town of Ipswich the lay-out and procedures are different. In Brisbane a day-time meter would not become a bus stop at night-time but, to my horror and surprise, I found that to be so in Ipswich. In one area, on a Saturday night, a metered area becomes a bus parking area. When there is no common law throughout the State motorists who visit neighbouring cities must be taken by suprise by the lack of uniformity. And surely there should be uniformity in matters of this nature.

Traffic lights are very expensive for local authorities to install. The Brisbane City Council has greater financial resources than other local authorities, but all of them have found that they have insufficient funds to provide the necessary traffic lights and other safeguards and protections.

This year we have often heard of pedestrians being knocked over and killed on zebra crossings that are supposedly safe for pedestrian traffic. We have heard at inquests before the Coroner, from police and others who have observed the circumstances of the accidents, that white lines have been obliterated, that motorists could not see them, and that there were no warning signs or lights. There was one fatality at Buranda and another. which was not the first, in the Stone's Corner area. One would think that that showed shocking negligence on the part of those responsible for providing a safe traffic system for pedestrians and motorists, but we are met with the argument that funds are unavailable to meet the demand and to ensure that the obligations are attended to. That again proves that local authorities, including the Brisbane City Council, cannot cope with all the necessary arrangements to provide safeguards for traffic, and expedite the flow of traffic in the city.

The latest dispute between the Transport Workers' Union and the Brisbane City Council has clearly proved that action should be taken by a common, supreme authority so that justice is meted out to the opposing parties.

We have a forest or a jungle of traffic signs in some places. I certainly agree with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that we do not oppose the introduction of this measure and that we will look at it to see what it does. Under the proposed legislation the unfortunate truck driver, motorist, or citizen will have to carry a pamphlet copy

of the Traffic Regulations in order to satisfy himself that he may properly park at any kerbside in the city.

Mr. Ramsden: You will pay more income tax as a result of it.

Mr. BENNETT: I will probably pay more income tax as a result of it, and I will probably earn a lot more in fees trying to iron out the confusion in the regulations.

The Traffic Act is becoming like the traffic in the city and elsewhere. It is getting into a state of confusion. I opened my remarks by saying that the Government's attitude to traffic is congested and chaotic, and the legislation on the Statute Book clearly proves that. The people who are required to know the Traffic Act and Regulations are the ordinary citizens, and in particular, the motorists. The people who are required to enforce the Traffic Act and Regulations are, in the main young police officers. The senior police officers naturally are not required to do field work or beat duty, so that it is the young policemen who are required to have a thorough knowledge of the Traffic Act and Regulations so that they can be enforced properly, thoroughly and fairly.

But what do we find? We find that the Traffic Act is like the jungle of traffic signs; it is like a pakapu ticket on the Statute Book. As a matter of fact it is almost impossible for a practising lawyer to keep abreast of the regulations that are published under the Act from time to time. To make all the amendments one almost needs a part-time secretary—let alone reading them and understanding them. There is confusion as to which regulation has been amended and which has not. Motorists educated in one particular regulation find, after a few months, that it has been superseded or repealed by another regulation.

The Government has had ample time to prepare its legislation for this, the final session of this Parliament before the next general election. One would expect that the legislation would be prepared carefully, and that the Acts being amended would be consolidated and brought up to date.

But what do we find with the Traffic Act? The Government is having a stab at it every year. To my knowledge this is at least the fifteenth amendment to this Act. To understand the legislation, any unsuspecting person —or any careful person for that matter—has to wade through 15 volumes of the Statutes, or 15 different amending Acts, to be satisfied as to the current law. We have the original Traffic Act of 1949 and the other Acts that amend that original Act or add to it, which are—

> Main Roads Acts and Another Act Amendment Act of 1952; Traffic Acts Amendment Act of 1953; Traffic Act and Another Act Amendment Act of 1956; Traffic Acts and Another Act Amendment Act of 1957; Traffic Acts and Another Act Amendment Act of 1957, No. 2; Traffic Acts Amendment Act of 1958; State Transport Facilities Acts and Another Act Amendment Act of 1959; Traffic Acts and Another Act Amendment Act of 1959; Traffic Acts Amendment Act of 1960; Traffic Acts Amendment Act of 1961; Traffic Acts Amendment Act of 1962; Traffic Acts and other Acts Amendment Act of 1965; Traffic Acts Amendment Act of 1967; Traffic Acts Amendment Act of 1968;

And now we have another little piece of legislation that will become the Traffic Act Amendment Act of 1968, No. 2. Why can the Government not introduce legislation to consolidate the Acts, and at the same time introduce legislation that will not require amendment twice per annum? It substantiates the argument that I have already submitted, namely, that the Government is not worried about traffic. The Government has dumped the baby in the lap of local government and has side-stepped the issue by making amendments from time to time—even two and three amendments in one year.

It is a shame that even before the end of this session the Government will have the audacity and hide to bring in a further amendment to the Traffic Act because it has no authority, apparently, to control and possibly anticipate the demands of the traffic authorities and the requirements for traffic movement in this State.

I have pointed out that at present the Main Roads Act encroaches on the Traffic Act, and the Traffic Act encroaches on the Main Roads Act. When we ask a question in this House of the Minister for Transport, it turns out to be a matter for the Minister in charge of the Police Force, and then when a question is asked of that Minister, it may be that it should have been directed to the Minister for Industrial Development, or some other Minister. At least three Ministers have a finger in the traffic pie, and none wants to stick it in properly. In fact, they are constantly trying to pull their fingers out and leave the matter to local authorities. The whole situation is completely unsatisfactory.

