

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 29 OCTOBER 1968

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

QUESTIONS

NEW OFFICE ACCOMMODATION, BALMORAL STATE HIGH SCHOOL

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

Has the Principal of Balmoral State High School made application for new accommodation for himself and staff? If so, has his request been investigated and when will the accommodation be provided?

Answer:—

“A request has been received for the provision of improved office accommodation at the Balmoral State High School. This request is being considered in the Architectural Branch of the Department of Works, but no indication can be given, at present, as to when the accommodation in question will be provided.”

INSTALLATION OF SPRINKLER FIRE ALARMS IN GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

Mr. Donald for **Mr. Bromley**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

(1) As it is policy not to insure Government buildings, will the new buildings being constructed for the Government be fitted with sprinkler fire alarms?

(2) For the same reason as well as for safety purposes, will schools being built or constructed in the future have sprinkler fire alarms installed?

(3) If the Answers to Questions (1) and (2) are in the negative, what is the reason?

(4) What was the cost to the State of the Supreme Court fire and any other fires in Government buildings or schools during the last three years?

Answers:—

(1) “No.”

(2) “It is not proposed to install sprinkler fire alarms in these buildings.”

(3) “Adequate provisions for egress from buildings are made and fire alarms where considered to be necessary are installed.”

(4) “A system of keeping up to date valuations of buildings and their contents would serve no useful purpose and the incurring of the considerable expense that would be involved could not be justified. The cost to the State of the Supreme Court fire and any other fires in Government buildings or schools during the last three years is not known, as detailed assessments of damage were not made.”

JOINT AUSTRALIAN-JAPANESE STUDY OF
GREAT BARRIER REEF

Mr. Donald for Mr. O'Donnell, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

With reference to the proposed joint Australian-Japanese study of the Great Barrier Reef—

- (1) Why are the Japanese interested?
- (2) Why will the expense of Australian participation be borne by the Commonwealth Bureau of Mineral Resources rather than by the Department of Education and Science, which uses C.S.I.R.O. as its instrument for scientific research?
- (3) Does the financial method mean that the study will be an assessment of mineral potential rather than an excursion to further knowledge in marine biology?

Answers:—

(1) "The Japanese research group is interested in pure scientific research in certain marine fields. I have been advised by the Right Honourable the Prime Minister that the relevant Commonwealth Departments have carefully examined the details of the cruise and have found no reason why it should not proceed."

(2) "This was a determination by the Commonwealth Government and I am not aware of any particular reason governing this decision."

(3) "See Answer to (2)."

RAILWAY WOODWORKING SHOPS,
TOWNSVILLE

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

(1) With reference to his letter to me on the subject of an amenities block for the woodworking shops in the South Yard, Townsville, and his intimation therein that the shops will be closed and re-sited to make room for improved goods-handling facilities, what is the approximate date of the closure of the woodworking shops and the probable site of the new?

(2) Will he seek the opinions of employees concerned to ensure that the design and construction of the shops and the installation of machinery will be such as will ensure maximum efficiency?

Answers:—

(1) "The expansion of the Department's Goods Yards at South Townsville to embrace the South Yard Workshops is part of a long-term plan, and no date can be given at this stage as to when the removal of the workshops will become necessary."

(2) "When the time arrives, the design and construction of the shops and the installation of machinery will be carried out in such a manner as to ensure maximum efficiency."

MARKETING OF ULTRA-HEAT-TREATED
MILK

(a) **Mr. Lickiss**, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

In view of the serious impact that Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution could have on the Queensland dairy industry, particularly in South-east Queensland, will he reconsider the limitations placed on the U.H.T. plant which he recently opened for the production of long-life milk products to enable Queensland products from this plant, locally-owned and employing Queensland labour, to compete on favourable terms with interstate supplies presently coming on to the Queensland market?

Answer:—

"Section 92 of the Constitution is accepted for the present as an unchangeable factor. It can operate for or against businesses trading in Queensland, as the Question infers. The application by Pauls Ice Cream & Milk Ltd. for authority to use its export U.H.T. plant to treat milk for the Brisbane market is still under consideration. The other point of issue in connection with the granting of a licence to the company for the production and sale of U.H.T. milk on the Queensland market is one of price. The Queensland Dairymen's Organisation is seeking a price equal to that paid for ordinary market milk supplies for pasteurisation whilst the company has not yet indicated a clear intention as respects price."

(b) **Mr. Donald for Mr. O'Donnell**, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

With reference to his Answer to my Question on October 24 relative to marketing of ultra-heat-treated milk in which he stated, "The original application by Pauls Ice Cream & Milk Ltd. was for the purpose of manufacturing long-life milk for export. This was approved by the Government and an Order in Council was issued"—

(1) Was the original application by Queensland United Foods Ltd. to the Director-General of Primary Industries, dated March 17, 1967, for permission to erect and equip a factory at Montague Road, South Brisbane, at an estimated cost of \$432,069 for the production of ultra-heat-treated milk without any reference being made in that application to either the export or the local market?

(2) Was the application acknowledged without comment on March 23, 1967, by the Director of Dairying?

(3) As the Order in Council of December 21, 1967, states that the Certificate of Registration of the factory for the production of ultra-heat-treated milk shall be

restricted to and endorsed for the production and sale of ultra-heat-treated milk for export beyond the State of Queensland and for no other purpose, if the Answers to (1) and (2) are in the affirmative, when, between March 17, and December 23, 1967, was an application made by Q.U.F. Ltd. to manufacture U.H.T. milk for export?

(4) If no such application was made, why was the restriction imposed?

Answers:—

(1) "No. The original application was dated January 26, 1967, and was acknowledged by letter dated February 1, 1967. The letter of application to which the Honourable Member refers was forwarded by the group engineer of the company and who, it must be concluded, was unaware that an application had already been made by the production manager of his company. Neither application set out information specifically in regard to the purposes for which the plant was to be constructed, although the second application included advice that the treated product was to be marketed as 'Long Life' under agreement with Messrs. Express Dairy Co., London. The company's attention was formally directed in the Department's letter of February 1, 1967, to the need for specific information under the Dairy Produce Acts as to the purpose for which the plant was to be used. I say 'formally' as it was the general understanding of departmental officers concerned that the U.H.T. plant was intended to be used for the treatment of milk for export. In this regard, I quote from a letter dated June 21, 1966, addressed by the company to the Queensland Dairymen's State Council:—"We were very sorry to learn that some of your members had formed the impression that this company's venture into the production of Long Life Milk could in any way endanger the sales in Australia of pasteurised milk. Our object in going into this rather costly venture is to attempt to procure export sales for Australian dairy products, in the form of whole milk instead of in the form of either butter-fat or milk powder, and we are confident that over a period a valuable export business can be built up. Your members can be assured that we are fully appreciative of the value to the industry of orderly marketing of pasteurised milk in Australia, and that we will do nothing to upset this. On the contrary, we hope to tap entirely new external markets which will assist in the sale of dairy products." The application was dealt with by the Department of Primary Industries and approved on the basis that the U.H.T. plant was intended primarily for export and not as a duplication of existing milk-treatment facilities."

(2) "The application to which the Honourable Member refers was acknowledged without comment in view of the

Department's previous letter drawing attention to the provisions of the Dairy Produce Acts."

(3) "See (1) and (2). An application was made by the company on June 20, 1968, for authority to use its export U.H.T. plant for the treatment of milk for sale on the local market. This application is still under consideration. The issue of the Order in Council to permit treatment of milk for export was designed to enable that company to proceed without delay to the commissioning of their U.H.T. plant pending consideration of vital and complex issues relating to the likely effects of the sale of such milk on the domestic market milk structure and, in particular, on dairy farmers' incomes. The General Manager of Queensland United Foods Ltd., Mr. L. J. McCray, was fully aware of these reasons and accepted the terms of the Order in Council as a preliminary measure designed to facilitate the early commissioning of the factory. I would add that in the present circumstances of there being an adequate supply of quality market milk available to local consumers at the cheapest retail prices in Australia, the Government has been loath to use its powers, either to fix prices or otherwise to interfere in what is essentially a matter for the milk industry and the owner of the U.H.T. plant to settle."

(4) "See (1) and (3)."

USE OF OBSOLETE TEXTBOOKS IN STATE SCHOOLS

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

(1) Are mathematics textbooks using £ s. d. currency still on issue and in use in State schools? If so, as it is now almost three years since the change-over to decimal currency, when will the practice be terminated?

(2) In view of apparent obsolete stock lists being supplied to schools, (a) what was the date of the last amended stock list and (b) when will a list more appropriate to the needs of today be issued?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes. Departmental textbooks in Mathematics issued to schools, as in the past, contain chapters on money in the old currency. As there is still much of value to both teachers and scholars in other chapters of the books they have been retained until a new series is available. At the same time advice has been given to teachers on the substitution of present currency in exercises set to give practice in money transactions. It is expected that the new series of mathematics textbooks will be issued in 1969."

(2) "New stock lists introduced this year are presently on issue and have already been used by a large number of schools."

NEW PETRIE TERRACE STATE SCHOOL

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

What is the approximate occupation date of the target date set for the new Petrie Terrace State School?

Answer:—

"The Department of Works has advised that plans are in course of preparation. No indication can be given at this stage as to when the building will be ready for occupation. The matter will be dealt with as expeditiously as possible."

SECURITY LIGHTING AT STATE SCHOOLS

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

With reference to his statement in Answer to the Question of the Honourable Member for Townsville South on October 22, that it is not the practice to provide security lighting to schools and that funds are not available for the purpose, could consideration be given to such lighting in those cases where factors exist in the siting of the building or suchlike which lead to frequent breaking and entering and consequent loss, particularly of parents and citizens' association property, as in the Townsville case mentioned and in Brisbane at locations such as Kelvin Grove State School?

Answer:—

"The incidence of breaking and entering is not confined to hours of darkness and does not follow any particular pattern as regards locality or siting of buildings. Consequently the provision of security lighting would not serve as a strong deterrent to damage to school buildings and to loss of property therefrom. It is not proposed to install security lighting either at the locations requested or as a general practice."

LAND FOR SLIPWAY FACILITIES,
MOOLOOLAH BOAT HARBOUR

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

How much land is available adjacent to the Mooloolah Boat Harbour for the purpose of boat building and boat repair facilities, where exactly is it situated and when it is expected that tenders will be called for the establishment of the facilities?

Answer:—

"A 1-acre waterfront site fronting the upstream section of the dredged basin in the Mooloolah River is planned for slipway and boat repair development. Formalities with respect to the transfer of ownership of the land by the Crown to the Port Authority

have not yet been completed. When this is done, tenders for development of the site will be invited."

ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS TO WIDOWS
WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN

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

(1) Is he aware of an allegation in *The Courier-Mail* of October 25 that in the case of widows with dependent children the recent pension rise of \$1 per week has been eroded by the Children's Services Department in discontinuing payment for one child? If so, is Queensland the only State to do so or has it been applied uniformly in all States?

(2) Will he clarify the matter?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "As stated in the letter referred to by the Honourable Member, Family Assistance which is paid by the State as a supplement to the Commonwealth Social Service Benefits has been reduced in a number of cases following the recent increase in those benefits. In making these reductions the Department has followed the practice which was adopted by a previous Government in 1942 and has been followed ever since. This State has been paying a child allowance to widows and other eligible persons since 1906. When the Commonwealth entered the Social Service field in 1942, it was decided to continue these State payments supplementary to Commonwealth Social Service payments, relating the family income from all sources to a scale based on the State Male Basic Wage. State Family Assistance payments to 1 and 2 child families have not, in general, been reduced, because in the majority of cases the total income of these families is well below the eligibility scale based on the State Male Basic Wage. However, payments to other families have been affected, because they have received the greatest benefit from the Commonwealth increase of \$1 per week for the parent or parents, and \$1 per week for each of the children. No family has been reduced to the income it received prior to the Commonwealth increase and every one of these families has received an increase. If the Honourable Member examines the level of Social Service welfare assistance from Commonwealth, State and other sources he will see that a situation has arisen where many recipients are in a better financial position than when they were dependent on a father's earning capacity. Owing to an ever-increasing incidence of family desertion it is of paramount importance to preserve a balance between the level of Social Service payments and the earning capacity of the family provider. To allow a situation to develop where families would be better placed financially

were they to be deserted by the husband and father would have most undesirable consequences. There are differing practices in the various States, both in relation to the type of Supplementary Assistance paid to widows, pensioners, etc., and the basis of making such payments make it difficult to obtain a comparison. Some States give either little or nothing as a supplement to Commonwealth Social Service Pensions, for example New South Wales since the recent increase in the Commonwealth rates, has discontinued Supplementary Assistance unless there are very special circumstances. In South Australia, the only Supplementary Assistance payable is a rent allowance up to a maximum of \$2 per week, when the rent paid exceeds \$4. Families in receipt of Social Service Benefits in Queensland are still more favourably placed in relation to those in any other State. The family income of a widow and three children, paying rent, so far as it is possible to compare the systems in the different States would be as follows:—Queensland, \$32.50; New South Wales, \$27.50; Victoria, \$32.00; South Australia, \$29.50; Western Australia, \$30.50; Tasmania, \$30.50. I might add that, following the decision of the State Industrial Commission on Friday last to increase the State Male Basic Wage by \$1.35 per week, the cases of Family Assistance recipients will need to be reviewed again, as some may be eligible for increased assistance as a result of the effect of this rise on the eligibility scale which, as I have already indicated is related to the State Male Basic Wage. It must also be pointed out that the Director of Children's Services may in his discretion give assistance where special circumstances or difficulties indicate a special need."

DEONS PTY. LTD.

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to the share dealings of a company known as Deons Pty. Ltd.?

(2) Is he able to obtain a copy of the list of shareholders?

(3) Does the value of the paid-up shareholding amount to \$148,052?

(4) What has happened to the finance and assets of the company?

(5) Is it able to pay out the full value of the shareholding to its shareholders?

(6) Where is Mr. O'Donnell, who was the company's managing director?

(7) Who was the company's accountant?

(8) Does he own any shares in the company? If so, how many and how much did he pay for them?

Answers:—

(1) "No. There is no company currently registered as Deons Pty. Ltd. However, a company bearing this name changed that name to SNOED Trading Co. Pty. Ltd. on April 11, 1967."

(2 to 8) "The Honourable Member is referred to the Office of the Registrar of Companies and Commercial Acts where such information as is had by that Office may be obtained by him."

ACCUMULATION OF RECREATION LEAVE BY POLICE OFFICERS

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

(1) Are police officers allowed to accumulate leave for periods of more than twelve months or must they take their leave within that period?

(2) Are there any officers who have accumulated leave for longer periods? If so, will he supply a list of their names and particulars of the leave due to them?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes, in accordance with Industrial Awards relating to police officers."

(2) "Yes, but the information requested is not readily available and it is not proposed to undertake the considerable man-hours of work which would be required to collate such particulars."

POLICE BRIEF IN INDECENTLY DEALING CHARGE, INNISFAIL

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

(1) Was a person arrested at Innisfail and charged by Constable 1/C Murray with indecently dealing?

(2) At the hearing this week, did the defendant's solicitor, Mr. Vandeleur, admit in open court that he had a photostat copy of the police brief?

(3) Did Mr. Vandeleur in fact have it?

(4) Is it proper for defence counsel to have a copy of a police brief?

(5) Who gave the copy to Mr. Vandeleur?

(6) Is Inspector Chandler responsible for the safe custody of police documents in Innisfail?

(7) Was the charge dismissed because the defendant's solicitor had a copy of the police brief?

(8) Did the Innisfail police administration "run dead" on the prosecution?

(9) Will the whole matter of the prosecution be investigated in order to ascertain if the unusual procedure followed had any connection with or followed repercussions after the withdrawal of a gaming charge in Innisfail this year?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2 to 9) "The action taken by the police in relation to the case under review was strictly in accordance with advice received from the Crown's legal advisers. The Honourable Member will know that it has been the practice by the Crown, in cases where there are inconsistencies in the statements of witnesses for the prosecution, for the defence solicitors to be supplied with copies of these statements, and that such practice stems from the Privy Council decision in *Mahadeo v. R.*, [1936] 2 All E.R. 813."

SUSPENSION OF DRIVERS' LICENCES

Mr. Donald for **Mr. Bromley**, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) How many motorists have been called on to show cause why their licences should not be suspended or taken away in each of the eighteen police districts in the last twelve months?

(2) How many motorists had their licences suspended in the same districts in the same time and for what period were the licences suspended?

(3) What were the major breaches?

(4) How many drivers were let off with a warning?

(5) What was the number of (a) males and (b) females concerned?