I indicated my expectation by asking the Minister by interjection when he was foreshadowing the amendment, "Are you going to iron out the problems of the breathalyser in this legislation?" Much to my surprise, disappointment and, indeed, horror, he shook his head and said, "No". Mr. N. Langford, Stipendiary Magistrate, said, as reported in "The Courier-Mail" of 3 October, after dismissing a charge of being in charge of a vehicle whilst under the influence of liquor, "A medical certificate on its own doesn't prove a single solitary thing except the blood-alcohol content of a person".

I do not wish to re-hash the debates in this Chamber on the amendment to the Traffic Act that introduced the use of the breathalyser, and made it an offence to have a blood-alcohol concentration in excess of .1 per cent. Although I do not wish

to repeat it to the point of tedium, it is scandalous that when a new offence is created there is no provision for charging a motorist with that offence. He still has to be charged with the old offence, under section 16, of being in charge of a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol. A person finds it fairly easy these days to prove that he is not guilty of that charge, but he must be convicted if there is——

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Carey): I hope the hon. member will relate his remarks to the matter before the Committee.

Mr. BENNETT: I will move an amendment if I am to be restricted. I have noticed the Minister, who has had experience in the chair, prompting you, Mr. Carey. I resent his interference, because I have always believed you to be a perfectly fair chairman. It is not often that we get the opportunity in this Chamber to debate serious matters of this nature. Of course, I know Government members are not interested because most of the time there have been only five of them here to support the Minister. There are six now.

Mr. Ramsden: That is the effect you have on the Chamber.

Mr. BENNETT: Whilst the hon. member for Merthyr was asleep, I was counting and listening to the speakers from his side of the Chamber. Quite frankly, we do not meet very often as a Parliament, and we are not given many opportunities to discuss matters of a controversial nature. I hope that no technicalities will be used to try to gag a speaker because so few on the Government side are interested.

Mr. Walsh: You can move your amendment, anyhow.

Mr. BENNETT: I certainly will if I have to. I already have it written out, and I shall move it if there is any attempt to gag me.

In answer to my question this morning, the Minister said in effect that the statement made by Mr. Langford was not accurate. I cannot remember his exact words, but in effect he meant that the claim was not correct.

Mr. Knox: I made no such statement.

Mr. BENNETT: You said, in effect, that the stipendiary magistrate's claim was not correct, in that the percentage of blood alcohol is strong evidence, or good evidence, to secure a conviction under section 16.

Mr. KNOX: I rise to a point of order. I cannot allow the hon. member for South Brisbane to say that I said that a statement by a magistrate was incorrect. No such statement was made by me, either here or anywhere else.

Mr. BENNETT: I certainly accept the Minister's explanation. I do not claim that the Minister said that, but the purport of his answer was to the effect—in my understanding of it, anyway—that the magistrate was not correct in making that claim. I think that the Minister's answer suggested that it was sufficient to place before a court only evidence of the percentage of blood alcohol, which is, of course, entirely incorrect. I wish to point out the observations and indicia that the courts require, and I am exhorting the Minister to change the policy of the department relative to the Traffic Acts to make it possible for clinical evidence still to be provided, because courts will not convict unless it is provided. I am not looking for convictions—I always appear for the defendant—but if one is genuine and sincere about this matter one must admit that, as the magistrate said—many other magistrates would agree with him; all lawyers would—that the medical certificate alone does not prove a single, solitary thing other than the blood alcohol of a person.

In the well-known case of Noonan v. Elson, which is reported in Queensland State Reports (1950) at page 215, Mr. Justice Stanley set out clearly the standards of proof necessary to show whether or not a court can, should or will convict a person of being under the influence of liquor, and percentage blood alcohol is not worth a snap of the fingers. He said—

> " . . . evidence merely that the fact that the defendant had consumed some five rums over a period of five hours and smelt of drink was not sufficient, having regard to the other facts of the case, to establish beyond a reasonable doubt that he was under the influence of liquor."

He pointed out also, referring to page 541 of Taylor on Principles and Practice of Medical Jurisprudence, that the specially appointed Committee of the British Medical Association on "Tests for Drunkenness" came to the conclusion that—

> "(i) There are no tests universally applicable for determining the amount of alcohol which would render a person incapable of carrying on his occupation in a proper manner, as the effect of alcohol varies within wide limits in different individuals and in the same individual under different conditions. Fine shades of self control might be lost without any apparent signs of alcoholic intoxication;
>
> (ii) The first effect of alcohol is on the higher centres and is subjective, and even if no objective symptoms occur the subjective effect of alcohol may be sufficient to make it unsafe for an individual to be in a responsible position, e.g. in charge of a mechanically propelled vehicle."

That means that the percentage blood alcohol means little; the court depends on the clinical observations that are made of the person concerned.

Mr. Justice Stanley then said—

> "Any layman can observe that there is usually a time lag between the consumption of intoxicating liquor and the

obvious loss of self control by the consumer. But unless the drinker takes some steps to eliminate the liquor from his stomach the processes of ingestion into the blood stream will go on and varying results may be manifested before the liquor is eliminated from the body by natural processes. Having regard to the relevant considerations, in my judgment the Legislature intended in the interests of public safety that the public should not be exposed to the risk that drivers or persons in charge of motor vehicles will reach the stage when their power of effective control of the vehicle may become impaired through intoxicating liquor."

Later in the judgment he said—

"There is nothing in the argument that a driver may not safely even have one drink of intoxicating liquor. If his tolerance of alcohol is so poor that one drink will make his conduct or his re-actions abnormal the section requires that he should not have it. In testing such abnormality, the relevant standard of normality is that of the individual concerned."

So that the machine means nothing; it is the individual concerned and what his normality is.

Mr. Justice Stanley goes on to say—

"But the question whether a man is capable of driving or controlling a vehicle may be a matter to be taken into account in considering whether he is under the influence of liquor."

He then quotes the facts of the case.

Further on, he says—

"But on the interpretation of the section which commends itself to me, I think that the appellant's conduct at the material time . . ."

that is his conduct at the material time, not his percentage blood alcohol—

". . . must be very closely scrutinised to see if it was sufficiently abnormal to warrant that he was then under the influence of liquor."

If I may quote the present Chief Justice, who was the dissenting judge in that case, to indicate just what is required, this is what he said, at page 226—

"However, the prosecution in each case must prove not only that the person charged has consumed liquor but also that the effect of the consumption has disturbed the action of the mental or physical faculties so that they are no longer in their normal condition. If a person drinks some liquor but not enough to affect his faculties to this extent, that person if he drives or is in charge of a motor vehicle does not commit an offence under the section. Evidence of a smell of liquor on the breath is merely one factor, namely the consumption; there must in addition be sensible signs that he has been affected by liquor, e.g. as shown by the difference from the normal in the particular person's physical appearance, actions, conduct, speech or behaviour."

(Time expired.)

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) (4.32 p.m.): I think the simple truth of this problem, which the Minister's amendment seeks to remedy to some degree, is that we have reached the stage where our city streets will no longer accommodate all the commercial vehicles, public transport and private vehicles that want to use them. I think the stage has been reached where it becomes a question of who is going to move over or move out. This is a very difficult proposition because each of them is essential for its particular purpose.

In view of the enlargement of the city and the erection of new buildings, which are bringing more professional services into operation in the city and thus more people into the city, commercial vehicles appear to be essential because all these things have to be serviced. Our stores have to accommodate additional people coming into the city, and consequently commercial vehicles are feeling the strain in the delivery of their goods. Unless we prescribe some restriction of hours in the use of roads by commercial vehicles, I do not think we can ask commercial vehicles to move out.

Public transport is also essential to bring people into the city to do business with the increased facilities that are available. This leaves the private vehicle as the one whose usefulness in the city has to be considered.

Mr. Kaus: They will be forced to park in the city council's parking station.

Mr. MELLOY: This again means the provision of even more parking facilities. Despite the size of the hole in Albert Square, I do not think it will accommodate the vehicles that seek parking accommodation in the inner city. Again, it will create a greater demand on kerbside space and, when the buses are in Queen Street as I presume they will be—I do not know what the plans are in that regard——

Mr. Ramsden: They run down there now.

Mr. MELLOY: As the hon. member says, they run down there now, but, just as one cannot pass a tram in the middle of the road, the buses will be using the sides of the road and blocking the lane near the kerb.

Mr. Ramsden: And the middle, too.

Mr. MELLOY: And the middle, too. This, I think, poses a problem relative to public transport.

On the matter of cargo deliveries I mention the airlines, which carry many small parcels that are sent by air as a matter of urgency. When those parcels reach their destination the airline companies have to distribute them by truck, and this is not done until after 8 a.m. when the business premises open. The airlines form an essential

part of our commercial life, and their deliveries will add to the confusion that exists in the mornings.

In the Transport Workers' Union's dispute with the Brisbane City Council it has to protect the interests of its members, who have the responsibility of delivering goods, and are forced on many occasions to double-park. If they did not they would not be able to make their deliveries.

Mr. Kaus: They have been fined for doing this.

Mr. MELLOY: That is true, and that is where the union's responsibility comes into the matter. It has to protect the interests of its members. It is quite understandable that the union will dispute any move that will make the delivery of goods by its members more difficult.

This Bill raises the matter of whether restricted periods should be applied to the various categories of road transport and whether deliveries should be restricted to the hours before 11 a.m. and after 3 p.m. so that the middle of the day can be left free for private vehicles. This would only add to the confusion and involve overtime payments to members of the Transport Workers' Union. Another problem would be that the commercial vehicles would become involved with peak-hour traffic. Public transport is already restricted in the peak periods when buses and trams are carrying their full capacities, but it appears to me that we could not introduce any restricted periods for traffic movement. Possibly the movement of private vehicles could be restricted to certain times, but this would involve many difficulties because emergencies would arise, such as medical emergencies, which would make it necessary for private vehicles to be driven into the city at any time during the day. I do not think that the Government could issue special licences for medical emergencies and things of that nature.

Mr. Kaus: Do you think that this could have been solved by Clem Jones constructing perimeter parking stations instead of central parking stations?

Mr. MELLOY: No, I do not think so. Inner-city parking stations are essential in any case because there will always be a large number of citizens who have to use their vehicles for urgent purposes and for convenience. I do not think that we can continue to oppress the ordinary person in the community.

Mr. E. G. W. Wood: You get a dead heart if you do that.