Answers:—

(1 and 2) "The information sought by the Honourable Member has entailed the preparation of a considerable amount of data. Figures in relation to the actual number of motorists who were called on to show cause in the twelve months preceding October 25, 1968, are not available, but figures showing the number of show cause actions finalised in the respective Police Districts for the twelve months ended September 30, 1968, are available. Show cause actions against motorists residing in the Brisbane Metropolitan Traffic District are dealt with by the District Superintendent of Traffic, Traffic Branch, Brisbane, and he consequently deals with all such cases in the Brisbane Police District, and in those parts of the Fortitude Valley and South Coast Police Districts which are within the Brisbane Metropolitan Traffic District. The Inspectors of Police, Fortitude Valley and South Coast deal with such matters in those parts of their Districts outside the Brisbane Metropolitan Traffic District. Finalised

show cause actions in the districts concerned for the twelve months ended September 30, 1968, are set out hereunder and I quote the number of show cause actions finalised, the number of licences suspended, and the periods of suspension for each individual district:—Brisbane Metropolitan Traffic District, 3,276—2,534—1 at 2 weeks; 2,174 at 1 month; 222 at 6 weeks; 88 at 2 months; 3 at 10 weeks; 24 at 3 months; 9 at 4 months; 1 at 5 months; 4 at 6 months; 3 at 7 months; 2 at 8 months; 2 at 9 months; and 1 at 5 years. Fortitude Valley District, 239—151—8 at 1 week; 52 at 2 weeks; 1 at 3 weeks; 78 at 1 month; 8 at 2 months and 4 at 3 months. South Coast District, 346—179—31 at 2 weeks; 103 at 1 month; 4 at 6 weeks; 23 at 2 months; 13 at 3 months; 3 at 4 months; and 2 at 6 months. Bundaberg District, 80—65—5 at 2 months; 1 at 6 weeks; and 59 at 1 month. Cairns District, 108—89—2 at 1 week; 18 at 2 weeks; 46 at 1 month; 9 at 2 months; 5 at 3 months; 1 at 12 months; 4 at 3 weeks; 2 at 6 weeks; and 2 at 4 weeks. Charleville District, 9—5—2 at 2 weeks; and 3 at 1 month. Innisfail District, 29—26—19 at 1 month; 1 at 3 months; 5 at 2 months; and 1 at 6 months. Ipswich, 330—201—4 at 1 week; 29 at 2 weeks; 43 at 3 weeks; 71 at 1 month; 22 at 6 weeks; 14 at 2 months; 1 at 83 days; 9 at 3 months; 1 at 94 days; 6 at 4 months; and 1 at 6 months. Longreach, 5—5—2 at 1 month; 2 at 2 months; and 1 at 5 months. Mackay, 146—53—36 at 1 month; 16 at 2 months; and 1 at 8 months. Maryborough, 84—73—12 at 1 week; 4 at 2 weeks; 1 at 3 weeks; 46 at 1 month; 2 at 6 weeks; 4 at 2 months; 2 at 3 months; 1 at 6 months; and 1 at 3 years. Mount Isa District, 32—29—3 at 6 weeks; 18 at 1 month; 2 at 2 months; and 6 at 3 months. Rockhampton District, 138—86—66 at 1 month; 1 at 6 weeks; 12 at 2 months; 6 at 3 months; and 1 at 6 months. Roma District, 22—22—2 at 2 weeks; 8 at 1 month; 9 at 3 months; and 3 at 6 months. Toowoomba District, 251—223—76 at 2 weeks; 31 at 3 weeks; 63 at 4 weeks; 9 at 6 months; 21 at 8 weeks; 20 at 3 months; and 3 at 4 months. Townsville District, 274—268—1 at 10 days; 35 at 2 weeks; 1 at 4 weeks; 1 at 5 weeks; 13 at 6 weeks; 146 at 1 month; 36 at 2 months; 19 at 3 months; 3 at 4 months; 2 at 5 months; 4 at 6 months; 2 at 8 months; 3 at 9 months; and 2 at 12 months. Warwick, 42—33—1 at 12 days; 1 at 2 weeks; 13 at 1 month; 1 at 36 days; 8 at 2 months; 5 at 3 months; 2 at 7 months 10 days; 1 at 7 months 24 days; and 1 at 3 years."

(3) "The most prevalent breaches associated with the show cause actions under review were exceeding prescribed speed limits; disobeying 'Stop' and 'Give Way' signs and traffic control light signals; crossing double lines; failing to yield right of way; and driving without due care and attention."

(4) "The number of persons who were considered to have shown cause in the districts concerned was 1,146."

(5) "(a) 5,328; (b) 83."

SUBSIDIES FOR SCHOOL LIBRARIES

Mr. Donald for **Mr. Bromley**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) What subsidies were paid to libraries in primary and secondary schools in 1967-68?

(2) Will the report of the committee on teacher education currently meeting be made available and when?

Answers:—

(1) "Primary schools, \$47,296.83; secondary schools, \$31,719.82."

(2) "It is anticipated that the report of the Committee appointed to review teacher education will be available during 1969."

PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF CANNERY AGREEMENT

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

In view of the intention to amend the Cannery Agreement, when will the variation be introduced?

Answer:—

"The amendment of the Cannery Agreement is a matter in the first instance for the Cannery Board, the Pineapple Sectional Group Committee and the Subscribers' Trustee who are the three parties to the Cannery Agreement. The date nominated in the stabilisation proposals is December 1, 1968."

DISCREPANCY IN YARRABAH WELFARE ASSOCIATION FUNDS

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

Further to the Answer to my Question on December 6, 1967, relative to a discrepancy in Yarrabah Welfare Association Funds, have the investigations been completed? If so, will he table the findings and indicate the Department's action in relation to the discrepancy being made good and what change has been made in order to avoid such irregularities in future?

Answer:—

"Police investigations into an apparent discrepancy in Welfare Association Funds at Yarrabah have been completed and were considered by the Solicitor-General, who indicates that under all of the circumstances of this matter, no criminal proceedings are open. I do not propose to table the file.

The apparent discrepancy resulted from the extension of credit to almost all of the Yarrabah residents by the canteen staff appointed by the association, and some failures to correctly account stock. Some small part of the credit has been recovered, and there appears no alternative but to write off the shortage. The Honourable Member will appreciate that in encouraging and training Aboriginal residents to accept responsibilities of this and similar kinds, it is very necessary to allow a measure of self-determination in administering such a venture and, of course, from time to time there may be some breakdowns. This is not applicable only to Aborigines. However, this should not deter the continuing exercise of extending responsibility in practical administration, otherwise Aborigines will never reach the desirable degree of assimilation which is the Department's policy. Since this incident, a closer measure of supervision and instruction is again being exercised by departmental forces, but with an Association Committee, and after a period of settling down, it is reasonable to expect that such controls will again be progressively withdrawn as a further step in the overall exercise of training and encouragement of Aboriginal people to total participation in such business ventures as well as other aspects of life. Some factors are presently under consideration, and when all avenues have been fully explored, the overall position will be discussed with the Welfare Association to determine the next steps to be taken."

PAPERS

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

Reports—

State Electricity Commission of Queensland, for the year 1967-68.

Commissioner for Transport, for the year 1967-68.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

The Fisheries Acts, 1957 to 1962.

The Harbours Acts, 1955 to 1968.

The State Electricity Commission Acts, 1937 to 1965.

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

The Water Acts, 1926 to 1967.

The River Improvement Trust Acts, 1940 to 1965.

FORM OF QUESTION

Mr. LONERGAN (Flinders) having given notice of a question—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not in order in asking if a newspaper article is accurate. The question will have to be altered to conform to Standing Orders.

SUPPLY

COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT—
RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

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

Debate resumed from 24 October (see p. 972) on Mr. Chalk's motion—

"That there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1968-69, a sum not exceeding \$4,321 to defray the salary of Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor."

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) (11.40 a.m.): The Treasurer, as has become the custom of Treasurers in recent times, gave a descriptive title to his Budget; on this occasion he chose to call it "Queensland's march to progress" Budget. As a matter of fact, he applied this sobriquet by way of a short christening ceremony in the early stages of his speech. Little imagination was required to be transported to the atmosphere of a majestic old church, and we could well imagine that we were listening to the Rev. Chalk saying, "I christen thee the 'March to Progress' Budget."

One has, of course, become accustomed to this type of extravaganza in recent times. Ever since the Government came to office 12 years ago we have been "awakening like a slumbering giant", "approaching the goal of distant horizons," or "pushing ahead," as the Budget of a couple of years ago was named. On this occasion, we are "marching to progress." We have become accustomed to this type of extravaganza, particularly when it heralds the coming of a State election. We have been entertained by this never-ending stream of corny propaganda every time an election has been in the offing.

No doubt if this type of speech was delivered in the sanctum sanctorum of the Liberal Party, the Treasurer would be roundly applauded by his admirers. (I do not know if they would include the members of the "ginger group".) It would probably earn limited comments such as "Jolly good show, old chap" if it was delivered in a place such as the Queensland Club. If delivered to an after-dinner gathering of Government supporters, most likely it would be mildly applauded as a display of statesmanship. But to those who delve, and carry out research, into the Financial Statement, and to those who are devoid of the starry-eyed adulation of political hopefuls, it becomes about as attractive as the remnants of last evening's party.

No doubt certain sections of the community are "marching to progress". Because of generous concessions and helpful aid handed out on a silver platter, many of the large monopolies that have grown in this State since the Government came to office and many of the overseas investors who are exploiting our natural resources are, I would say, not only "marching to progress" but are literally galloping on their merry way. But

for those who have but one thing, and one thing only, to sell, namely, their labour, this so-called "march to progress" has become a weary trudge, with an ever-increasing number slipping behind in the race.

Mr. Sullivan: Oh!

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The Minister for Lands says "Oh!" in his usual fashion. I still have about 55 minutes in which to speak, and I hope that in that time I shall be able to deal very lucidly with the position of the the people who have been left behind in this weary trudge. If one looks at wage rates and the Consumer Price Index, it requires little imagination to see how many in the community are being affected by the policies of the Government and slipping behind the rest of the people of Australia.

One finds very little evidence to validate the prodigious statement by the Treasurer that this is a march to progress. For the information of hon. members, particularly those ebullient hon. members who tried to challenge me before I reached the stage of detailing my submissions, let me draw their attention to figures released recently by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics in the Monthly Review of Business Statistics, No. 370, and show just how far the worker in Queensland is slipping behind the national average of weekly earnings. The figures are—

| State | Average weekly earnings | Queensland average weekly earnings | Disadvantage to Queensland |
|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | \$ | \$ | \$ |
| Victoria | 68.30 | 59.80 | 8.50 |
| New South Wales | 67.70 | 59.80 | 7.90 |
| Western Australia | 64.30 | 59.80 | 4.50 |
| Tasmania | 62.90 | 59.80 | 3.10 |
| Australian average | 65.90 | 59.80 | 6.10 |

The Government tries to tell hon. members that this is a march to progress. I ask the Committee to bear in mind that the average weekly earnings in Victoria, which makes nothing like the contribution to Australia's export earnings that Queensland does, is far ahead of the average weekly earnings in Queensland.

To take it a little further, I will show how dramatic the deterioration has been since the Country-Liberal Government came to office and how far workers in this State have lagged behind the national average weekly earnings.

| Year | Queensland average weekly earnings | National average weekly earnings | Disadvantage to Queensland |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | \$ | \$ | \$ |
| 1958-59 | 37.20 | 40.70 | 3.50 |
| 1959-60 | 39.40 | 43.90 | 4.50 |
| 1967-68 | 58.80 | 64.30 | 5.50 |
| Month of June, 1968 | 59.80 | 65.90 | 6.10 |

Mr. Sullivan: Have you got the 1955 figures?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I will deal with those, too. I am not attempting to mislead the Committee; the hon. gentleman need not worry about that.

In spite of the figures that I have read to hon. members, the Treasurer has come into the Chamber and told us that it is a march to progress. It is evident, I think, that the workers of Queensland are not able to keep up in the race that he describes as the "march to progress"; hence my reference to the fact that it is fast becoming a weary trudge for the workers of this State. Let there be no mistake about it: the system used in compiling the figures in June, 1968, was the same as the one that was in use 10 years earlier.

As I said, Government members and the Treasurer claim that this is a march to progress, and the Minister for Lands said to me, "Can you produce the 1955 figures?" Let me tell the Minister for Lands that it could be claimed that Queensland has always been a low-wage State but, until this Government came to office, we have the very great advantage of having an effective system of price control in this State.

Mr. Walsh: That is not true; Queensland was not always a low-wage State.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I am speaking in the long term. What I am saying is that, because we had a very effective price control organisation, this had a very stabilising effect on wages in this State. Sad to relate, however, because this Government chose to try to stabilise the economy by making an attack on the wage system in Queensland, choosing at the same time to completely ignore the cost of living, a position has been reached today far from the position that obtained in Labour's day, when we had effective price control which assisted in retaining low wage rates. Not only are Queensland workers the lowest paid in the Commonwealth today, not only are their average earnings lagging behind those of workers in every other State, but in the 12 years of office of this Government the cost of living has risen out of all proportion. The Government lifted price control and the cost of living in this State is now at the top of the table in the Statistician's figures. In contrast to the position today, in Labour's day the workers reaped the benefit of a combination of price control and wage justice.

I am not denying that the Government could possibly claim that in 1955 Queensland lagged behind other States in wage rates, but at least at that time, because of an effective system of price control, the amount paid to the wage earner was far more commensurate with the cost of living than it is today.

Mr. Walsh: His purchasing power was much higher.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: That is what I say. Another point I was making was that, though we might have had a low wage

structure in previous years, there was the brake of price control which ensured that the purchasing power of the average wage-earner in Queensland was greatly protected, certainly to a greater extent than it is today. This Government attempts to stabilise the economy by attacking the wages of the workers of Queensland instead of getting to the root of the trouble by pegging the cost of living and ensuring that wages have a greater purchasing power today than they did previously.

Mr. Armstrong: That is a lot of rubbish.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The hon. member, of course, can sit here and say it is a lot of rubbish. He is one of the North's affluent cane-growers and would not have a clue about the difficulties that face the average worker in the community. The hon. member may choose to dispute what I am saying, but he cannot deny that figures show that in Australia at the present time some 600,000 families are on the verge of poverty. If the hon. member wishes to say that this sort of thing is a lot of hooey I hope he can face his electors on that basis at the next State election. I forecast that the people of Queensland will not be misled by the assertion that we are "marching to progress". They have become aware of just how the purchasing power of the average wage in Queensland has been eroded over the last 12 years under this Government.

Looking now at the cost of living and starting with the base figure of 100 in 1952-53, Queensland's cost of living, in the price indexes has now risen to a figure of 148.8 and leads every other State in the Commonwealth. The national average is 143.4, so Queensland's figure exceeds the national average by 5.4 per cent.

Mr. Miller: What are the figures for Victoria?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The hon. member wants the figures for Victoria. The figure for Melbourne is 145.9. That is very enlightening, too.

Mr. Armstrong: What about New South Wales?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The figure for New South Wales is 140.6. It is no use the hon. member simply sitting there and asking questions. I have quoted figures from Bulletin No. 47 of 1968, which is the most recent bulletin issued by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics. Its contents were published in the evening Press of Wednesday, 21 August. It does not matter how many questions the hon. member might ask, here in black and white the statistician shows that since the base year of 1952-53 the sharpest increase in the cost of living has occurred in Queensland. With this combination of the highest cost of living and lowest average earnings in mind, we ask:

how can the Treasurer or any Government back-bencher say that we are "marching to progress"?

I turn now to some other statements made by the Treasurer in his Budget. Nobody will convince me that this Budget is not garnished with election propaganda. It is complete with photographs. I was surprised to find that there was no picture of the Treasurer on the fly leaf. If I were asked to give a descriptive title to the Budget I would say that it is nothing more than a "big-noting" Budget. It is evident that, with a State election in the offing, the Treasurer has set out to big-note the Government to the electors. This tendency to big-note itself all over the place is something for which this Government has become famous during its term of office. On many occasions in the past its habit of going out to the public through its Public Relations officers and big-noting itself has led it into many embarrassing situations.

Mr. Armstrong: Well, there is no need for you to get upset about it.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I am not upset about it.

Mr. Armstrong: The way you are moaning, one would think you were.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I am not upset, and I am not moaning; I am simply trying to bring some sanity into the ludicrous statements that have been made by the Government from time to time, many of which have been expressed in the Budget.

Mr. Chinchin: What are the ludicrous statements?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: If the hon. member sits quietly and waits, and does not dash off somewhere to a morning-tea party, I will show him some ludicrous statements.

Let us look at how the Government big-noted itself on the eve of the 1966 State election, when the Treasurer, as Leader of the Liberal Party, delivered his policy speech. After castigating the Brisbane City Council for increasing fares, he said—

"The most progressive feature of our railway policy for the next three years is an undertaking that we will grapple with suburban transport.

The Railway Department does not agree with the viewpoint that metropolitan transport fares should rise steeply, as has been the policy inflicted on the people of Brisbane by a Labour-Party-dominated Brisbane City Council. We therefore announce . . ."

this is almost a melodramatic approach—

"We therefore announce that this Government will, on return to office, make every effort to maintain cheap railway fares."

What was the result once the Government was safely entrenched in the Government benches of this Parliament? It increased

suburban railway fares by 25 per cent. and fares in other parts of the State by 20 per cent.

Mr. Miller: It is still cheap travel when compared with that provided by the Brisbane City Council.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I beg your pardon?

Mr. Miller: It is still cheaper than travelling on the city council services.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Yes, it is still cheaper, but the Government pledged itself to maintain cheap railway fares. What did it do as soon as it was safely entrenched in Government for another three years? It increased the railway fares by 20 and 25 per cent.

I do not need a good memory to recall how the Government big-noted itself on the Bill of Rights, which was suddenly withdrawn. Nobody in Queensland today, except possibly members of the Cabinet, knows why it was withdrawn. I am sure that many Government backbenchers do not know why it was suddenly and mysteriously withdrawn. That occurred after a great blast of propaganda from the Government about the introduction of a Bill of Rights. The Government big-noted itself on several occasions only to find that it was placed in some very embarrassing situations.

It was part of the Government's election policy in 1966 to establish a Prices Advisory Board. We were told that the Government would appoint a body of experts to advise it on the cost of living and on prices of commodities. The Government big-noted itself with various organisations in the city over this board. When the Prices Advisory Board recommended the virtual retention of price control in Queensland the Government stripped it of power to the extent that it resembled a plucked "chook" because its findings were not compatible with what the Government desired.

That was another occasion on which the Government big-noted itself, only to find that an expert committee established by it was almost totally opposed to its policy. Because the board did not tell the Government what it wanted to hear the Government promptly lopped off the heads of its members. It is quite obvious that the Government found it necessary to retreat in disarray after several years of such propaganda.

It is not long since one of the Ministers told us, in big-noting himself, how he stood over a mining monopoly by making it a term of the conditions of lease that this monopoly had to pay part of the cost of the Moura railway line. But within a couple of years a Bill was introduced under which the Government itself had to finance the building of the line. Again the Government big-noted itself, and I believe that this Budget is nothing other than a continuing process of big-noting.

I have not forgotten how, in the 1966 election campaign, the Government big-noted itself about the new university at Mt. Gravatt because it had an inkling that finance for it might be made available. But it was left high and dry by the Commonwealth Government, like a shag on a rock, because finance was not available. We are still awaiting the university at Mt. Gravatt which was talked about so many years ago.

I have a vivid recollection of how the previous Treasurer complained in this Chamber—again we had the big-noting process—that one of the stumbling blocks preventing Queensland from getting its rightful share of money from the Loan Council was the inability of former Labour negotiators to put up a sound case. He boasted that the new Government would display prowess in negotiations with the Loan Council, but year after year he crept back here from Canberra with little or nothing more than the usual percentage that had been handed out to Queensland over the years. In an endeavour to big-note himself, because the elections will probably be held in May next year, on this occasion the Treasurer sets out to big-note the Government by handing back a minute proportion of the freight increases loaded onto primary producers in the previous two Budgets. He is very generously handing back a small proportion of the increases that were imposed a couple of years ago.

Mr. Ahern: A big proportion.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: That is a matter of opinion. I shall develop that argument a little further later on.

At this point I take issue with the Treasurer's statement—

Mr. E. G. W. Wood: You will be foolish if you do.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I have taken on better men than he is in my time.

Mr. E. G. W. Wood: He will make a fool out of you.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: He could not do that to the hon. member for Logan, because that has already been accomplished.

On page 6 of the Financial Statement the Treasurer said—

"I want to say to the Committee that the Government's position in this matter is clear. One of the legacies which we inherited as a Government was a higher level in the rates of certain taxes and charges in Queensland in comparison with those operating in some other States."

Apparently, when the Treasurer prepared his speech he did not do his homework on what his predecessor had said. The former Treasurer, back in 1957, when speaking to the Queensland Taxpayers' Association—no doubt he was doing his bit of big-noting—suggested that "he was 'horrified' to find that some State taxes were costing more to collect than they yielded."

He also said—

"Governments in recent times had been getting 'hungry' and trying to squeeze too much from the taxpayers. This led to widespread evasion of taxation.

"The public should not be bothered by the Government requiring them to fill out returns and then assessments which might yield very little. Licence fees of 2/6d or other fees of £1 were not worth the cost of staff to handle them."

Apparently the former Treasurer's view was divergent from that of the present Treasurer, who refers to inherent higher rates of taxation.

In looking at taxation it is necessary to study the statistics contained in the Queensland Year Book. In 1955-56 the average Queenslander was paying £27/10/- in State taxation and £57/18/- in Commonwealth taxation, so that State taxes made up 32.17 per cent. of the total tax collected in 1955-56. According to the latest figures I have been able to find, those for 1964-65, the average Queenslander in that year paid \$103.99 in State taxation and \$187.42 in Commonwealth taxation, so that State taxes made up 35.34 per cent. of the total tax collected in that year. Therefore the Treasurer's statement that he inherited higher taxation rates from the Labour Government is idle. The figures prove conclusively that the proportion of State taxation has increased by 3 per cent. during the term of office of this Government. In that period not only have taxes been increased but many new ones have also been introduced. I say to the hon. member who wanted to challenge me on this ludicrous statement that there is a classic example of the way in which the Treasurer has adamantly stated that the Government inherited higher rates of taxation. The Government has in fact taken every opportunity to increase taxes and also to introduce new ones.

I remind the Treasurer that the 1958 Budget provided for increased fees for the registration of motor vehicles, and increased taxes on liquor and betting. The 1959 Budget increased stamp duties and duties on conveyances, transfers of shares, hire-purchase agreements, insurance policies and transfers of Crown leases, and imposed higher pilotage fees. A couple of years after it came to office the Government implemented those higher charges and taxes.

After the election in 1961, licensing fees were increased from 4 per cent. to 6 per cent. There were also increases in turnover tax on betting and fees for drivers' licences. In 1966 rail fares payable by suburban travellers were increased by 25 per cent., and those of country dwellers were increased by 20 per cent. There were also increases in State transport fees, motor vehicle registration fees, and the charges made on private and intermediate patients in public hospitals. It is quite apparent that at that time the Government was quite happy to slug the

train traveller, despite the Treasurer's almost melodramatic promise in his policy speech that the Government would maintain cheaper suburban railway fares. His ideals were not so laudable that he would refrain from taxing the sick by increasing hospital charges to obtain extra finance for Consolidated Revenue.

The Treasurer also "socked" motorists by introducing a new stamp duty on registration, and transfer of registration, of motor vehicles. He also introduced stamp duty on workers' compensation premiums, which was something entirely new in the taxation field in Queensland. By increasing charges for hospital beds and increasing taxation by taxing workers' compensation premiums, the Treasurer, far from being prepared to succour the sick and injured, took them for a lot of suckers. The Treasurer now has the audacity to say, purely for election propaganda purposes, that the Government inherited high taxation rates from a previous Labour Government. As a matter of fact, in the 1966 Budget the Treasurer outdid himself by increasing charges and imposing new taxation measures. I think the editorial in "Sunday Truth" of 2 October, 1966, is worth recording for posterity.

Under the heading "A rival now to Fadden", it says—

"When people think of Sir Arthur Fadden they immediately think of his Federal Horror Budget. Now when Queenslanders think of Mr. Gordon Chalk they must think of his Little Horror State Budget of last week.

"Sir Arthur at his peak could scarcely have improved on it, for Mr. Chalk is squeezing every section of the community to get more 'cheeses' for his Government."

Mr. Mann: Quite true!

Mr. SHERRINGTON: As my distinguished colleague the hon. member for Brisbane says, "Quite true!"

At that time, many people in responsible positions in the community were very critical. Mr. Peter Bell, who could not be described, by any stretch of the imagination, as a Labour Party supporter, said—

"The Budget will hit the grazing industry."

Mr. Tozer, of the Australian Primary Producers' Union, said—

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

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

"The tax gatherers apparently have run riot."

So it goes on!

In spite of those comments, the Treasurer gets up in this Chamber and weeps crocodile tears about inheriting high taxation measures from former Labour Governments. In spite of all the facts about taxation that I have detailed to hon. members, the Government

reverts continually to big-noting itself for handing back a few miserable crumbs that are available because of increased revenue resulting from savage taxation measures and obvious under-spending from Consolidated Revenue.

In a grandiose manner the Treasurer hands back portion of the increased freight on grain, raw sugar, general merchandise, wool, cotton, livestock, and logs. Does he hand back anything to the train travellers whom he "socked", as I said, by about 25 per cent.? Does he hand anything back to the wage-earner who uses the trains as a means of travelling to and from his employment? Not one cent of relief does he hand back to the people whom he taxes and who represent a large proportion of the community, and no relief is in sight for train travellers. If the Budget concessions on livestock and timber are any indication of the Treasurer's thinking, it appears that a pig or a log of wood is more entitled to a concession than is a paying passenger on the railways in this State.

What relief has been afforded to the motorist, in the light of the increases in motor vehicle taxation that have been implemented by Country-Liberal Governments during their long, weary 12 years in office? What concessions have been given, in the face of higher registration, driving licence fees, and the iniquitous system of "on-the-spot" fines that Country-Liberal Governments have been responsible for introducing? Third-party and comprehensive motor vehicle insurance has risen steadily, and it has now reached a point at which the ordinary person in Queensland can no longer afford to own or drive a motor vehicle.

A very pertinent point is that, as a result of that increased taxation, there has been only a very insignificant increase in Queensland's population during the 12 years of Country-Liberal Governments. The population of the State has increased by about 2.3 per cent. a year, which means that 2.3 per cent. more people are paying about a 3.5 per cent. increase in taxation implemented by the Government. However, as I said, every time an election is in the offing the Government "marches to progress".

Let me turn now to some of the so-called plums with which the Treasurer sought to big-note himself in the Budget now being considered by the Committee. I deal first with this statement by the Treasurer—

"For State Primary and Secondary Schools we have set aside, in addition to all other extra provisions for education, a special sum of \$2 million for the modernisation of school furniture and for the supply of teaching aids, school requisites, projectors, typewriters, duplicators and the like."

I believe that the Treasurer would have gone on saying what the Government was going to spend this sum of \$2,000,000 on if he could have brought any more names

to mind. If this is not a political Budget, why was it necessary for the Treasurer to set aside a special amount? Why, in the interest of education, could he not have been happy to say that spending on education this year would reach a certain level? But, no! With typical election propaganda he has to set aside a special amount of \$2,000,000.

From research that I have done into this matter, I believe that even the figures I have are lagging behind the up-to-date figures, but in Queensland there are 1,170 primary schools and 22 special primary schools. There are 97 secondary schools, and I understand that by next year the number will have been increased to 101. The enrolment at primary schools for 1967 was 202,713, and the enrolment at secondary schools was 77,728. These figures will increase with the intake for the 1969 school year. If one averages these figures according to classrooms it will be seen that there are approximately 7,000 classrooms in the State, so that an expenditure of \$2,000,000 equals less than \$8 a pupil, \$280 a classroom and \$1,500 a school. This is the amount with which the Treasurer is going to perform all sorts of miracles in modernising furniture and supplying teaching aids, school requisites, projectors, typewriters, duplicators and the like. He is going to do this all on less than \$8 a pupil.

We would not mind this sort of thing if it was not so obviously an election propaganda stunt. Let us look at some of the things that are happening in primary schools in our education system today. Is it any wonder that teachers and parents sneer when they hear this sort of corny propaganda coming out on election eve?

Mr. Hughes: I think you are wrong in your figures.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I delve for my figures. I do not get them from a kitchen study group. Possibly the hon. member has better contacts in the Government than I have, so it becomes more difficult for me to present an argument such as this. We have not the facilities in this Parliament for research, and before I finish I will have something more to say about information given to the Parliament.

Back in the early 1950's, a decision was made to replace the standard reader by reading libraries in the various Grades in the schools, but until 1964—four years ago—only grades 1, 2 and 3 had been equipped by the Education Department with these reading libraries. As a matter of fact, in one of the schools in my electorate, Grade 1 has 21 books of this type, Grade 2 has 15, Grade 3 has 12, and Grades 4, 5, 6 and 7, unless the school has a parents and citizens' association which can purchase them on subsidy—something for which I do not believe these associations should be responsible—or unless the parents have the finance at their disposal to purchase the books, are still using the standard grade reader.

Turning to the standard 7th grade reader, if any one wants a bit of enlightening poetry in 1968, let him read this—

"Who stuffed that white owl?" No one spoke in the shop;

The barber was busy and he couldn't stop;"

This is what I was taught when I was at school in 1928. This is the same standard reader. Then, if anyone wants something more for this scientific, technological and enlightened age, if anyone wants some enlightening reading for the children in 7th grade, let him refer to the lesson, "The Chemistry of a Candle".

This reading book also contains a story entitled "The Race with the Wolves", in which a servant jumps overboard so that his master can escape, and is devoured by wolves. Surely our modern approach to education warrants something better than that type of story.

The only schools that have been able to replace reading books are those with affluent parents and citizens' associations, which are able to buy new books after being granted a subsidy. Let me go further and say that over the last 10 or 12 years very few teaching aids have been provided in Queensland State schools with the exception of those provided after the parents and citizens' associations concerned had applied for subsidies.

I challenge the Government, and particularly the Minister for Education, to tell hon. members how many innovations the Government has voluntarily introduced into our education system. Only after pressure was brought to bear on the Government by certain parents and citizens' associations were some innovations introduced.

This morning the hon. member for Baroona elicited the information that not one primary school has received a mathematics textbook containing the conversion to decimal currency. The Minister sought to excuse that anomaly by saying that great value is derived from retaining the old books for a certain period, despite the fact that for almost three years prior to the nation's conversion to decimal currency the Government, and in fact the Australian people, knew that the conversion would take place. Three years were allowed to elapse, and not one mathematics textbook containing the conversion has been issued. It has become necessary for teachers to go through the textbooks and to make the conversion to decimal currency in ink. This is how the State is "marching to progress" in education.

Mr. P. Wood: The Government is too mean to provide new books.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I could not agree more. But for the fact that I am constrained to use parliamentary language I could give the Budget a more descriptive title than the one I have given it.

The Government talks a lot about what it has done for education. It says that it has built more schools than Labour did.

and has done this and that; yet we find that it has forgotten the bare essentials of education.

Some years ago I raised in this Chamber the need to relieve parents and citizens' associations of some of their burden in the provision and maintenance of school-grounds. Each high school is provided with a permanent groundsman—and I am not complaining about that; I believe that it is necessary—yet primary schools are provided with the services of a groundsman for only half a day a week. In suburbs that contain quite a number of schools, such as Inala, that means that each primary school has the services of a groundsman for only half a day every six or seven weeks. I asked why, in view of the fact that it is not possible to provide a groundsman to each primary school, this Government did not adopt the Western Australian system, which is to provide maintenance gangs that travel throughout districts and take care of school-grounds. Of course, this Government chose to throw the responsibility not only for school-ground improvements but also for the purchase of many teaching aids on the parents and citizens' associations.

If Government back-benchers want to challenge me on this matter, I ask them why it is that the Education Department will subsidise the purchase of fertiliser although it will not subsidise the provision of many of the teaching aids? It provides subsidies only for the durable parts of the Science Research Associates system, whereas record books have to be purchased either by parents or by parents and citizens' associations.

Mr. Aikens: Why don't you write to school-teachers and say—

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Why doesn't the hon. member for Townsville South pull his head in? He was shown up the other day by the hon. member for Tablelands. The hon. member for Townsville South talked about giving a 24-hour service to his constituents, yet he has not even got the phone on. He was shown up very clearly for what he is by the hon. member for Tablelands.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. Aikens: Charlie Porter will do that for you.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The hon. member for Toowong does not worry me. All his fangs have been pulled by the Liberal Party executive.

As I have said, the Education Department is quite prepared to subsidise the purchase of fertilizer, but it is not prepared to subsidise many of the very essential teaching aids that are becoming part of our modern education system. I would perhaps not mind that if it were not for the continual big-noting by Government members of what the

Government has done. They attend school speech nights and detail to parents what the Government has done for Education in Queensland, at the same time laughing up their sleeves about the essentials that the Government is not paying for. The Treasurer referred to the spending of some \$2,000,000 on special buildings, but the number of temporary rooms in use has not decreased, and the bare essential educational aids are being overlooked by the Government.

Mr. Porter: Where do you propose to get the extra finance?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I will later suggest several avenues that could be used instead of having the Government socking the ordinary person in the community through taxation. There are plenty of loopholes that could be sealed and various avenues that could be exploited, avenues in which taxation is not being levied on the sections of the community that could well afford to bear higher taxes. A close examination reveals that, in all its claims concerning education, the Government is found wanting.

While examining the history of parents and citizens' associations, it is worth recording in "Hansard" that school boards were established under the State Education Act of 1875. They were of an advisory nature and their duties consisted of assisting the head-teacher of the school, visiting primary schools to see for themselves the condition of school premises, books and so on, and trying to induce parents to send their children to school. That position obtained till 1908, when the system of school committees was instituted. Their responsibility, again, was merely of an advisory nature.

In 1934 that position still obtained. At that time the duties of a school committee were—

"(a) To take care that the school buildings are not used for any purpose or at any time not authorised by the Minister;

(b) To observe and report upon the state of the school buildings and premises, and to supervise the execution of such improvements as the Minister may authorise them to carry out;

(c) To inspect periodically the Admission Register, the Class Rolls, the Daily Report Book, and the Time Book; but no other register or school documents;

(d) To use their influence with parents to induce them to send their children regularly to school;

(e) To report to the Minister misconduct on the part of any members of the teaching staff, and to protect teachers from frivolous and vexatious complaints;"

Over the years increased responsibility was gradually shifted on to the shoulders of parents and citizens associations, until they are now required to provide more and more for the education of their children. Many

teaching aids are not subsidised, and ground improvements are carried out on a subsidy basis.

Only recently I persuaded the Department of Education to obtain an extra 5 acres for one of my schools. The ground was totally denuded of growth and when I asked the department if it was prepared to pay for the planting of grass on the oval I was told that that would be carried out on a subsidy basis. It seems that no responsibility is accepted other than the very loose concept of leaving the school-grounds in a usable state.