Mr. MELLOY: That is true. People still need to come into the centre of the city to carry out their normal business.

The only thing that can be done is to restrict the entry into the city of as many private vehicles as possible. The Minister for Transport can play his part in solving the problem, because if parking areas were established at suburban railway stations the need for vehicles to come into the city could be eliminated.

Mr. Knox: We have quite a number now.

Mr. MELLOY: Yes, but they are not sufficient. The land available at suburban railway stations is not sufficient to encourage motorists to park there and then make use of the public transport into the city. The same remarks apply to our bus services. If we could provide parking areas, say, a mile out of the city, where people could park their cars and catch buses into the city that should ease the situation, because they would be only 1 mile from town. If land can be acquired for these parking areas, I am sure the people would use them in conjunction with a good public transport system.

Mr. Ramsden: The whole thing would have to be economic.

Mr. MELLOY: I think it would be economic.

Mr. Ramsden: People could not pay high parking fees plus the fare to town.

Mr. MELLOY: That is true. They have to be public facilities rather than money-making propositions. A charge could be made to cover administrative costs and the wages of an attendant and so on, depending upon the size of the parking area. Such a scheme would help to solve the problems created by private vehicles coming into the city.

While I am talking about the city, I should like to support the remarks of the hon. members for South Brisbane and Wavell about Edward Street and George Street. Until 10.30 a.m. those streets are absolutely useless for anyone who has to work to a close timetable. It has often taken me half an hour to travel from the Trades Hall to Queen Street.

Mrs. Jordan: I can travel in from Ipswich more quickly.

Mr. MELLOY: That is true. The position is aggravated by the taxi rank in Edward Street and the buses coming down. They create traffic chaos. I do not know whether the taxi rank in Edward Street should be closed for certain periods of the day, because that raises the question of where we should put it, and the taxis must be in the centre of the city readily available for those who need them. However, I emphasise that in conjunction with the buses they cause considerable delay.

We must do something about the city traffic in Edward Street. It is chaotic. I have not mentioned George Street traffic, because it is absolutely intolerable. I think it is somewhat responsible for the chaos in Edward Street. People are bypassing George Street in favour of Edward Street to come down to this end of the city.

Mr. Ramsden: You must admit that George Street is all right whilst there is no parking until 9 a.m.

Mr. MELLOY: That is not true. The trams cause as much trouble as anything else.

Mr. Ramsden: It is the parking of cars in George Street that causes the trouble.

Mr. MELLOY: Yes, but the roadway is so narrow that every time a tram stops—and there are many tram stops in George Street—the traffic backs up, compared with Edward Street, which has no trams. I think the trams are largely responsible for the trouble in George Street, because even when cars are not parked in George Street there are many delays.

Mr. Ramsden: I can get into town quicker in the morning via George Street, before 9 o'clock, than by using Coronation Drive.

Mr. MELLOY: Before 9 o'clock, yes.

With an increasing traffic flow into the city these days there is a tendency to build concrete monstrosities at intersections. Whenever an intersection is developed and widened, and corners truncated, to provide tremendous space for manoeuvrability, someone puts in a huge slab of concrete—a traffic island. These things do not contribute in any way to safety. In fact, many of the metal "Keep Left" signs at the ends of the traffic islands are knocked over every day, simply because there is no room to move in the event of confusion at the intersection. In many cases they cause innocent drivers who are hedged in to have accidents. If another car gets off the beam, or comes down the wrong lane, there is no chance to move out of the way, with the resultant risk of a collision.

That is all I want to say on this legislation. We do not know what is in the Bill—we will have an opportunity to discover that shortly—and then, as the hon. member for Toowoomba West said, we might change our views on some matters in it. I consider that the only solution to our problem is to have some control or restriction on the parking of private cars in the city area.

Mr. RAMSDEN (Merthyr) (4.46 p.m.): I enter the debate to speak briefly on this matter. I regret that there is a need to introduce this legislation. I agree with the hon. member for Toowoomba West that all of the chaos in the Brisbane traffic situation is causing the introduction of legislation that will be effective throughout the whole State, including many local authorities where the problem has not yet arisen, and probably never will, unless there is concerted action by the Transport Workers' Union who will move into neighbouring cities.

Mr. Bennett: The Country Party members do not seem worried about it. They are not even here.

Mr. RAMSDEN: As a matter of fact, they know that I am making a good speech and that they do not have to be here.

The fact is that the mess we are in at the moment has been caused entirely by the Lord Mayor's consistent refusal to accept the advice given to him by the Tramway and Motor Omnibus Employees' Union just prior to Exhibition Week.

Mr. Bennett: You are attacking the Lord Mayor. You are playing politics.

Mr. RAMSDEN: If the hon. member for South Brisbane was not here, he could be admirably placed on one of the more comic shows on television. If he loses his seat, I shall give him a reference to get a job there.

Evidently the Lord Mayor thought that with Exhibition Week coming on there would be great public feeling exhibited and that no industrial action would be taken, and therefore he could press on and do what he did. We know that he cancelled trams on the one line that the union asked him to retain until the matter was concluded. This led to the strike. As I said last night, the strike led to the people in the city, including the crowds of visitors here for Exhibition Week, seeking an alternative method of transport. All public transport administered by the Brisbane City Council was out of action during the strike because of the Lord Mayor's obstinacy. In my opinion, the real problem is that this was a self-inflicted injury. The truth of the matter is that due to the premature replacement of the Ashgrove trams with buses, without adequate planning of bus stops, many of the loading zones, and indeed many of the metered parking spaces in the city, have been wiped out to make room for the increased number of buses on the road.

Mr. Bennett: Are you a "tram" man?

Mr. RAMSDEN: I am, yes. This situation will deteriorate even further when all the trams come off and more buses are put onto our roads. Despite all the claims made about the manoeuvrability of buses and how much better they are, it still takes approximately 1½ buses to carry the payload of one tram. I was not greatly surprised when even the hon. member for Salisbury agreed that this position will continue. As more and more trams go off the road and more and more buses come on, the situation will develop at an even greater rate than it is developing now, with the swallowing up of loading zones and metered spaces.

I am a little concerned at what further irresponsible action may be taken by the Brisbane City Council. The Minister said in his introduction of the Bill that it repeals the present definition of a loading zone and substitutes a new definition which will result in the following situation:—

1. The existing loading will be retained.

2. Additional loading zones may be created in accordance with the requirements of the local authority.

3. These loading zones will be restrictive in regard to the class or classes of vehicles allied to the purpose for which they may be used, as indicated on the official traffic sign.

4. They may be restricted to—

(a) Loading or unloading goods;

(b) Picking up or setting down passengers; or

(c) For both of those purposes.

5. The period of restricted use for the purpose indicated on the sign will not exceed—

(a) Five minutes in respect to passengers; or

(b) Twenty minutes in respect to goods; or

(c) Such longer period in either case as indicated on the sign.

The thing that concerns me in this legislation is that it is putting yet another weapon into the hands of the Brisbane City Council to force more and more private motorists off the road. The thing that concerns me is that nothing is mandatory except the time.

When it is seen that existing loading zones will be retained, this does not necessarily mean, if I understand the Minister correctly, that this will, of necessity, happen. It appears to me that once the amendment is passed, the city council may subsequently change any existing loading zone from any purpose for which it now exists and either use it for a specific purpose or wipe it out altogether. The Minister nods his head in agreement. That is something of a shock to me.

Quite seriously, this concerns me because one can see what attitude will be adopted when one looks at the Lord Mayor's attitude to the all-day parker in what I may describe as the old markets area. For some time many vehicles have been parked in this area, at a fairly reasonable daily rate. The Lord Mayor has now made a statement that immediately the parking station under the city square is available for public use the parking area at Roma Street is to be closed to the public. It appears to me that irrespective of whether the Roma Street area is or is not needed for redevelopment, private motorists will be precluded from using it and forced to use the city square parking station. I suppose the contractor has to be guaranteed his return. I was most interested to hear the hon. member for South Brisbane support the Transport Workers' Union in their stand against the Lord Mayor.

Mr. Bennett: I am always a unionist. I supported the firemen against your awful acts.

Mr. RAMSDEN: That is very good. I am glad to hear the hon. member say that he supports the union against my lawful acts.

Mr. Bennett: Your "awful" acts, I said.

Mr. RAMSDEN: With such experienced members as the hon. member for South Brisbane and Toowoomba West taking the side of the Transport Workers' Union against the Lord Mayor, one can understand my fears in this matter. Like the member for Toowoomba West, I am interested in the welfare of the ordinary man and woman who drives in the city. With registration fees, insurance rates, and the ordinary costs of running a car as high as they are, those who pay the penalty for owning a vehicle and whose business brings them to the city must receive some consideration, whether they be private drivers or members of the Transport Workers' Union.

I accept this legislation only because in the game of chess or the game of cards referred to by the hon. member for Toowoomba West, which the Lord Mayor has been playing with the State Government and the Minister, the Lord Mayor has in fact checkmated the Government or trumped the Government's trick, whichever analogy one uses. There will be complete chaos if we do not take the Lord Mayor off the hook on which he has hung himself by his own precipitate and premature introduction of buses to replace trams before he shuffled his cards properly or put all the men on the chessboard in their correct order.

I am concerned that, in giving these additional powers to the Brisbane City Council to alter the loading zones, we will give it even more power to belt this Government round the ears once again.

I think it was the hon. member for Toowoomba West who mentioned the adroitness of the Lord Mayor in being able to sizzle his own buns, as it were, and then pass the burnt offering over to the Government to swallow, and sometimes it has turned out to be a very bitter pill indeed. He has done that already with the Wilbur Smith Plan. Hon. members all remember how for many months the Press, the public and the Opposition in the City Council asked again and again, "What is going to be the future of trams in this city?" The Lord Mayor remained silent. Time after time he said, "I will make a statement at the correct moment." In the long run, he did not make any statement; he left it to his Deputy Lord Mayor, who quite frankly and bluntly stated that trams were going. Immediately this was stated, the Press challenged the Lord Mayor on that subject. With the adroitness to which the hon. member for Toowoomba West referred, the Lord Mayor shrugged his shoulders and said, "You all knew. Good heavens, the Government forced us to take the trams off the day it agreed to implement the Wilbur Smith Plan!" With that adroitness, that subtlety of his, the Lord Mayor was able to shift the blame onto the Government. On that basis, of course, he justified a completely autocratic action of refusing the rights of the citizens to be considered.

Mr. Bennett: He said your Government took the trams off Victoria Bridge.

Mr. RAMSDEN: That, in itself, is completely inaccurate, because I well remember the Lord Mayor's being asked by the Government of the day whether he wanted the Co-ordinator-General to put tram tracks on the new Victoria Bridge and his saying, "No." I will pin that one back right now.