There are several other matters concerning the Budget that I should like to raise. One matter at which I express alarm is the Government's policy on the selling of Crown land. Because I was concerned about this matter, on 17 September I asked a question of the Premier, as follows:—

- (1) What is the extent of Crown land in the Gold Coast area and where is it located?
- (2) How much Crown land in the area has been disposed of in the past ten years?
- (3) In what manner has it been disposed of?
- (4) What is the total revenue obtained by the Government as a result of the disposal of Crown land in the area in the past ten years?"

The Premier, in reply to what I considered to be a question on a matter of vital public importance, said that to obtain the information would entail a good deal of research and would require the payment of overtime to several Government officers, and that he did not feel obliged to give the information because the reason for which I wanted it was not apparent.

A couple of days later the Minister for Lands—I am sorry he is not in the Chamber at the moment—in reply to a question asked by the hon. member for Flinders, said—

"The Honourable Member's interest in improving railway service for passengers, employees and customers is well known. Since 1958, he has made no less than 300 representations on railway matters in his electorate—most of which have been agreed to."

It is shocking that Ministers of the Crown use public servants to give the hon. member for Flinders credit for having made 300 representations on railway matters but not to extract information for a front-bench member of the Opposition on Crown land that has been sold in the Gold Coast over a number of years. I consider that the Government has been selling land on the Gold Coast because it returns something like ten times the real-estate value of other land in the Commonwealth. In spite of the persistent reference by the Federal Leader of the Country Party to "selling the farm", this Government, in an endeavour to boost revenue, is selling off Crown land. I believe that the

reason why we cannot get an answer on the Tallebudgera proposal is that it involves certain Crown land which the Crown wants to dispose of. I do not believe that any answer will be forthcoming this side of the next State elections.

To realise what a lousy attitude this Government adopts to some of its employees, one has only to read the answers that I have consistently received from the Premier relative to Government officers who undergo National Service training. When they resume duty they have to pay arrears of contributions to the superannuation fund. The total amount involved is some \$4,000. In answer to another question I was told that the Government spent \$13,500 on a "grog and prawn" party at the opening of the Moura railway line. Yet officers who resume duty after National Service training, probably honouring their obligation to their country in the stinking jungles of Vietnam, are met with a demand to pay their arrears of superannuation contributions. One officer owed 55c. All the thanks that he gets for his service to his country is to be told on resuming duty that he owes a lousy 55c. Yet the "hawks" on the Government benches talk about their support for the war in Vietnam. They are not concerned about the plight of Government officers who are called up and give two years of their lives in the service of their country. This so-called grateful Government demands that they pay these small amounts of arrears. It would have been a fine gesture to these National Servicemen if the Government had paid the \$4,000 that was owing by them. But not this Government! It hands out concessions to monopolies and in other avenues, but, when it comes to these young lads who have served their country, it says, "You have given a service to your country, but you are in arrears with your contributions to the superannuation fund."

(Time expired.)

Mr. WALSH (Bundaberg) (12.40 p.m.): First of all, Mr. Hooper, I think I am expressing the feelings of every hon. member when I say how pleased I am to see you back in the chair after your sojourn in hospital as the result of war injuries. We hope that you continue to enjoy good health.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. WALSH: Before I deal with general topics, I think I might waste a minute or two on a report that appeared in "The Courier-Mail" on Saturday last which contained remarks made by a Mr. Goodman, or Dr. Goodman, Assistant Director of External Studies at the University of Queensland.

Mr. Aikens: They call him "Masturbation Mick". He advocates to the students that they indulge in masturbation.

Mr. WALSH: I know that the hon. member for Townsville South has his own way of describing people whom he likes to put

his knife into. I am not in a position to say whether what he alleges about this man is correct or incorrect.

Mr. Aikens: Why don't you go and ask some of the students?

Mr. WALSH: I shall later be putting forward a proposal, and I hope that the hon. member for Townsville South will fall in with it.

Mr. Aikens: I sure will, if it's a good one.

Mr. WALSH: I want to be fair and say that I have never met this gentleman, if he can be described as such.

Mr. Aikens: You are very fortunate.

Mr. WALSH: If I were to judge him and his capacity to undertake the work that he is employed to do from his remarks that are published from time to time in the Press, I would say that he is totally unfitted for his position. Again I emphasise, in all fairness to him, that I have not met him personally. I know that he has been round the Wide Bay region on a few occasions, and his remarks have been reported in the Press. He appears to me always to take the opportunity, at what may be described as gatherings of people who are looking for a lead on worth-while matters, to deal with controversial matters. No matter what Government is in power, I do not think it can afford to encourage this attitude on the part of people who enjoy enormous salaries and lucrative conditions of employment generally at the university, in the Government service, public administration, or similar fields.

Although I do not know whether Mr. Goodman—or Dr. Goodman, as he may be—claims to be educated, I can assure him that when the products of universities have come to this Chamber, in my opinion they have never stood head and shoulders above the ordinary rank-and-file politician in the community. That has been my experience over many years. The report in "The Courier-Mail" of Saturday, 26 October, appearing at page 13, under a Bundaberg dateline, reads—

"No organisation in society could function efficiently with such under-educated, unqualified, unskilled, and untrained personnel as Parliament, said Dr. R. D. Goodman last night.

"Dr. Goodman is the assistant director of the Queensland University's department of external studies."

Mr. Aikens: He fell off the platform, dead drunk.

Mr. WALSH: If Dr. Goodman is prepared to agree to the proposal that I shall make later and if the hon. member for Townsville South falls in with it, the hon. member can save all his remarks for that occasion.

Mr. Aikens: Surely he would not say that if he was stone sober.

Mr. WALSH: I do not know at what stage Dr. Goodman undertakes to judge whether he himself is fully educated, or whether any member of this Assembly is educated or uneducated. I have to concede that I had very little education and that for a good part of my early life I could not even see to read, but I have not done too badly under the conditions that have applied in Queensland. I have seen men and women come to this Chamber virtually from the wilderness—men such as Theodore, McCormack, Jimmy Stopford and a host of others. They were coal-miners, farmers, timber-workers and other types of workers who applied themselves to the task and who have had no equals in politics in this State.

In my summing up, Theodore would be the best financial brain that this country has produced, and he left school at 12 years of age and worked in the mines at 14 years of age. Again, Ben Chifley, who went chug-chugging along in locomotives, smoking his pipe, could be regarded as one of the most successful Treasurers that the Commonwealth Government has had.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: He was invited to sit on a royal commission on banking.

Mr. WALSH: Exactly; by a Government that was not of the same political colour as he was.

When I look back over the history of government in Australia, and particularly in Queensland, I think of Curtin and Scullin, and I remember the types of men from the mines who undertook leadership in times of crisis, whether they resulted from war or from economic conditions. It is only Labour Governments and Labour leaders that have given that leadership in times of crisis under the headings that I have mentioned.

My proposal now is, of course, that the hon. member for Townsville South—I know that he would like to have a pick at this—and Dr. Goodman should book the City Hall, or the Festival Hall, and arrange a meeting between the two of them, with no holds barred. An admission charge of \$1 could be made to listen to the comic opera between the two of them, and the proceeds could go to the Queensland Branch of the Sub-Normal Children's Welfare Association. The chancellor of the university could be asked to preside at the meeting. Whether or not we agree with the type of language that the hon. member for Townsville South employs—we all know him for his exaggeration, at times—this would be an occasion on which he and Dr. Goodman could be given an opportunity to exaggerate as much as they wished. I think that such a gathering would be worth while, and, now that I have made the proposal, I hope that Dr. Goodman will agree to it. The hon. member for Townsville South has already said that he will.

To put the other side of the picture and use a more reasoned approach to the question, I refer hon. members to a report that appeared in the "Bundaberg News-Mail" of Wednesday, 16 October this year, of the remarks of the principal of the Kepnock State High School at the school's speech night on Tuesday, 15 October. Under the heading "Plea for more credit to 'average' student", the report said—

"A plea for more credit to be given to the average student, particularly the one who is strong on reliability, responsibility and cheerful co-operation, was made by Mr. J. R. Allen, principal of Kepnock State High School, at the school's Speech Night last night.

"Mr. Allen stressed that the worth of a student was not judged simply by his academic ability, but by his courteous conduct, his willing co-operation, and his character in general."

I am sure that every hon. member in the Chamber will agree with those sentiments.

The report continued—

"It is very probable that many of the men and women who have responsible positions in industry, commerce, science and government departments, and those who shoulder most of the burdens of civic responsibility, come within this category", he said."

Again, I think every hon. member will agree.

To add to that, I draw the attention of the Committee to what I believe is a little bit of reasoned thinking in a copy of a letter that was read in this Chamber on 5 October, 1943. It appears in Volume 181 of "Hansard", on page 681. I cannot read all the letter—it is a very long one—but it was written to me by Mr. M. R. Shannon, of "Olive Downs", Nebo, a barrister, as well as a very well-read man and a man of world-wide experience, after an attack was made on politicians in an editorial in "The Courier-Mail". The Press loves to do this sort of thing. In the heading to his letter Mr. Shannon suggested that I might use my influence and have it published in "The Courier-Mail". Of course he did not know that I did not have any influence with "The Courier-Mail". However, I retained the letter and gave it to my old friend the late Dick Riordan, who was hon. member for Bowen at that time, to read on the Vote for the Legislative Assembly. It is headed "Unkind Press", and I now quote from it—

"While one may sympathise with the politician in his natural reaction to at least unsympathetic reporting, the harm it does is not to him personally.

"It makes him out to be an ordinary everyday fellow and that is exactly his highest recommendation. As he has to be the mouthpiece of the ordinary everyday men and women and children of the community, the nearer he is to them the better does he represent them. His greatest

merit is that, not having had the benefit of culture he is not steeped in tradition; therefore, he is ever demolishing some tradition that has ceased to be of value to the community. At first a tradition may serve because it means order and system but when it becomes an iron band around the communal head to keep the brains from expanding, it should die. If it doesn't, it produces such curses as the caste system of India.

"The politician should ask not to be judged by his words but by his deeds."

I know that many people can be fairly wordy without saying anything, but if Dr. Goodman had had the same experience as many of us in this Chamber have had over the years, of meeting people and having to deal with their human problems, he would have learned that he will never be old enough to be fully educated in the problems of life.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: In that sense, he has not started to learn.

Mr. WALSH: That is perfectly true. In my case, I can only say that every time I go to Bundaberg I interview anything from 30 to 50 people. They all have their different problems—housing, domestic and income tax problems—and I am being educated every day, even at my stage of life. I should hate to think that it would be otherwise, because I would then feel that I was no longer of value to my constituents.

Mr. Aikens: And it is an education that one cannot get from a book in the university library.

Mr. WALSH: It certainly is an education that one will never get from any book. Yet we have people like Dr. Goodman who, after he has obtained and read some matter in this way—in effect, he brain-sucked everybody else for the material for his talk—has the hide to describe the personnel in this Parliament as "unskilled and unqualified."

I notice that two high schools have cut out their speech nights, and they cannot blame the politicians for this. I have taken particular notice that it has become the custom in recent times to invite university groups into country areas, and many of them engage in controversial political matters. I think it should be stopped. I am glad to see that the principal of the Brisbane State High School, even though he has not commented on the fact that the school will not be having a guest speaker, is one of the two principals who have made this decision.

Mr. Porter: The other one is from Toowoong, a very enlightened electorate.

Mr. WALSH: The other one is from Toowoong. Anybody who knows George Lockie knows that few principals in this State are his equal and none are better.

Before getting on to general matters affecting the Budget, let me mention the oft-repeated query that comes from the other

side of the Chamber in the course of debates: "What has the Labour Government done in its period of office extending over 40 years?" I know that we do not have to live in the past, but unfortunately we do not seem to have many on this side of the Chamber who are prepared to get up and outline the historic events of the growth of social services in this State, particularly under Labour.

Do I have to remind Government members, including the Premier, who has made this claim, that during Labour's 39 years in office it had to face two world wars as well as an economic crisis, which, although it was not brought about by the then anti-Labour Government, was certainly aggravated by its policies? When the Labour Party was returned to office in 1932 it was called upon to clean up the untidy mess that had been left in Queensland by the anti-Labour forces. This applied throughout Australia. It is absurd for any Government member representing a rural electorate, and particularly for any Country Party member, to challenge Labour's claim that it has done a lot for the primary industries. In the Premier's electorate a prosperous peanut industry has been established for some time. How was it established? How was it able to mould its different elements of organisation and marketing so that it could develop into one of the major industries of this State? The same thing can be asked about other primary industries, including the one with which the Deputy Leader of the Country Party is associated. He knows only too well that in the sugar industry the principles of organisation that were laid down by Labour are today reflected in world conferences, which have taken place for a number of years.

Mr. McKechnie: Do you include tobacco?

Mr. WALSH: Yes, I include tobacco. I am glad that the hon. member for Carnarvon mentioned the tobacco industry. Does he remember the encouragement given to that industry by the Scullin Labour Government? Does he remember how the Lyons Government drove people out of the industry by increasing the excise on the locally produced product and reducing the import duty on the imported product? Don't talk to me about the tobacco industry!

Mr. Murray: You will be telling us shortly that the Labour Party brought John Macarthur and his few merinos out to this country.

Mr. WALSH: I would not be silly enough to tell hon. members that, but I should say that if every other leadership during the war had enjoyed the same relationship as the one that existed between General McArthur and Curtin, it would have been a good thing. We know that Curtin had to fight his way against Churchill and others to bring our armed forces back to Australia.

A Government Member: You've got the wrong McArthur.

Mr. WALSH: Queensland was formerly the only State that had a system of social services. Whereas the other States did not have unemployment insurance until the Commonwealth Constitution was amended after the 1946 referendum, Queensland has had unemployment insurance since 1926. It has also had a system of free hospitalisation. Both these systems were developed under Labour's administration. If the members of the present Government desire to take credit for having built on these great foundations, I do not blame them; however, they should give the Labour Party credit for the things that it did when it was in power. I know that Government members sometimes talk about the State butcher shops, State sawmills, and so on. Do not let them forget one thriving organisation that was started by Labour. I refer, of course, to the State Government Insurance Office, and to the Public Curator, too.

I could mention many fields in which Labour laid the foundations for the betterment of conditions of industrial workers and farmers in this State. It is unrealistic for responsible members of the Government to say that Labour has done nothing. They are now taking advantage of the foundation that was laid by the Labour Government. If in 25 years' time members of Parliament can point to similar legislation for which this Government is responsible it will be to this Government's credit.

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

Mr. WALSH: We have heard much from hon. members opposite, and the Treasurer in particular, about the tremendous development that is taking place in Queensland today, particularly in mineral development. After an examination of all the documents available to hon. members relating to the development of our mineral resources, it appears to me that much of it has been achieved at the expense of the taxpayers rather than at the expense of the companies, which have been attracted to Queensland because of its vast mineral resources. If necessary I will continue to repeat—to remind the Treasurer and others—that the outstanding example in Queensland of mineral development is to be seen at Mt. Isa. At no stage did Mount Isa Mines Ltd. lean on Labour Governments of the day to programme its policy of development. Its water supply, its housing, its electricity supply and the various other things pertinent to the residential development, apart from mineral development, were, in the main, met from capital resources found by the company itself.

The Treasurer cannot deny that, and, so far as I am concerned, he is wasting his time in trying to impress me that the Government is doing a good job in the field of mineral development. If it was a matter

of taxing the people to facilitate this development, we would have to congratulate the Treasurer. He cannot deny that the work undertaken by the company at Mt. Isa was carried out at the company's expense and not at the expense of the taxpayers of Queensland. I think the Treasurer will be big enough to concede that, upon the rehabilitation of the Mt. Isa railway line, the company offered to enter into an agreement to pay freight charges that would go a long way towards meeting the interest and redemption commitments on the finance involved. When hon. members opposite try to pinpoint what the Government is doing today, they should not overlook the progress made at Mt. Isa.

I ask the Treasurer if he can tell the Chamber whether the concern at Gladstone—call it "Comalco", or whatever else we care to; there are so many interwoven aliases—is likely to pay one cent. of income tax on any profits it makes. The Treasurer knows the reverse to be the case. After exploiting the resources of Queensland and processing the raw material, the product will be sent overseas for final treatment. The company at Gladstone will be a non-profit-making company, therefore it will contribute little or nothing to the tax funds of Australia, or Queensland. The Treasurer need not try to lead me astray by saying how much he will get out of rail freights or something else, because that is "peanuts" to the over-all position.

I want to expose the story that the country will get so much from this great investment of foreign capital in Queensland. I am not opposed to the introduction of foreign capital, and never have been. But I should like to see something established here in the nature of permanent industry which would continue to contribute to our economy as the years go by. As and when it suits these people—when something else intervenes—Moura, Blackwater and all the other places will be forgotten and we could be left with many white elephants.

Mr. Pilbeam: What about the alumina?

Mr. WALSH: Evidently the hon. member has not been listening to me. I have already pointed out that the raw material is processed at Gladstone by a non-profit-making company that pays little or no income tax to this country, and is then sent overseas for further processing.

Mr. Pilbeam: It is a big taxpayer.

Mr. WALSH: That is what the hon. member for Rockhampton South says. I shall leave it to the Treasurer to say whether he has any evidence that this company will pay income tax. As I understand it, it is a non-profit-making body.

The people of Queensland have much to thank Labour Governments for in the good deeds done by Labour for the primary producers, the introduction of industrial legislation, and so on. If I may say so, the

reverse applies today. This Government has had increased funds available to it since 1957, yet the average rural area is struggling to get sufficient finance to provide water conservation in its agricultural areas, while at the same time, at Blackwater the Government is tripping over itself to provide a water supply for a company that is wallowing in millions of dollars. This is contrary to the position at Mt. Isa. Mount Isa Mines Ltd. spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to provide its own water supply, with no assistance from the Government. The Treasurer is boasting that a great powerhouse will be erected in Central Queensland. Mount Isa Mines Ltd. established an electricity supply not only for its own requirements but also for local consumers, and at 2½d. a unit, which made it the cheapest electricity available. I could go on with these matters to point out that the Government is making the struggling families of this State provide these things to enable the establishment of companies that are wallowing in millions of dollars of capital.

Not long ago the Treasurer entered this Chamber—and I could almost hear the tears dropping onto the floor—when an attack was being made on some of these companies, and, amongst other things, he pointed out that a particular company had not paid a dividend for a limited period. This could be quite true, and I am not denying it. If the accounting system of certain interests that have overseas interests identified with them is on a par with the system that enabled the smuggling of thousands of dollars worth of motor-car parts into this country, thus defrauding the country of revenue, the Treasurer's assertion is open to question. The evidence is there.

Mr. Chalk: Do you have any charge against the company in relation to that particular incident?

Mr. WALSH: I cannot have any charge, because the books and documents are not at my disposal.

Mr. Chalk: Would you be surprised to know that that company was not involved?

Mr. WALSH: When Japanese interests are able to smuggle into this country through their subsidiaries here articles worth hundreds and thousands of dollars, in my book they are "smart cookies", wherever they may be.

Mr. Chalk: You are charging the Japanese now?

Mr. WALSH: The evidence came out in the Press.

Mr. Chalk: But not concerning the company that you made the charge against. You have to be fair.

Mr. WALSH: The Treasurer is not getting me on a hook in this way.

Mr. Chalk: You are on a hook.

Mr. WALSH: I am not.

Mr. Chalk: Yes, you are.

Mr. WALSH: I know companies, even in this city, with Australian names and identities, but the Australian components do not form their backbone and life-blood. When I read in the Press that a company in this country has a capital of \$50,000,000, let no-one try to fool me that the people attached to that company are, in the main, responsible for raising that capital.

The fact remains that the Treasurer seems to have gone to a good deal of trouble to justify the Government's policy of providing concessions for companies which, in their world-wide operations, are wallowing in millions of dollars of capital. It is pathetic to think that any Government could sell itself, and the resources of the country, to overseas interests.

I now wish to refer to legislation passed here some time last year concerning the contract with Arthur H. Stephens (Qld) Pty. Ltd. This is where I have to involve the A.L.P. with the Treasurer. When discussing this matter during the Budget debate last year, the Treasurer threw out his chest and said that this agreement had nothing to do with the Loan Council. He came back from the meeting of the Loan Council with a different point of view.

Mr. Chalk: No, I did not. It is quite true that it has nothing to do with the Loan Council.

Mr. WALSH: Since the Treasurer returned from the meeting of the Loan Council, he has said that these agreements have to be submitted for consideration.

Mr. Chalk: After they are made.

Mr. WALSH: The previous agreement was no different.

Mr. Chalk: It was outside the Loan Council.

Mr. WALSH: Local-authority business is not part and parcel of the Financial Agreement. I am under no delusion in this matter. I know that there is a gentlemen's agreement on the borrowings and expenditure of local authorities. I could not see how the Treasurer was going to get out of that.

My main interest in this matter, however, is the influence that the Treasurer had over the A.L.P. on that occasion. By some means or other, the Brisbane City Council was able to make it known to the Q.C.E. that no amendment of the legislation was required. The Treasurer was the one who threw the gauntlet down and said, "If any amendment to the Bill is proposed, I will withdraw it." I know that if the Treasurer attempted to do a thing like that in our time and we were the Opposition, I would have said, "You know what to do with the Bill; you go your hardest". But the fact remains that no amendment was moved to the Bill, although such action was expected.

Although it was bad enough in previous years to charge Labour Governments with being under Trades Hall domination, it is even worse when a senior Minister can dictate to the A.L.P. the type of opposition that it will produce to legislation. Although I do not know whether the Treasurer will deny what I am saying, the circumstances were very apparent to me when I saw representatives of the Q.C.E. here and the things that happened. My source of information eventually indicated to me that the Treasurer had a stronger influence over the A.L.P. in this Parliament than I thought he had.

A great deal has been said about the record of the Government and about its record Budget. It is true that the Budget provides for record revenue and expenditure; but that record will be surpassed as each year goes by and revenue and expenditure increases still further. However, there are a few records that the Treasurer does not wish to bring forward, and I refer particularly to the taxation policy of the Country-Liberal Government and to its sources of revenue.

A few years ago I put on the Government, because of its particular interest in liquor and gambling, the tag "grog and gambling" Government. After having had a look at the revenue received by the Government from liquor and betting, I have revised my opinion somewhat, and I am inclined now to give the Government the title of the "booze, bet and borrow" Government.

Mr. Hanlon: There is only "bust" left.

Mr. WALSH: The interjection by the hon. member for Baroona reminds me of the days when a Labour Government under Theodore sought to get foreign capital from London into this country. Hon. members will recall that a mission was sent from Queensland to prevent the Labour Government from raising money in London, and that Theodore then went to America to endeavour to raise a loan. Of course, foreign capital is accepted with open arms today, and for a different reason—a Labour Government is not in office.

Let me take the Financial Statement first. It consists of about 26 pages, and I suggest that the Treasurer is entitled to list it as another addition to the pictorial section of the magazine that is published by various commercial firms and is circulating in Queensland. Having had a good look at the Tables relating to the Financial Statement, I notice that some useful tables have been dropped. The Treasurer said that he may review the position later, and I hope that he does. He could well restore Table C5, showing the revenue and expenditure per head of population. I do not know why it was deleted. It contained a very useful set of statistics for comparison purposes, and I suggest that the Treasurer should give consideration to its restoration.

I think it would be fair to say that, of the 26 pages it contains, almost a quarter of the Financial Statement is taken up with photographs, many of which have appeared previously in publications emanating from the Public Relations Bureau or various other Government departments. In fact, in some instances the same photograph has been published two, three or more times.

I thought that the Treasurer might have seen fit to give at least a brief outline in his Financial Statement of the difficulties confronting the State under the present financial relationship with the Commonwealth. I do not think that he need have discussed it on a political basis; rather could he have presented the facts of the position that has confronted him since he took office. I should like to have thought that the Treasurer was doing something to see that the State's sovereign rights in financial matters are restored to it. It has not any such rights at the moment, nor is it likely to have any if the Commonwealth continues putting a stranglehold on the States.

I do not suggest that the Budget does not contain some worth-while proposals that will appeal to particular sections of the community, and the Government is quite entitled to parade those things, as previous Governments have done, more particularly as an election is to be held next year. It would be no different from former Governments if it paraded the better parts of its financial activities. There is no need for me to pinpoint these particular features of the Budget, because the Treasurer has his own band of flag-wavers on that side of the Chamber.

Having referred to the fact that various speakers claim that this Budget is a record in various respects, it would do no harm to look at the sources of revenue available to the Government and at how it is expended. I think it should be more the function of the Opposition rather than of Government members to see if the Government is pursuing a sound financial and economic policy. In this respect, therefore, I propose to make some comparisons between the present position and the position that applied under the Labour Government in 1956-57. In that year, payment by the Commonwealth of tax reimbursements to Consolidated Revenue amounted to \$56,716,180; for the year ended 30 June, 1968, the present Government received from the same source \$174,392,528. That is more than three times the amount received in the last year under Labour.

Somebody might get up and say that there has been an increase in costs. I suppose we can talk at length about average earnings of the wage-earner and so on, but I do not think that is the point that should be established here. When one takes into consideration the average wages earned, one must remember that that average includes overtime and all the other special payments provided for in industrial awards. But I think it is fair enough to take a comparison

of the basic wage. I find that in 1957 the basic wage was approximately \$24, and at 30 June this year it was about \$33. There is, therefore, no question of costs having even doubled, yet the Government, from the source that I mentioned, received three times as much revenue.

I come now to revenues that have gone into the Government's coffers from various other sources, and I want to make a comparison with the amounts received from similar sources in the last year of a Labour Government. In 1956-57 receipts from licences and permits amounted to \$1,766,910. To the end of June, 1968, this Government received \$4,847,639 from this source. Turning, then, to totalisator and betting taxes, the amount received in the last year of the Labour Government was \$600,906. From the totalisator and betting taxes alone, this Government received, to the end of June, 1968, \$3,610,457. In addition, it received \$1,560,080 from bookmakers' turnover tax, and, if I throw in for good measure the amount received by way of fines and forfeitures, the amounts were \$386,242 in 1956-57 and \$2,184,800 in 1967-68. The reason I put that figure in, apart altogether from the fact that it shows a substantial increase of \$1,798,558, is that a good proportion of it would come as the result of penalties imposed for drink-driving, so that this comes into the liquor bracket—the "booze, bet and borrow" angle.

While I am dealing with these figures, I want to prove the basis of my new slogan for the Government and show how the public debt has increased. I will take the year 1932, which was the last year of office of the then anti-Labour Government. In that year the public debt per head of population was \$238.68. After 25 years of Labour Government the figure had increased by \$147.69, to \$386.37. Under the present Government, as is shown in the documents tabled by the Treasurer, without stating the aggregate amount, the present figure is \$621.92 per head, an increase of \$235.55 on the figure for the last year of Labour's administration. In other words, in 11 years this Government has increased the public debt by \$235.55 per head, whereas over 25 years the Labour Government increased it by only \$147.69.

Mr. Porter: You are very knowledgeable on this, and you will know that this is something that is Australia-wide. There is a Labour Government in Tasmania.

Mr. WALSH: I know that all these figures are related to the financial relationship between the Commonwealth and the States.

Mr. Porter: That is true. Good husbandry by the State has very little to do with this.

Mr. WALSH: I think that the hon. member for Toowong will agree that the increase I have mentioned is a very substantial one.

I turn now to the matter of uniform taxation. If I were to give marks to any hon. member for his contributions to the debate—not that there have not been a lot of useful contributions—the two members whom I would single out are the hon. members for Toowong and Baroona. It would be worth while for every hon. member to read the matter that has been so carefully prepared by the hon. member for Toowong and, from another point of view, the hon. member for Baroona, who carried out a great deal of research into the matter.

A widespread opinion seems to be held by people that their objection to the States' resumption of income-tax powers is that they would be bothered with having to fill in more than one income-tax return. This is not true. For the 18 years prior to the introduction of uniform taxation there was in existence a joint Federal-State income-tax return. The individual filled in this return each year in the respective columns for State and Federal purposes. The matter of a dual return does not arise, because the joint return was in existence from 1924 until 1942.

Let me have recorded in "Hansard"—and I do not care who wants to deny this—that at all times Queensland desired the return of its taxing powers. Some people within the Labour Party might have said, "This is better out of our hands," but the general attitude was one against uniform taxation. Let me put on record that the unanimous decision of the six States was one in opposition to uniform taxation. Let it be put on record also that when Victoria took out a writ challenging the validity of the tax-reimbursement legislation the three States of Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia joined with Victoria in that State's challenge. The High Court ruled against the States at that time.

Later, in 1950, Victoria issued another writ but did not pursue the matter. In 1955 Victoria issued a new writ, and on this occasion the New South Wales Government identified itself with Victoria in challenging the validity of the uniform tax law. The High Court ruled unanimously that that part of the agreement which stipulated that the States could not collect taxation prior to the Commonwealth was valid. On the second point, which challenged the right of the individual taxpayer to pay income tax to the State before the Commonwealth, the High Court ruled by a majority of four to three that it was invalid; that is, that section 221 (1) (a) of the Income Tax and Social Service Contributions Act was invalid. That must be related not so much to the peculiar powers that the Commonwealth might have regarding its right to taxation over the States, in the first place, but to the condition that provided for the entering into agreements by the States with the Commonwealth. If they were to benefit by any grants from the Commonwealth under this law, they had to comply with the conditions.

If I remember the judgment rightly, in 1957 or 1959 the High Court drew attention to section 96 of the Commonwealth Constitution, which I think I should read to put it on record in this debate. It provides—

"During a period of ten years after the establishment of the Commonwealth and thereafter until the Parliament otherwise provides, the Parliament may grant financial assistance to any State on such terms and conditions as the Parliament thinks fit."

That is a very simple, short clause containing an enormous power for the Commonwealth.

Since that judgment of the High Court, the Commonwealth Government—in the main anti-Labour, of course—has seen to it that every grant made to a State is brought down by way of a separate Act of Parliament and identified with that particular section which gives the Commonwealth the right to lay down the terms and conditions under which the grant is made to the State and how it shall be expended.

Mr. Porter: That is the dagger that is plunged into the heart of Federalism.

Mr. WALSH: That is perfectly true, as the hon. member has said. I entirely agree with the sentiments he expressed, although I do not entirely agree with the methods he advocated to bring about relief.

One of the matters that must be brought back into the ring is that the Commonwealth should be asked to see that any moneys expended by it on capital works come from the same source of funds as do those expended by the States. In other words, the surplus revenue of the Commonwealth that is available today from the taxpayers, on which the Commonwealth pays no interest—in this way it does not increase its public debt; as a matter of fact, its public debt is continuing to decrease while those of the States and local authorities continue to rise—should become part of the funds available to the Governments as a whole, including the Commonwealth Government. I think that, under the Financial Agreement, it would be entitled to a share of one-fifth if that formula was applied. But, of course, no-one wants the formula, and that is the great difficulty. If the formula was operating that would be the extent of the Commonwealth's share of the total funds available for its Works programme.

If we are to expect the family organisation of the States and the Commonwealth to continue on the basis as we knew it prior to uniform taxation, it is not right that the Commonwealth should be allowed to continue spending money on capitals works, as it is, purely from revenue. Worse still, having taken the money from the taxpayers, it then parcels it out in huge amounts to the States and charges them interest on it. In that respect, I have some figures indicating

the tremendously increased amount that this Government has received from the Commonwealth since 1956-57.

Mr. Hughes: You don't think that Queensland has been disadvantaged?

Mr. WALSH: Of course I do, for the reason I have stated. Our public debt is rising substantially each year and we have to raise funds to pay interest on it, and the Commonwealth will see to it that this continues to the point where the States break down.

Mr. Hughes: I agree with you. We should have it interest free.

Mr. WALSH: I do not want to get caught up in this matter. I do not want to bring in the Douglas Social Credit theory.

The total payments made to Queensland in 1956-57, the last year of the Labour Government, amounted to \$74,634,000. I want the hon. member for Kurilpa, and the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt, who will be speaking shortly, to listen to this. To the end of June, 1968, the payments amounted to \$223,491,000. Is it any wonder that this Government is able to boast, to some extent, about what it is doing. It has the funds available. But let me point out to the Treasurer that the money has not been expended in the right direction. For all the Government says about what it is doing to provide accommodation and facilities for school-children and school-teachers, it is going backwards, and much of the money it is expending on harbours and other facilities for these companies that are wallowing in millions of dollars of capital could be expended on providing decent buildings and conditions in schools and school-grounds.

Mr. Chalk: What money am I spending on harbours?

Mr. WALSH: The Treasurer can twist around as much as he likes, but will he deny that he is spending public money to build houses in these areas?

Mr. Chalk: Are you denying the workers the right to have houses?

Mr. WALSH: The example quoted here recently was a four-room house. I have people in my electorate who have five or seven children and are trying to get a rental house with three rooms. The Treasurer talks about Tin Can Bay. That company comes in and mines for rutile and so on, and in no time it will pick up its chattels and go and the Government will have 10 houses on its hands. Yet where do the established industries like the sugar industry and the foundries in Bundaberg get homes for their workers?

Mr. Hughes: What about migration and industrial development?

Mr. WALSH: We had to deal with these problems in our day.

If I continued to quote from the table headed "Commonwealth Payments to or For the States" I could show the advantageous position that South Australia still occupies compared with Queensland.

Mr. Chalk: You were a party to that set-up in your time, too.

Mr. WALSH: We were nothing of the sort. We got our share of the housing agreement money, having regard to the available tradesmen and material. I ask the Treasurer to say how much that grant has increased since this Government came to power. The table does not show such a big increase.

Mr. Chalk: You are like the dog that was kicked in the pants and yelled like hell.

Mr. WALSH: I know that the Treasurer does not like this. He has been preening himself, claiming all these records, and his feathers have been flopping around. But, judging by the record of taxation and the sources from which it has been raised, it appears that he gets a great deal of delight in extracting money from struggling families, workers and others in this State.

That is the way the Treasurer has been carrying on, and his predecessor was even worse; he left the Treasurer with the baby, and he has to suckle it. No doubt the Treasurer will again tell the story tonight of how this State is going ahead.

(Time expired.)

Mr. CHINCHEN: (Mt. Gravatt) (2.56 p.m.) I should like to explain that, for two reasons, it was not my intention to speak in this debate. The first reason is that the Budget, so ably presented by the Treasurer, does not need any support; it stands squarely on its own two feet as the most magnificent Budget that Queensland has seen. That is evidenced by the weak attack that the Opposition has made in an attempt to pick holes in it. About all that the Opposition did was explain how more money could be spent, without saying where it could be obtained. The hon. member for Salisbury said this morning, "I shall tell you later where the money will come from," but he did not get round to doing that.