Mr. Chinchen: The Lord Mayor advised the Premier that he did not want them.

Mr. RAMSDEN: He advised the Premier that he did not want them. The hon. member for South Brisbane cannot toss that one. I know he is only interjecting to pull my leg. The hon. member for South Brisbane has even less time for the Lord Mayor than I have, and that is saying something.

To continue on this line, I should like to again borrow a simile from the hon. member for Toowoomba West, who spoke about the meat in the sandwich. The only trouble with the sandwich in this case is that it happens to be a Dagwood—a very big sandwich. On this occasion the Government is the meat in the sandwich between a number of slices of bread.

Mr. Bennett: I thought it was the grub in the salad.

Mr. RAMSDEN: I am sorry; there is no salad where the hon. member gets his grubs. The slices of bread are the bus and tram drivers' union, the Transport Workers' Union, the ordinary driver whose business brings him into the city, and the Brisbane City Council. Here are all the gigantic slabs of bread that go together to make us this Dagwood sandwich, and in every case this Government has allowed itself to be manoeuvred into being the meat in this Dagwood sandwich. No wonder we will get indigestion in this city; no wonder there will be traffic indigestion; it is a wonder we do not die of colic. I deprecate, with the hon. member for Toowoomba West, the need for this legislation to be inflicted on all local authorities simply because of the arrogance of the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, who has consistently refused to accept the advice of his own unions.

To get back to the simile of ballet dancing, that the hon. member for Toowoomba West used, if we see the ballet with the Minister on the one hand and the Lord Mayor on the other, then I suppose we, on the Government benches, will have to join in the circus he started. It has certainly become a circus ever since the Lord Mayor took over the administration of traffic in this city.

Mr. Bennett: Do you think it is a question of chickens coming home to roost?

Mr. RAMSDEN: Unfortunately, Mr. Carey, I cannot say what I am thinking because it would be reported in "Hansard". So, I want to say at this point that it is with a great deal of reluctance and foreboding that I accept the necessity for this legislation.

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Transport) (5.2 p.m.), in reply: I think that the way in which this amendment is being received indicates the truth and substance of what I said in my introductory remarks, that is, that we all have what we believe to be expert opinions about traffic matters. I am not an exception to this. It has always been my experience in this Chamber that when we discuss traffic matters we cover very wide fields. I was rather hoping that this matter would be restricted to the terms of the amendment, which I outlined very fully today, but quite a number of other matters have been canvassed.

I do not intend to try to answer all the matters that have been raised outside of the terms of the amendment, because we could argue on some of them for quite some time.

The hon. member for Townsville North referred to the fact that as long ago as 1960 the Transport Workers' Union made representations to this Government for a system of rationalisation of loading zones, with tickets or stickers issued, and so on. That is quite true. At that time, of course, it was felt that this was not necessary in view of the existing circumstances. Indeed, it was not necessary then, but, as time progressed, in other capital cities in Australia, as it is now in Brisbane, it has been found that the type of loading zone originally designated, which allowed the widest possible use, is not adequate to meet the specialised needs of a diversified and affluent community.

I believe that on this occasion the amending of the definition of "loading zone" will, for the time being anyway, cater for the problem. I do not deny that it is necessary to amend the Traffic Act frequently, as the hon. member for South Brisbane said, but we are dealing today with a very dynamic problem, a problem that is changing from year to year, and we cannot with any certainty forecast exactly what new problems might occur in traffic in the next year or so that will require further amendment. I would not hesitate to introduce an amendment to the Traffic Act, while I remained in charge of it, if it was necessary to do it, rather than make the excuse that I did not want to amend the Act because the hon. member for South Brisbane has some problem gluing bits of paper into his original Act. I think that would be a very poor reason for not amending it—simply because the hon. member is being inconvenienced. If a need exists to amend the Traffic Act I will amend it as often as it is needed, even though the amendments may cause some problems in maintaining up-to-date records.

In effect, the observations made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition are correct, but while I have been Minister in charge of this Act the need has not arisen to amend it. The need was not brought to my attention by the Transport Workers' Union until its recent dispute with the Brisbane City

Council, and I did not expect any need to be brought to my attention because everything was going along quite smoothly.

As the hon. members for South Brisbane and Toowoomba West pointed out, the recent tram strike and the abuse of the use of loading zones and the abolition of loading zones to provide bus stops aggravated the problem and brought the matter to a head. This was stated by the Transport Workers' Union in its original dispute with the Brisbane City Council. The union wanted the restoration of the loading zones that had been eliminated. As time passed, the union found that the loading zones were not being restored, and it went into conference with the council, and the result was that the union's suggestions came forward.

As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition suggests, possibly confusion could arise about the traffic signs. Confusion already exists. I do not know if additional types of signs will be instituted as a result of this Bill; I do not think that they will be. Already there exists a long list of standard signs throughout the nation. These signs may be used where they might prove effective. It is quite true that a person can travel from one place in the Commonwealth to another and find a standard sign, which may not be in existence in the place where he lives. That sign is still in the manual of standard signs that is accepted by the local authorities and Governments throughout the nation. The motorist should be alerted to the existence of the standard signs. From time to time pamphlets have been issued to make motorists aware of the signs that are used throughout the nation. In fact, oil companies and other organisations are distributing such pamphlets to school children so that they may become familiar with traffic signs.