My second reason is that I feel that debate on a matter as important as the Financial Statement should relate to the Budget. What happens in this lengthy debate (and I think that speeches of an hour are too long) is that speakers deal with parochial matters, which is something that I have always considered bad and should not happen. However, on this occasion I, too, am going to do just that, and I do it because of a matter which was raised in my electorate last week and to which I was not granted the opportunity to reply through the normal medium, which is the Press. I therefore have to use this Chamber to give expression to my thoughts on what is, in my electorate, an important matter.

In the Press last Monday there appeared a rather strange statement which was made by the endorsed Labour candidate for Mt. Gravatt. The news item was headed "Parents' revolt fear at Kuraby State School". I feel that journalism has reached an all-time low if the Press accepts a statement such as that from any Tom, Dick or Harry and publishes it without investigation. This article has upset many people in my electorate—those connected with the school, and the children—and what it alleges is a lot of humbug. Here is a man endeavouring to make political capital, and it is a shocking thing that the Press will accept a statement such as that, with its wide repercussions, does not check it till the next day, and then, when the member responsible for the area wishes to make a statement, publishes not a word of it. It is for this reason that I now take the time of the Committee to express my thoughts on the attitude of the Press and the gentleman whose statement was published.

I was in Sydney last week. I bought "The Courier-Mail" when it arrived there a little after 11 o'clock, and in it I saw the statement to which I have referred. I do not know this gentleman, although I should like to point out to him that this is not the way to win friends and influence people. I made a telephone call to the chief of staff of "The Courier-Mail". I was told that he was not available, and I asked if I could be informed when he was. At about 4 o'clock or a little later, I was connected to "The Courier-Mail". A girl answered the phone and I said, "I would like to speak to the chief of staff of 'The Courier-Mail'." She said, "What is it about?" I explained that I was the member for Mt. Gravatt and that this article to which I have referred had appeared in the paper, and that I had a short statement that I would like to make. I heard her speak to somebody, and a reporter came on the phone. He could not write shorthand, and I had four extensions whilst giving him a short statement on the matter. This did not appear in the Press, and it created in the minds of the people in my area the impression that I had not endeavoured to get in touch with the paper, that I had no interest in them. Of course, people associated with the school know that I am interested; but people not associated with it might well have in mind the thought, "What is wrong with our local member?" I am taking this opportunity to explain the situation.

I think it is shocking that people can do that sort of thing—create problems in an area for which they have no responsibility—and that the person who has the responsibility is not given the opportunity of replying. It is not good enough, and it should not happen to anybody. I am not complaining merely because it happened to me or because I am a member of the Government. It could happen to any member of Parliament. If an irresponsible attack is made in any area,

surely the man who is put there by the people to represent them should be able to say something about it. I should like to think that a situation such as this will not arise in future.

One person who rang me said, "Well, Geoff, I can tell you that this man did not contact me. I had nothing to do with the whole business." I said, "Thank you very much. I know that." He said, "Do you think he was granted this privilege"—it is a privilege to have that large space in the paper—"because he is a large advertiser in the paper?" I said, "A lot of nonsense. That would not be right." This man is an electrical retailer. He has full-page and half-page ads. I said, "I would not believe that it is the policy of the paper to grant him space in the paper because he is a large advertiser." It will be interesting to see whether this happens again. That is what I shall be watching for.

I invite hon. members to look at what this man said about a "parents' revolt". He said, "While calling on parents in the area . . ." I doubt that very much. I know many people in the area who have said, "He did not call on me." I have been told quite authoritatively—I believe it is correct—that the person concerned was told by someone at an A.L.P. meeting about what he considered were problems at the school, and that is where it all started. It was "jazzed up" there and then, and this is the way it has been presented in the Press. If that is what is to happen, it is pretty grim.

The gentleman concerned went on to say that, although the school had seven grades, there were only three classrooms and a temporary classroom under the building. That is true. It is a very old school; it had its 40th anniversary a few months ago. I was responsible for getting a fourth teacher at the school and for getting the additional temporary room. That temporary room could have been there earlier, but the head-teacher and many of the parents wanted its arrival delayed because of the large function they were having to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the school. They were anxious to hold such a celebration because they knew that a new school would be built in another area.

The gentleman concerned does not know that, immediately I became the member for Mt. Gravatt, I personally undertook a survey of the whole area to see what the school-ground requirements were in the future. Looking to the future, this was one instance in which I realised that a need existed, and this is one of the school-grounds that I was able to influence the department to purchase. The school-grounds exist—not only a site for a new primary school at Kuraby but also a site for a new high school, when that becomes necessary. The parents and citizens' association at that

school—it is a wonderful parents and citizens' association; it has done a terrific amount of work—

Mr. Hinze: All parents and citizens' associations are wonderful.

Mr. CHINCHEN: I agree that they are wonderful. But this one is magnificent. At this time, with about 120 pupils at the school, it has developed a new oval and has arranged for the reticulation of water. Those things have happened, and the parents know that their time for a new school is coming.

The gentleman concerned went on to say—

"The local Parents and Citizens' Committee asked the Education Department at least to soundproof the temporary classroom, but this request was refused. They are now offering to pay for it themselves . . ."

That is not true. Again his facts are entirely incorrect.

The part that hurts the local people is that he went on to say that the school has had three different head-teachers in the last three months. Can any decent man make political capital out of the death of a beloved head-master? That is what has happened. Mr. Bill Klemm, who was highly respected by everybody in the district, was head-master for many years. He was loved by the children, and he died very suddenly only two or three months ago. His death was a great shock to people in the district. This was a very happy school under his control. The Education Department immediately had a problem, so it found a person who could take the school over the next day. He was there only as an acting head-teacher until one of the usual, relieving head-teachers could be assigned to the school. That is all that has happened. A head-teacher died and another man was put in there for a very short period. It was Mr. Bannerman, from Ipswich. He filled the gap until a relieving head-teacher was available. These men are not just sitting around in a room waiting for calls such as this; they are very busy people. One of them was chosen by the department to go to Kuraby, and he will be there until the end of the year.

The gentleman responsible for this allegation should know that all major changes are made at the end of the school year. It would be impossible to find a permanent head-teacher for this school at this moment without a series of moves. There could be dozens of moves. If one person is taken out to go to this school it creates a gap, and another one, and another, and so on. This relieving head-teacher will take care of the school until the end of the year, when all the necessary moves will be made.

Apparently this person does not understand these things. He goes on to say that this is one of the major problems; that this is going to bring about a parents' revolt.

This, of course, is nonsense. People know that these things happen, and I think it is rather despicable that anybody should make political capital out of the death of a head-teacher. I think it is a shocking thing, and is something to be deplored by everybody.

Mr. Walsh: Is he campaigning against you?

Mr. CHINCHEN: Yes, definitely, if it can be called a campaign, and I think this is a shocking way to do it.

He went on to say—

"The school was supposed to be a four-teacher school, but until recently had only three teachers."

What does he mean by "it was supposed to be a four-teacher school"? It was once a one-teacher school, then a two-teacher school, then a three-teacher school, and now it is a four-teacher school. It is on this sort of basis that this person is talking about a parents' revolt.

He went on to say—

"The school has to be rebuilt on a site some 300 yards away, but in the meantime the children in the area are getting a raw deal."

I have every faith in the parents and citizens' association at this school, and they have not approached me on this matter. I know they would have done so if the position was as serious as is stated.

On the question of the school being rebuilt, if there is any reason why it will not be rebuilt in the very near future, it is because of statements such as this. If a parent not connected with the school, but with a young child due to go to school next year, read this Press article it would make him very doubtful whether this was the place to send his child. The way to get the new school sooner is to have greater numbers attending, and all that this opponent of mine is doing is scaring people away from the school. This will mean that the school cannot justify going into new and larger premises. This is what worries me, and it is also worrying the parents and citizens' association and the people of the Kuraby district. This man is acting not in the interests of the school or the people but in his own political interests, and what he has done could result in delaying the provision of a new school.

Mr. Graham: It looks as though he got under your skin a bit.

Mr. CHINCHEN: It is not only my skin that he has got under, he has got under the skin of everybody in the district with the exception of one person, namely, the person who told him at the A.L.P. meeting to write this rubbish to make political capital. He has been ill advised.

For the record, I should like to say that not a word was printed of the statement that I gave to "The Courier-Mail" on Monday, 21 October, at a little after

4 o'clock. The newspaper did not even say that the local member was interested in the school. It did publish an item the following day, "Kuraby school revolt is tame", and that if there was a revolution, it was a very quiet revolution. I must thank the newspaper for at least saying this. But why accept scurrilous stuff like this and print it, create the problem, and next day say that the position was not as stated by this gentleman. Is this the way journalism operates today—that anybody can make a rash statement and have it published? If this is the case, I am extremely disappointed in our Press.

I should like to read the short statement that I issued to "The Courier-Mail", not a word of which was published.

It reads—

"Mr. G. T. Chinchin, M.L.A. for Mt. Gravatt, said today from Sydney, where he was attending the International Union of Building Societies and Savings Associations Congress, that he was pleased that his opponent at the next State election was looking at educational matters in the Mt. Gravatt electorate, as he would see striking evidence of the improvements made by the present Government.

"Mr. Chinchin said that he was responsible for the acquisition of a new primary-school site and also a high-school site at Kuraby, and he was hopeful that a new primary school would be built in the next financial year.

"The vacancy caused by the sudden death of the head-teacher of the Kuraby school, Mr. Bill Klemm, was immediately filled by an acting head-teacher, and a relieving head-teacher was appointed as soon as possible. This gentleman told Mr. Chinchin recently that he considered the standard of the children at the school quite satisfactory.

"A permanent head-teacher will be appointed at the start of the new school year when all new appointments are made.

"Mr. Chinchin said the parents and citizens' association, in whom he had every confidence, had not complained to him but early last week two people interested in the school had mentioned some matters which he had immediately taken up with the Director of Primary Education.

"Mr. Chinchin said that he would not like to think that his political opponent was making political capital out of the sudden death of the late head-teacher."

I take this opportunity, as I will have no other, of explaining the situation at the Kuraby school. All of us know that things are never perfect. I am not saying for a moment that in any of the schools in my electorate things are perfect. However, at the Kuraby school we have the additional teacher and the additional temporary room, and we are hopeful that a slight increase in enrolment will justify the erection of a

new primary school in the Kuraby area in the next financial year. Of course, I know that the needs of that district must be considered together with those of the rest of the State.

I hope that the statement that was published in the Press has not scared parents in the district and will not result in a reduction of the number of school-children attending this school. It would be a great shame if children who would normally go to the Kuraby school next year attend some other school. The Kuraby school has been a very happy school in the past, and I know that it will continue to be a very happy one in the future.

If this gentleman is interested in education, I suggest to him that before he makes statements of this nature he should make thorough inquiries to ensure that he knows what he is talking about. His statements can only do harm and will do no good at all in helping the situation. If he were to move about the area he would find that new school-grounds have been provided and that a new high school is being presently constructed. In addition, of course, he would see two other high schools. When this Government took office there was not one high school in the Mt. Gravatt electorate; at the beginning of the next school year there will be three.

I suggest to him that he should look further afield at the technical education that is provided in institutes of technology and technical colleges throughout this State. He should look at the Longreach Rural College and the Agricultural College at Lawes to see what has happened there in the last two or three years. If this man is genuinely interested in this field he will be surprised by what has happened. He will learn that in this year the present Minister for Education and Cultural Activities will be receiving \$22,000,000 more than his predecessor received a year ago. In the last financial year the Education Department's appropriation was 11½ per cent. higher than the one for the previous year. This financial year it is almost 20 per cent. more than last year's. This means that over a period of two years there has been an increase of 31.5 per cent., which shows that this Government is interested in education and is doing everything humanly possible in this field within the limits of the financial resources available to it.

To make statements that disturb people is the last thing that we want. I grant that we must be critical and also analytical but we should not consider anything in isolation. I invite this gentleman to make a survey. I will help him to do this if he wants me to, and I think that he will be quite surprised by what has been done. As I say, there is more to be done, but we can see where we are going. Everyone will agree that the new high-school standards are excellent. In the old days there were no standards; in fact, we virtually had no high schools. When this

Government came to office, 15,000 children in Queensland—the select few—attended State high schools, whereas today there are 77,000 State high-school students, all accommodated in well-equipped, good high schools.

We know full well the improvements in the design of buildings and equipment, and the size of the school-grounds. We provide 10 acres for primary schools and, if possible, 20 acres for high schools. Such standards did not exist previously. I have a school at Mt. Gravatt, with an enrolment of 1,100 children, on an area of only 4½ acres. The Government of the day was offered 37 acres, then 24; the area gradually decreased until the Government finally settled for 4½ acres. I do not think it would have had even that area had not one of the residents bought a string of blocks at the back of the school which were eventually taken over. We have good standards today, and things are moving well. No-one can tell me that our children are not receiving good education.

I know that our teachers have a big load, but they are doing remarkably well. We have created some of the stresses and strains by increasing the leaving age to 15, something that the Labour Government failed to grapple with. In addition, we increased the teacher-training period to two years, which meant a loss of 1,000 teachers. We knew there would be stresses and strains, but we realised that it was necessary for teachers to have a two-year training period. It should have been provided earlier, but at least we did it. We now know that it is essential that the training time for teachers be extended to three years. That will impose further stresses, but at least we know what is happening. We are providing in the Budget for an additional 850 primary and secondary teachers, and for an increase from 3,167 to 3,824 in the number of trainee teachers. We know how this will help. We are allowing for an all-time record appointment of 2,050 teachers next January.

That is what is happening, and our political opponents should be aware of it. They should not be hasty in seeking Press publicity or adopting scare tactics similar to the actions of Mr. Baldwin, the president of the Teachers' Union, in referring to "blackboard jungles". Such talk is shocking and upsetting, and does nothing to overcome the problem. I welcome constructive criticism because it is needed. Everyone should be interested in education and should advance sound ideas, but talking about revolution and anarchy within our schools helps no-one. I think the A.L.P. should take to task its members who do that and bring them into line with common sense and good thinking. The Labour Party should influence these people to bring forward good, constructive, sound thinking.

My main purpose in speaking was to explain the real position to the people I represent. I tried to have an answer published in the Press, but this was denied to

me. I have therefore taken advantage of the opportunity to make a few comments in this debate.

I should now like to refer briefly to another matter. While I was absent from Queensland last week many speeches were made in this Chamber. I have been trying to catch up with them by reading "Hansard", and I was interested to read the speech made by the hon. member for Norman in which he referred to the need for a consumers' protection council. He seemed to be quite delighted in that this was his idea, and he pursued the matter. I should like him to know that I thoroughly agree with him. I do not often agree with him, but I do so on this matter. I have a surprise for him, because this matter has been considered by Government members and further investigation is under way. We know full well that such a council operates in Victoria, and one has been operating in Denmark, and also in New Zealand, for quite some time. Its sole purpose is to help someone who feels that he has a problem that does not justify legal action. It may be a small problem, but to him it is important. Such problems occur every day of the week. Anybody who reads "Crisis Line" in "Sunday Truth" knows that people have these little problems, but there is nobody to whom they can go. The Press is doing a wonderful job in correcting these problems, because there is no body or authority to whom these people can go.

Mr. Walsh: I was rather surprised that the hon. member for Norman should identify himself with what the Democratic Labour Party has advocated for a long time.

Mr. CHINCHEN: All sound-thinking people think along these lines. I am just as amazed as the hon. member for Bundaberg that the hon. member for Norman should adopt this attitude.

I think that this matter is quite important. As an example, three or four weeks ago a constituent of mine came to me with a suit that had literally fallen to pieces. It was not a very expensive suit, but he expected to get a year or two of wear out of it. He went back to the place where he bought it, and the retailer referred him to the interstate manufacturer. He contacted the manufacturer who said, "The retailer sold it to you; I didn't." The poor fellow was left in a quandary. He was kicked from one to the other. He wrote to me and I referred it to the Minister for Justice. After a lengthy delay I received a reply that he had recourse to law. This was a \$50 or \$60 suit, and the cost of a lawsuit would be prohibitive.

This might happen to 100 or 1,000 people—nobody knows. But if these complaints could be registered with a particular body, such as a consumer protection council, and six, 18 or 20 complaints were lodged about a certain firm, it would be realised that that firm was taking the public down. We have nothing of this nature. It happens in hundreds

of cases and people have to stand the loss. For this reason it is necessary to have some type of consumer protection body.

Mr. J. T. Molony, Q.C., headed a British committee that investigated this matter and came up with 200-odd recommendations to the Government of the day. On page 278 of the report, dealing with a consumer protection council, he said—

“The case for creating such a body rests on the proposition that the consumer needs an independent and forceful authority to speak and to act on his behalf.”

I thoroughly agree with that.

He went on further, in this very lengthy report, to say—

“Our conclusion is that a Consumer Council should be established. We are well aware that any addition to the apparatus of bureaucracy is open to criticism and requires a powerful case to justify it. We have found after careful deliberation that such a case exists. We were influenced by the possible needs of the future as much as by the patent requirements of the present; including our awareness of many problems which we could not sift in a reasonable time but which merited investigation by an authoritative body acting in the consumer interest. We were also influenced by the fact that since—and, we believe, in part because of—our appointment a greater recognition of consumer needs and a readiness to respect them by positive measures developed in several quarters; we believe that a Consumer Council would maintain this stimulus. Above all we were led to our conclusion by a realization, which progressively developed as our inquiry proceeded, that the system of consumer protection we were called upon to devise would be deficient without such a cornerstone as a Consumer Council alone could provide.”