The hon. member for Ithaca is somewhat concerned about the fact that not all the vehicles will be able to use specialised loading zones that may be instituted by local authorities. What he said is true. I point out that not all vehicles are allowed to use existing loading zones, and the whole trouble at the moment is that vehicles that should not be allowed to use them, in the true sense of the term, are in fact using them. This helps to aggravate the problem. It is not possible to say that specialised types of loading zones should be provided for all commercial vehicles, because many vehicles that do not carry goods are registered as commercial vehicles, and many vehicles that are registered as commercial vehicles for insurance purposes, because of the nature of the business of the owners, are in fact sedan cars. If special privileges were extended to that type of vehicle it would be able to use a loading zone when in fact it is not entitled to do so because its driver is not delivering or picking up goods. The concern of the hon. member for Ithaca is not well founded, if, after the Act is amended, local authorities are providing zones or spaces for parking and loading in accord with the needs of the community over which they have jurisdiction. At present if a local authority desires to abolish or shift a loading zone it may do so. In fact, the Brisbane City Council did that only recently, and this added to the concern of the Transport Workers' Union.

The proposed amendments do not alter the present power of the local authority in this matter. I am unable to give the hon. member for Wavell an off-the-cuff answer to the special problem on Moggill Road. If he makes representations to the authorities to create a one-way street, I have no doubt that they will be seriously considered.

Mr. Lickiss: Application has already been made.

Mr. KNOX: Apparently the hon. member representing the area has attended to it, so that it is already under way.

The hon. member for Wavell also warned us that other types of vehicles might want to use a loading zone. Speaking specifically of the Brisbane City Council, I believe that if the local authority wants a loading zone specially for motor trucks and motor utilities, no type of vehicle that could be logically expected to use the loading zone would be excluded. If vehicles wish to drop and pick up passengers (and there are plenty of them in the community), the Brisbane City Council should ensure that there are adequate places in the city for that purpose. I referred earlier to the matter of picture theatres, hotels, places of amusement and public gatherings, as well as a few other places, that might well be served with a type of loading zone called "passengers-only loading zone." They would be for a special use, which would be in accord with the amendment.

I do not think the fears of the hon. member for Wavell are well founded, in view of the proposed definition of "loading zone". However, if there are special vehicles that the local authority wishes to exclude from using the kerbside space it may exclude them now without this amendment. If there is a particular type of vehicle that a local authority wishes to exclude from using a metered space or a loading zone it presently has the power, and this amendment will not alter the situation.

The hon. member for Salisbury, in common with his Deputy Leader, said that he would examine the Bill in more detail before committing himself. I feel that he said that with the thought in mind that the evidence might be used against him. He said that the measure will do little to alleviate the problem, as did several other hon. members. That is quite so. I said earlier that the mere alteration of the Traffic Act as we are suggesting—that is, by altering the definition of "loading zone" and creating an offence for parking in these specialised places (which is not provided at present), with a limitation of time for loading of goods and people—will not overcome the problem in Brisbane

at all unless many other things are done. The Transport Workers' Union and the retailers pointed that out quite clearly to me. I am sure that the Lord Mayor will also agree.

Until the Act is amended in this way there is no means by which the city council believes it can carry out the next stage of ensuring that there are specialised and exclusive-use loading zones so that the policing can be more effective.

One of the great difficulties—and this is a legitimate difficulty facing the city council—is the trouble of policing loading zones. I believe that all local authorities are facing this problem. Unless the balance of loading zones to parking meters that existed before loading zones were taken over by bus stops is restored, the problem will not be solved. We will have done the best we can to give the council authority to act, but the problem will not be solved until more loading-zone space is provided in the city for those who are legitimately entitled to it.

The hon. member for Mt. Gravatt referred to the possibility of a type of meter in the loading zone. I looked quickly at the Act but it does not appear that there is power in it to do this, although I am not certain of that. I have asked my advisers to go into this in greater depth to see if the suggestion is a practical and possible solution to policing loading times. I presume that the hon. member is referring to the time limits in loading zones.

In any case, the hon. member suggests that it may be possible, under the definition, for local authorities to make up their own types of classification. He suggested "trucks and utilities only". I doubt very much that local authorities would be able to make up a definition that does not already exist in the Traffic Act. They would have to designate the classes of vehicles as they are presently designated in the Traffic Act, and there are quite a number of them.

As the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt correctly said, the possibility of local authorities wanting to have a loading zone especially for a certain type of vehicle, apart from a vehicle stand, would not be excluded. They already have authority to have a vehicle stand, which is a stand for a special type of vehicle which may not be loading or unloading anything. It might be there simply because it has no where else to go. These spaces already exist outside town halls and other places.

Local authorities might wish to have a specialised loading zone for a particular type of vehicle. This may occur where a business has not a back alley or some other way of getting into its premises, and they might say that vehicles serving certain premises can use this type of loading zone. I believe that they probably would be able to exercise their authority in this respect.

I hope that they would not exclude other users, and I know they would not because of their concern for the interests of other people in the area. I indeed have such space at the moment outside the Railway Department building for my Ministerial vehicle. The number of the vehicle is showing, but I have not the exclusive use of that area. In fact, it is not a loading zone at all; it is a bus stop, and I share it with buses. If the buses are there it is just too bad, and I have no place to park.

Mr. Ramsden: Who has priority?