This is the main point. If such a body was established, a good deal of this unfortunate behaviour by certain retailers and manufacturers would disappear, because there would be a body to which people could report. This council would give a report to Parliament every 12 months, and, naturally, no firm would like its name quoted in such a document.

There are big problems here. Such a body could be only as good as the administrative people who constitute it. Therefore we must have on it people who have great integrity and a certain amount of wisdom. A good deal of damage could be done to firms and individuals if it really got out of hand. And this could happen. It depends on the terms of reference. Certain safeguards could be provided in the legislation. This type of body has existed for some time in other countries, and an investigation in those countries could identify where the problems lie, and they could be overcome.

Mr. Carey: Do you think it would tend to increase the price of goods to the consumer?

Mr. CHINCHEN: There is no reason at all for that to happen. I believe that 99.9 per cent. of firms are honest and function in competition in an endeavour to give the best possible service to allow them to remain in business. That is necessary, as the hon. member for Albert knows. It is therefore necessary for a trader to have a good product, correctly priced, and to give good service. Otherwise his competitors will push him out. Unfortunately the odd shifty person gets into business, dealing mainly in small, shoddy items. He guarantees service but does not give any. What, then, does the person who has been “caught” do? He cannot afford to go to court. If he could go to a body such as I and the hon. member for Norman suggest, the dealers in shoddy articles would disappear quickly.

Mr. Porter: A consumer protection council would tend to keep prices down, because it would eliminate shoddy goods.

Mr. CHINCHEN: That is true.

The Victorian law is a small piece of legislation, but apparently it has been effective. The experience of that State is of extreme interest to us, and the first two reports, in 1966 and 1967, make very interesting reading. They set out the types of complaint that have been lodged, and what it has been possible to do about them. The Council found, for instance, that because of certain things that were coming to its notice which revealed weaknesses in the legislation, it was able to suggest to the Government that the Hire-purchase Act should be changed. What has been done in Victoria has been advantageous to the consumer.

It may be asked, “What is the cost of this?” In the report of the Consumers’ Protection Council, dated 24 October, 1966, the chairman, Mr. Bottomley, said—

“At present the Council’s staff consists of an administrative officer, who is secretary to the Council, a stenographer and a typist. However, in order to conduct research into consumer complaints effectively, Council requires the appointment of a second administrative officer to assist the secretary.”

That is not a large staff; indeed it is a small staff.

I was interested to read in the Press recently—

“Protection body claims \$6,000,000 saving to consumers. The Consumer Protection Council has saved the community at least \$6,000,000 for an outlay of less than \$60,000 in the three years it has been in existence. This estimate of saving to consumers was conservative.”

No doubt many other hon. members also read that item. I do not know whether what is stated there is correct. The figure quoted is probably one that the author somehow

found, and he has used it to obtain a bit of publicity. But there is no question that there is a great need for protection.

Every group has some form of "togetherness" for its own protection, but the consumer is left on his own. Such a consumer protection council would be a small but very effective body in this State, and I am one who advocates its introduction. There must, however, be certain safeguards in its functioning. The people running it are of extreme importance, and great care would have to be exercised in making information available for publication. If a complaint was registered which on investigation was shown to be unjustified, it would be wrong to have details of the complaint appearing in documents presented to Parliament. Care would have to be taken to ensure that legitimate traders were protected, and that only information concerning those who defrauded the public in one way or another was made public. I raise this point to let the hon. member for Norman know that it has been, and is being, considered, and I feel quite confident that ultimately the Government will consider something along these lines.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH (Tablelands) (3.30 p.m.): I think that the financial side of the Budget has been covered very well by various hon. members on this side of the Chamber, and I intend to deal mainly with a variety of items that I think are very important to Queensland, and very important, in many instances, to the area that I represent. I intend to deal first with Government protection in the Gulf of Carpentaria, a subject that I dealt with briefly in an earlier debate in this Chamber.

No matter where we look, we find newspaper articles relative to the Gulf area; we also hear radio commentaries on the subject, and I was told that there was a five-minute session on the Gulf area on television last night. It appears that it is becoming a very interesting area because of the income it will produce and because of its potential for attracting tourists from various parts of the world.

The point that I brought to the Government's notice recently was the failure to give protection to and to make arrangements for the investigation of the prawning industry, which is having rather a torrid time at present. In my opinion, this is due principally to the fact that no planning or scientific investigation has been undertaken. Wherever we look these days, we find references to "planning".

On 1 March, 1968, a big heading appeared in the Press "New Towns in the Gulf Area. Vast prawn-fishing project," and once again the spotlight fell on Karumba. One paragraph in that article said—

"In case of trouble between rival crews, some sort of police patrol also will be needed."

Since that time, of course, there has been trouble with the Russian trawler "Van Gogh". Hon. members will recall that on

2 April, 1968, which was well before the "Van Gogh" was in the Gulf of Carpentaria, I asked the Treasurer a question. His answer was that he was aware that foreign prawning trawlers were in the Gulf, and he went on to say—

"Waters in the Gulf beyond the 12-mile limit are international waters and no action by the Commonwealth or the State can alter this position."

On 11 July this year, a cartoon appeared in the Press, and I thought how typical it was of the Treasurer's answer. It shows a figure labelled "External Affairs" saying, "It is not my concern, it's his". Next to that is a figure labelled "Queensland Fisheries", which is pointing to a figure labelled "Navy". The Navy says, "It is not my concern. It's his", and points to a figure labelled "External Territories". External Territories is pointing to someone who is not in the picture. The public wants the answer, but the matter is still being passed backwards and forwards.

Reports are being received—in some instances they are second-hand—which are very disturbing. In fact, they are so disturbing that I visualise—I am not a prophet, of course—that in the corresponding season next year, unless something definite is known, not only State or Commonwealth-wide but internationally, as to the arrangements that have been made for and the conditions that have been applied to Gulf waters, there will be trouble. What is the use of the Navy, the Air Force, any Minister of the Crown or any member of Parliament making statements when a ship is in the Gulf of Carpentaria and an incident could occur? Many big conflicts have arisen from smaller incidents than people catching prawns in an area that others believe is their own.

This is now quite a big industry. In 1945-46 only 1,760 lb. of prawns was taken, the value being \$2,800. What a different picture there was in 1965-66, when, according to the Year Book, the catch was 6,034,000 lb., which was worth \$2,185,000. It is a source of wealth that any country would be looking for. There is a very lucrative market for this delicacy and it is not only in our South-eastern area. I have information from one prawner that he is sending prawns to Switzerland, where prices are high. They are a luxury that that country can pay for.

While the demand continues we must expect heavy competition for the trade, and if it is not controlled it must mean that these areas will be fished out. Only a fortnight ago, a person from the Tableland came back from Karumba and reported that work was not as plentiful as it has been. The reason being that the season was almost finished. In this sense "season" means the season for a particular type of prawn. In this instance it was the banana prawn; the tiger and king prawns are in deeper

waters farther out. But no survey has been made and it does not appear that there will be a survey.

I have a report to the effect that the Gulf deep sea prawn survey has been turned down. It has been turned down because it will cost a little money, and because the voting potential of the Gulf of Carpentaria area is not very high. Only two seats border it. This charge will have to be refuted by the Treasurer and the Government, to show they are realistic in their approach. The survey was turned down because the Government is not very interested in this industry or the interests of Queensland or Australia. They are very proud to say, "At Weipa, we are going to establish a fishing village". That was stated in answer to a question by me last week. It was news to me. I asked that an area of land be provided at Weipa to enable people to go there and enjoy the coast. As hon. members know, Comalco has 1,400 square miles under its control, and a person would not want to enter that property and take the risk of being summonsed for trespassing.

The Treasurer and the Government will say that such areas are being established, but the product is the thing I am worried about. I am concerned about the conservation of this product so that the take will be continuous rather than seasonal, and that can be achieved by a system of licensing under which only a certain number of fishermen and processing factories will be allowed to operate.

Prawning interests in Thursday Island have informed me that, whereas Western Australian fishermen can come to the Gulf, Queensland fishermen cannot go to Western Australian waters because licences there are limited.

These Gulf waters are the waters over which the Treasurer says he has no control beyond the 12-mile limit. The Government can exercise control by issuing licences, and I think to that end closer liaison between the State and Federal Governments is necessary. I know that there are loop-holes, but close liaison would very quickly and tightly close some of the gaps.

Mr. Walsh: You are not suggesting that the State has control outside the 12-mile limit?

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: No, I am not suggesting that at all, but I am suggesting that the State and the Commonwealth should get together and consider the position in the Gulf of Carpentaria and all its aspects. I am not going to compare it with the Gulf of Mexico, although that has been done before. It is an area that is deemed to be territorial waters. How was it done? Some Commonwealth statesman should be able to ascertain readily how that was done, so that Australia could follow the examples set in other parts of the world.

I turn now to the destruction of crocodiles and the failure of the crocodile industry in the Gulf of Carpentaria. The crocodile industry would be a big boon to Karumba, as it was at one time. A crocodile farm was established there in 1965, but it has now ceased to operate. One of the reasons for its closure was that no protection whatsoever was afforded against foreign interests who controlled the world market for crocodile skins. I refer to interests based in Singapore. In the early stages the operators of the farm received substantial help from the Government, but they found that they were in competition with this group in Singapore that had the world market tied up and, therefore, could dictate prices, could say how skins would be measured, and could, on the contention that all skins it imported were stretched, reduce the price for the skins. All of these factors made it impossible for the farm to continue to operate.

I have received some reports on the operations of this farm, as have the Government and Sir David Muir, and in the early stages of its operations the reports seemed to be quite heartening. The operators of the farm desired to expand its activities but could not obtain finance. In one of the reports they claimed that they found it impossible to establish an Australian company.

I have here a letter from the Under Secretary of the Premier's Department. It says—

"I am to inform you that since the early days of fauna protection in Queensland it has always been recognised that native animals are the property of the State and that it is the responsibility of the State to utilise and conserve this heritage. However, you will no doubt appreciate the State's financial resources are limited, and it is not always possible to allocate adequate funds to a particular field of activity. Hence, the implementation of fauna conservation measures can only proceed as fast as finances will permit."

Unfortunately, finances were not available to permit this to go any further. Sir David Muir sent up his officers, and they have taken over the property that was once a thriving crocodile farm.

Mr. Sherrington: One of the former Ministers in control of the Act was very helpful in this, wasn't he?

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: Yes. The hon. member for Wavell was the Minister at that time, and I give him credit for realising that there was a great potential in this industry.

I have with me a map, which was sent down by the gentleman who held this farm. As the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt said, we need ideas. This gentleman has his ideas. In fact, he has books of them. They are embodied in reports, but they fall on deaf ears. The map shows that the 300-mile section between the Nicholson River and Kendall River on the Gulf of Carpentaria could be farmed to produce \$5,000,000 worth

of crocodile skin each year. This production is far greater than that envisaged by the owner of the farm. He is a man dedicated to that area, and he has been in it for 12 or 14 years. For a man to live in that area for that length of time and to continue to produce that sort of evidence he must be dedicated to the activities that he took on.

He also shows that this area, which is only 500 miles from Cairns, could become a wonderful tourist attraction. I think that the hon. member for Wavell, when he was the Minister, realised that the area could become a major tourist resort.

I wonder how the safari of the present Minister for Tourism fared when it spent two days at Karumba. I do not know if many hon. members know Karumba, but there are not so many places of interest that an inspection would take two days. When the safari went to Normanton, where the Government administration centre is situated, it spent 30 minutes there. That is not a realistic approach to this area.

The crocodile industry has been sacrificed because of the paltry attention given to it by the Government. The Government has not provided any protection and it does not understand that this industry could quite easily compete with the Singapore market, if some protection was afforded. If the Government takes over this farm I hope it will continue to run it because the reports submitted by this man provide the basis for a wonderful industry in the Gulf, with only one counterpart in the world, at Singapore. This industry, if established, could supply most of the world demand. "The Sunday Mail" of 13 October this year contained an article which reads—

"Singapore has become one of the world's major sources of crocodile skins, though the beasts are not indigenous here.

"They are imported from Indonesia, 'farmed' up to size—which means about six feet long—turned into hides and exported to the fashion houses of the world."

They have the market sewn up. Mr. Chee, the manager, said that a good skin from a two-year-old crocodile was worth more than \$A70. Mr. Chee keeps a showcase for tourists who visit his farm and he is willing to sell handbags for \$100 each, but similar articles go as high as \$200. Except for a few skins Mr. Chee keeps for his tourist showcase all the best skins are exported. We are crying out for exports, yet the Government denied these people a chance to establish this industry.

On 26 March, 1968, Mr. Pawlowska wrote—

"We have had to give up all hopes of forming an Australian company, of forming a unique Australian industry.

"The Australian economy rejects our project which creates increasing interest overseas. Thus we are forced to look overseas in order to develop."

There is a possibility of his going overseas.

Mr. Dewar: That is very sad.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: It is.

When talking recently with Sir David Muir, he also expressed his regret that this had happened.

I now intend to devote a few minutes to the timber industry. I have here the week-old Annual Report of the North Queensland Sawmillers' Association. On looking through the pages I was surprised to see that we are still importing large quantities of timber. Queensland's imports of sawn timber increased by 43 per cent. compared with 1966-67, whilst sawn-timber imports throughout the Commonwealth increased by only 14 per cent. Queensland is a State that could be doing quite a lot to overcome the inroads of imported timbers on our markets. We should prepare for the future by reforestation, which I have often brought to the Minister's notice. I have urged not only that we should have plantations, but also that we should plant timber on broken land and water-courses. In these days many areas are being converted to improved pastures. Erosion is a terrific problem once it starts and the best way to start it is to clear the whole countryside. This has happened in many areas.

Hon. members from both sides of the House and I have driven through areas of lovely waving grass and have not seen a tree. This is a shocking state of affairs. We are already short of timber and by total clearing we are encouraging erosion in the quickest possible way. The best way in which the Government can get back into the field is to increase by 300 per cent. the production of seedlings and give these seedlings to people who undertake to plant them. They will not do this off their own bat. It is a long-term project. Who would plant a tree in the hope of getting a return from timber? Not one of us. And that is understandable. But if the Government said, "Here are 300 trees to plant along your watercourse; this is the type of tree that will grow in your soil; an officer is here to advise you; the trees are free; will you plant them?", 75 per cent. of the people would be only too pleased to assist. This could be done, and done quickly.

The report reads—

"Imports from New Zealand into Queensland more than trebled, increasing by 244 per cent.; whilst imports from New Zealand into the Commonwealth increased by 14 per cent."

That is a big upsurge in the importation of timber.

Log timber also is being imported. Log timber does give some benefit in that the processing of it into sawn timber and building material provides employment. But with imported sawn timber we miss out on employment for people harvesting the logs, working in the sawmills and dressing the

timber. I suggest that the Minister for Conservation watch this closely because too much sawn timber is being imported.

The report also says—

“Sawn timber shipped through the Port of Cairns amounted to 2,498,152 su. ft., an improvement of 17 per cent. over last year . . .”

This is an improvement of 17 per cent. in our exports, yet our importation of sawn timber increased by 43 per cent.

The report further says—

“. . . with a total of logs and sawn timber of 2,858,394 su. ft. of which 492,104 su. ft. were exports overseas. Attention of the Forestry Department has been drawn to the large traffic in logs, and the situation is being watched closely.”

So the importance and danger of too much traffic in log timber is realised.

Some freight concessions have been allowed and the association paid a good deal of attention to this matter. In his Financial Statement the Treasurer said that there has been quite a sizeable reduction. He said that as from 1 November, 1968, a 5 per cent. reduction will be made in railway freights on a number of articles, including logs and sawn timber.

The Sawmillers' Association says—

“The concessions made are not as effective in practice as they appear in print. The concession to Townsville in no way assists the coastal or Tableland mills, and the Brisbane market is predominantly in heavy species anyway. Following a meeting between the Executive Committee and the Department in Brisbane on 28th May, 1968, all these submissions are being again presented.”

So the association is making again the submissions it made to the department for a lower freight rate.

“The Courier-Mail” often contains good articles on page 2, and the one in today's edition is headed “Sydney—A.D. 2000. Plan for a super-city.” That time is only 32 years away, which is not very long at all. I have also read an article from Western Australia referring to the year 2868, which is another century away.

I am a little concerned by both those articles; on the one hand, it is said that there is an urgent need for planning everywhere, and, on the other, that there is an urgent need to control some scientific activities. Dealing with the year 2868, Professor L. C. Birch, Challis Professor of Biology at the Sydney University School of Biological Sciences, warned earlier this year that biology was a force more potent than nuclear war. This is a present-day approach to something that could get out of control quite easily. In looking through what Professor Birch said, I noticed that he stated that virtually all living organisms are now contaminated with D.D.T. “D.D.T.” has become a house word. I see that it is even mentioned, with a meaning

entirely different from its chemical meaning, in connection with the toll of the road. It has become a term that everyone understands, and it is regarded as a cure for many things. But it also has damaging effects, and I wonder whether we, as law-makers, will be sufficiently conscious of this to make some move to call a halt.