Mr. KNOX: It is a case of first in, best dressed. Fortunately I am usually driven by somebody else and I do not have to worry about it. But there have been occasions on which I have been driving the car and it has presented me with special problems. Usually, owing to the kindness of the bus drivers, I arrange to find a spot. However, I do not believe that the local authorities should provide loading zones for the exclusive use of vehicles that may be there for only a short time. I think that this is unwise.

The hon. member for Mt. Gravatt mentioned colour. There is in fact a national code of colours for use on signs. As I interjected when another hon. member raised this matter, if a colour was used to indicate a loading zone sign some distance way, it would be yellow, because this is the nationally recognised colour for this purpose. There are other colours for other purposes that I do not recall at the moment.

The hon. member for Toowoomba West again brought to our notice that this was specifically a Brisbane City Council problem. Because he did not hear what I said, he reiterated how it arose in Brisbane. He was somewhat concerned that it would be implemented throughout the State. When he reads what I have said he will realise the meaning of the term "implemented throughout the State" as used by me. The discretion is still in the hands of the local authorities to decide what type of loading zones they will have in their districts.

The hon. member said that the Lord Mayor and I were engaged in some form of ballet. I do not think that the Lord Mayor has ever suggested to me, or to anybody else, that the Brisbane City Council should lose its authority over traffic and parking, or that this authority should revert to the State Government.

Mr. Bennett: What do you think about that aspect yourself?

Mr. KNOX: As I said earlier, I think the authority should be vested in the local authority. That has been Government policy in this matter. This Government did not initiate the policy. It was initiated in 1956 by the Australian Labour Party Government, which gave to local authorities the authority to regulate parking. That was done before our time and continued when we took office.

I assume that both parties on this side of the Chamber have a similar attitude to where the authority for regulating parking and loading should lie. Obviously some members on the other side of the Chamber have short memories, or they have not done their "homework". It was in fact their Government that gave this authority to local authorities in 1956; I think I should put the record straight on that matter. The hon. member for Toowoomba West referred to it and said that he was staggered to learn that local authorities wanted this power.

Mr. Hanlon: I think he was referring to traffic facilities.

Mr. KNOX: Later on, in pursuit of that policy, we gave to local authorities areas outside parking areas and loading zones, which were, of course, parkatareas. The other power given was the right to police them.

Mr. Hanlon: Traffic lights and traffic facilities.

Mr. KNOX: That is only an extension of our policy. This problem was placed in the hands of local authorities in 1956.

The hon. member for Toowoomba West said that he agreed that the legislation would not be the cure-all of all problems, and I think that was also mentioned by several other members.

The hon. member for South Brisbane said that the Government should exercise its responsibilities. We are doing that by amending the Traffic Act.

Mr. Bennett: In a very irresponsible manner.

Mr. KNOX: We believe it is being done in a responsible way, and on the best advice available. I believe that the Bill will contribute to solving the problem if all the other necessary things are done by the Brisbane City Council. I have already commented on the hon. member's problem with paper work in his office, but I am not going to be deterred by the fact that he has a lot to do. If an amendment is necessary, it will be made. We are dealing with a changing situation, and we have to be alert to the possibility of future amendments.

The hon. member for Nudgee referred to emergency circumstances. They are generally covered at present, and I am quite sure that the Brisbane City Council will take them into account. I suggest that he make his representations to that quarter.

The hon. member for Merthyr was concerned about the possibility of another weapon being placed in the hands of the Brisbane City Council in restricting the rights of the citizen to the use of kerb space. I do not know whether that is necessarily so.

The Council is facing a difficult problem, which has to be resolved, in the use of kerb space in the city. It has decided, of its own volition and without any pressure from the Government, to convert the tramway system to a bus system at a rate which is probably unprecedented in the world. In other places such conversions from tram to bus services have taken up to five years. The Brisbane City Council apparently intends to do it in 12 months. An effective conversion of this type cannot be made in such a short space of time without the provision of complementary facilities, which are, of course, parking areas for buses.

Mr. Ramsden: In other words, you agree with me.

Mr. KNOX: I am not disagreeing. This is a special problem that the Brisbane City Council has, and I am not trying to deny that it is a serious one. If it is intended to use kerb-side bus stands, it is obvious that there must be a reduction in the number of parking meters and loading zones in the city.

Mr. Chinchen: What about terminals?

Mr. KNOX: Bus terminals and other facilities are required if the conversion of the magnitude planned in the next 12 months is to proceed smoothly. Otherwise, there will be little kerb space left in some of the principal streets of the city for use by vehicles other than buses.

Mr. Bennett: What is your Government doing about it? It is doing nothing.

Mr. KNOX: I am identifying the problem that the Brisbane City Council has decided to tackle. Therefore, I believe that it has to provide some of the solutions, which are very obvious and are to hand if it wishes to make use of them.

I am pleased that hon. members generally have accepted the proposals that I have put to them. I hope that when they have studied the Bill they will be convinced that it contributes to overcoming the difficulty with which the Brisbane City Council is now faced. Again I stress that the other action that the city council has said it will take relative to policing the loading zones must also flow.

I trust that the parties involved in the dispute will adopt a co-operative attitude and endeavour to use the legislation to provide services that will meet the needs—needs that must be met—of a growing and dynamic community.

Motion (Mr. Knox) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Knox, read a first time.

The House adjourned at 5.28 p.m.