Sydney is planned to be a super-city by the year 2000. No doubt many members have read the article in today's “Courier-Mail” to which I have referred, and I am not going to weary the Committee by reading it now. It does make one realise, however, the difficulty of even conceiving what cities will be like in the future. Imagine Sydney extending from Wollongong to Newcastle! Imagine Gosford a city of 500,000 people! At present it is a small, pleasant sea-side town.

Figures produced by the United Nations Organisation show that this type of expansion is taking place in a greater degree all over the world. In the year 2000 the world population will be 6,300 million, or four times the population in 1900. That means that the world population will quadruple in 100 years, which is a rate of increase greater than that expected in Sydney. In the advanced countries in 1950 there were 865,000,000 people. In 1975 the number is estimated to be 1,170 million, and by the year 2000 the estimate is 1,500 million. In the undeveloped countries, the rate of growth is even faster. By the year 2000, there will be 4,500 million, which represents an increase of 2.4 per cent., compared with 1 per cent. in the advanced countries.

All of those people have to be fed, or there will be untold starvation in countries that are supposed to be well advanced in scientific matters, such as nutritional requirements and the number of acres necessary to keep the food bins full. With the population of the world increasing at the rate of 1.6 per cent. per annum—that is, by 45,000,000 a year, or 5,000 an hour—the increase in one year equals the net migration from Europe between 1800 and 1950—150 years. Those figures come from the United Nations' Organisation. I am not sure whether the Government is going to argue against them; I am not interested, really, whether it is or not.

Because of medical skills, births have increased and deaths have decreased, and, as I said earlier, more food is required. Of the earth's surface, one-fifth is too cold for cropping, one-fifth is too arid, one-fifth is too mountainous, and one-tenth is soilless, which leaves only 30 per cent., including the tropics, that is suitable for cultivation. On a world basis, there are approximately 12.5 acres for each person, of which approximately 4 acres are potentially cultivable and 1.2 acres are being cultivated. Therefore, only a quarter

of what could be cultivated is being used. In Australia, there are 200 acres per head compared with 0.17 acres per head in Japan.

Mr. Smith: What does all this prove?

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: The hon. member for Windsor says, "What does all this lead to?", or something to that effect. If he is interested in knowing what it is leading to, he should listen. On many occasions when the hon. member rises to speak, we wonder where he is heading. He uses many legal terms and gets nowhere.

Mr. Tucker: And bores the House.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: Yes, and bores the House. I think he is here now only because he has to take the chair shortly.

Mr. Smith: And you might then have to sit down.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: I think the hon. member is going to be disappointed.

The suggestion is made that the area under cultivation should be extended from 1.2 acres to 4 acres a head; that more suitable crops or varieties, or animals, should be substituted; that water availability should be increased by storage, desalination and re-usage; that there should be increased fertiliser usage; and that the sea should be utilised. The Parliament and the Government of Queensland will not have to consider very minutely things such as those, because in this State we are in the happy position of having plenty of room for some considerable time. If time permits, I shall deal with the amount of land that we have available above the 16th parallel.

The population of the world can be fed if we have thinking, planning, development and consideration on a world scale. Lord Boyd Orr stated that virtually the only limit to food production is the amount of capital and labour that Governments are willing to devote to it. Therefore, the problem is political. He said that if all nations reduced their defence budget by 10 per cent. and devoted half the savings to a reduction in taxation and the other half to development by an international authority, under supervision of the United Nations, of the potential resources of the earth, the problem of under-nourishment would be solved. Any nation refusing to co-operate in this way could no longer pretend that its political ideology was designed to promote the welfare of mankind. The difficulty is, indeed, the deeper one of public understanding of varying standards and values, and until these are removed by widespread education and there is something approaching a general standard of honesty, disinterested service, loyalty, and respect for obligations, there is little hope of checking the inflamed nationalism that is mainly responsible today for denying mankind the benefits that science and technology offer.

I am now going to show the part that the area of Cape York Peninsula north of the 16th parallel could play in such an important project. The 16th parallel runs approximately due west from Daintree, and

the area north of it is approximately 32,000,000 acres in extent. The population is 8,000 including 3,000 in the Torres Strait area and an Aboriginal population of 3,500. Beef cattle numbers, according to the latest figures, as at March, 1966, were 105,000. Dealing with the climate, the rainfall is 40 to 70 inches with high reliability. Only a very small area in South-East Queensland, the southern half of Victoria, south-west Western Australia and the top of the Northern Territory have similar reliability. The temperature is always high enough for growth. The soil is almost all deficient in nitrogen and phosphorous with some sulphur deficiency. Development potential includes pastures, tropical legumes and summer crops such as sorghums and fodder legumes. If two-thirds of this total area of 32,000,000 acres were fully developed under improved pastures, it could carry 4,500,000 cattle. As I mentioned, the cattle population at present is 105,000. Based on a price of \$22.50 per 100-lb. carcass weight, this would represent an industry worth \$420,000,000 annually.

Mr. Ahern: Are you going to tell us how to go about it?

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: The Country Party member for Landsborough wants to know if I am going to tell him how to go about it.

Mr. Ahern: How would you go about it?

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: I am one member of this Parliament of 78. If we are going to depend on individuals becoming magicians I think we will wait a long time. A little bit of co-operation and practical thinking could transform the Parliament into a body that by its laws would not allow our natural wealth to be denuded, would not allow erosion to take place, would allow food production to be stepped up and would protect our industries. Those are the things we want to do. The hon. member asks me to tell them how to do it. In thinking that one person can answer all these questions, he is really showing his immaturity. I am making my contribution to this Budget debate in a way that I think can assist the State. If the hon. member does not wish to assist the State, he is of a different ilk from me.

In conclusion, I should say let the scientists look into the future and let the graziers take up the challenge of the present and make the northern pasture revolution a reality. If this was done, I am sure there would be a vast all-round improvement, not only in food production but also in halting the population drift. At the present time there is a distinct drift from country areas. From 1961 to 1966 there was a definite population drift from 18 rural areas. Insufficient thought and attention are being given to these areas that are so valuable not only to us, but to the world. We have 32 years to come

to the state I have mentioned. Those are United Nations' figures and they would be correct; and 32 years is not a very long time.

I say to Government members that they should give this a lot more thought than their own parochial and district problems. Their small problems are well worth consideration but let us be broader in our outlook. Let us adopt a world outlook and make this Parliament much better than it was when we entered it.

Mr. THACKERAY (Rockhampton North) (4.10 p.m.): I enter the debate, firstly, to say farewell to many of my colleagues who will be retiring at the end of this year. Among those people are the former Leader of the Opposition, Mr. John Duggan, Mr. Jim Donald, "Johnno" Mann, Jack Dufficy, Fred Graham and Peter Byrne. On the Government side there are Alf Muller and Eddie Beardmore. I include, too, Arthur Coburn.

I have grown to know these men. Some of them entered Parliament after I did. Eddie Beardmore certainly did. I have got to know their characteristics and their good and bad points. Since I have been a member, my closest friend has been John Duggan. He has been like a father to me. I went overseas with him in 1964, and over the years we have built up a very close friendship. It is a friendship that I have been very proud to be able to maintain. I will be sorry to see him retire. I think everybody will agree that he is one of the most outstanding orators in this House. He has not been in the best of health lately, and I wish him well in his years of retirement.

The same goes to my colleague Jim Donald. He has been a tower of strength to me. Since I have been here he has been the secretary of the party.

To all my other colleagues, the colourful "Johnno" Mann, Jack Dufficy, who is the expert on land matters—

Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt: I thought the hon. member for Barcoo was.

Mr. THACKERAY: He is a protege of Jack Dufficy. Jack is retiring and is handing over the title of "expert" to the hon. member for Barcoo. I would say that Mr. Dufficy has trained the hon. member for Barcoo. Everything good that is heard from the hon. member for Barcoo in this Chamber today comes more or less from advice given to him by Mr. Dufficy.

I pay a tribute to my colleague Peter Byrne, who also is retiring. He is the expert on sugar matters.

I should also like to say some good words about Alf Muller. If ever a man was crucified in this House it is Alf Muller. Two Premiers cut his head right off. They were Frank Nicklin and the late Jack Pizzey. The former Treasurer, Tom Hiley, should be included with them, too. If ever a

man was ostracised and cut to pieces it was Alf Muller, and those three gentlemen did the job.

Mr. Sullivan: You have been good up till now. Why disturb the situation?

Mr. THACKERAY: I say to the present Minister for Lands, "Let us not cast stones". If we all dig deep enough into closets we will dig up skeletons. When I was elected I was told to remember that. If a person digs deep enough he will find something, or, like the hon. member for Townsville South, he can make it up; it makes no difference.

To Alf Muller I say—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind the hon. member that when he refers to other hon. members he should refer to them by their electorates. When he talks about Mr. Muller he should refer to him as the hon. member for Fassifern.

Mr. THACKERAY: I am sorry, Mr. Hooper. The hon. member for Fassifern is a good friend of mine, and I thought you would grant me that indulgence when I was talking about him. That is all I want to say about it.

Eddie Beardmore is a great old guy. He came into Parliament a little late in life, and I do not think he had an opportunity to fully grasp the activities of Parliament. However, while he was here he devoted himself to his parliamentary duties. I think that Arthur Coburn, who everyone more or less looked on as an old school-teacher, did what we expected of him.

Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt: The hon. member for Landsborough came in early in life.

Mr. THACKERAY: He came in early, but how soon will he go out? His position could be viewed in the light of the result of the Isis by-election. In "The Courier-Mail", Logan Sligo reported that there was a big swing against the Government in Isis. He is very conservative when writing his reports. When he writes such a report for "The Courier-Mail" we do not know how far the swing will be, but the pendulum is swinging very strongly towards the Labour Party candidate. If my colleague the hon. member for Port Curtis, who has just returned from Isis, were to speak, he could report to us on his last five days there and tell us how the pendulum is swinging to Labour.

Mr. Sullivan: I heard that he came away from Isis very down-hearted.

Mr. THACKERAY: He has done a magnificent job up there. I have received phone calls from people in certain establishments who are very happy about him. I refer particularly to the publicans, who are not very happy about the shoddy deal that the Government is giving them. My colleague is a hotel proprietor.

Mr. Sullivan: What is the shoddy deal?

Mr. THACKERAY: The shoddy deal that the Government is giving the hotels in its licensing laws. The Government cannot make up its mind. Many Government members are absent and there are so many proxy votes that the Government cannot establish a definite policy. My colleague, who is well known in the liquor trade—

Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt: He is doing reasonably well in Gladstone, isn't he?

Mr. THACKERAY: That is true. We could not ask for a better man to go into Isis and spread the gospel in the liquor trade about this Government's attitude towards it, especially when the Liberal Minister, Dr. Delamothe, has been racing around telling some hotel proprietors that they are to get extended hours, and this and that.

Mr. Sullivan: Is it right that Mr. Hanson spent all his time electioneering in the hotels in the Isis?

Mr. THACKERAY: No. He did a door-to-door canvass. When the meetings were over at night-time, in the last hour of his duties, between 9 and 10 p.m., he canvassed the Childers hotels. On another night he went out to Appletree Creek.

Mr. Sullivan: Are you sure he was not there after hours?

Mr. THACKERAY: The Minister for Lands should not say anything about hotel proprietors trading after hours. His cousin, in Rockhampton, was well known in that field of activity. The funny thing about it is that his name is Sullivan, and the only difference between him and the Minister is that he claims he came from the north of Ireland and the Minister claims that he came from the south of Ireland.

I think I have said enough about my good colleagues in this Chamber who are retiring.

The Treasurer called this Budget a "march to progress" Budget, but as far as we in Rockhampton are concerned there is no march to progress. We must be a little bit parochial in these matters. In Rockhampton housing is No. 1 priority and there has been no housing grant for Rockhampton. Many hon. members have raised this issue. For some time Rockhampton's housing needs have been neglected. The population increase over the past few years verifies what I am saying about Housing Commission homes in Rockhampton. I have not checked with the district inspector of housing in Rockhampton, and I do not need to, because, from the inquiries I have received, at least 50 people in that city are waiting for houses.

I must agree with the hon. member for Rockhampton South in this matter. Last week he said that the institute of technology was unable to attract teachers and professors in certain fields because of the remuneration being offered. In addition, the Government

will not even provide houses for the top professors and technical officers of the Rockhampton Institute of Technology. This is a shocking indictment of the Government. It will build houses for the employees of flour mills, steel mills and other ancillary industries, but will not build one house for a top public servant or anyone else in Rockhampton. Those people have to fossick around for a house. The Government has not provided one house.

Mr. Miller: No houses?

Mr. THACKERAY: Not for top public servants in Rockhampton, or for people coming there. The number of houses available for public servants in Rockhampton could be counted on the fingers of one hand; there are only five or six of them.

Mr. Miller: How many Government houses have been built in Rockhampton?

Mr. THACKERAY: For rental?

Mr. Miller: How many have been built in the past four years?

Mr. THACKERAY: How many have been built, and how many have been sold?

Mr. Miller: We encourage people to own their own homes.

Mr. THACKERAY: The hon. member is not going to side-track me on this issue.

Mr. Miller: How many houses have been built?

Mr. THACKERAY: The Government has been building homes for Amagrazee, and for the saltworks at Bajool, which is in the electorate of the hon. member for Port Curtis. Those homes stood there for six or 12 months before they were occupied because they were sublet to the saltworks people. Because of the set-up of the Housing Commission in Rockhampton, our people had to live in caravans and drink stinking water from the creek. The hon. member for Ithaca should keep quiet. He knows nothing about this. My colleague and old friend the hon. member for Port Curtis can tell him all about that.

In Rockhampton, the Government is not building homes for top public servants or for rental. Instead, it is building homes for the staff of certain business enterprises. Why should they be given treatment different from that given to the human being who lives in Rockhampton all his life? There are widows, and people with four and five children, looking for homes. A number of homes in Rockhampton are in the high rental bracket—around \$18 a week—and the ordinary person cannot afford them. Most of those homes—and there are not many of them—are sold, and the ordinary person is priced out of them.

This Government is not doing anything to provide housing for the ordinary people, including top public servants. All it is doing

is setting up establishments like Amagrazé at Biloela, the saltworks at Gladstone and the flour mill, and providing homes for their employees. It is a shocking indictment of this Government that it has to do this to entice industries into the area. In addition to the other assistance the Government gives them, it provides homes for their employees.

I should like to ask the Minister for Works and Housing exactly what is happening at the Thozet Road estate in Rockhampton. I was there at the week-end, and I saw that it has been burnt out by bush-fires. This is magnificent land, and I should like to know what action has been taken on it by his department, and what the city council is doing about reticulating water to the estate and building roads there. Two years ago I looked at the ring-road proposal. It is quite outstanding, but so far nothing has been done about it and, from what I can see, it is not intended to do anything. This is the best area in Rockhampton for building purposes. I think approximately 15 acres have been set aside as a site for a new school, but nothing has been done to facilitate building homes there and relieving the housing situation in Rockhampton. This is a problem that is facing the Government, and it is one that will have to be looked at quickly in the interests of the people in Rockhampton who are seeking land through the Housing Commission on which to build homes, and those who require rental accommodation.

In Rockhampton today, particularly the North Rockhampton area, land values have risen to such an extent that the average allotment in a sewered area now costs well over \$2,000. If the land to which I refer had been subdivided, as was proposed two or three years ago, it would now be available for young people to build homes through the Housing Commission. The Budget contains no mention of this project.

Another problem with which I wish to deal is the position of "Eventide" homes in Queensland, particularly in Rockhampton.

Mr. Ahern: Are you going to tell us about C.R.E.B. later?

Mr. THACKERAY: That is a matter between the member for Rockhampton South and the Deputy Leader of the Country Party, who is the Minister for Mines, Main Roads and Electricity. Whatever may be the dog-fight that they have between themselves, I shall be most interested to hear about it.

I should now like to deal with the need for traffic lights in North Rockhampton.

Mr. R. Jones: What about "Eventide" homes?

Mr. THACKERAY: I shall start with traffic lights and return to "Eventide" homes later.

The Minister for Mines, Main Roads and Electricity knows North Rockhampton well. He has relatives there, and I know that the

matter to which I am about to refer comes within his portfolio. In this area, at the top end of Musgrave Street, a new plaza, built by Woolworths and costing approximately \$500,000, is to be opened in about three weeks' time. The population of the district is increasing, and Musgrave Street is the main arterial highway to the North. It has three lanes each way, and is used by trucks, cars, caravans, boats on trailers, and all other types of vehicle. It carries all tourist traffic to the North, and it is also the main arterial road to residential areas in North Rockhampton. If traffic lights are needed anywhere in Queensland, they are needed on this highway at North Rockhampton. Here one sees women with prams, and with baskets under their arms, side-stepping and almost doing ballet dances to get safely across the roadway. There are white lines on the road surface, but half of them are not painted clearly and there are no advisory speed signs in the North Rockhampton area. If action is not taken immediately, the Minister will have a major accident and deaths on his hands, because without a shadow of a doubt someone will be killed at Musgrave Street, North Rockhampton.

About two months ago I was driving down Musgrave Street at about 7 o'clock at night. I had my wife in the car with me, and on a plot in the centre of the street opposite the Rex Theatre, which is on the corner of Musgrave Street and Lucas Street, I saw a lad on a scooter. He was about eight years old and was wearing white pants. I saw him just before I began to cross the intersection, and he dashed off the garden plot and began to push the scooter across the roadway. It was lucky for me that I saw him. What would have been the comment if I had not seen him and had hit him with my car? It would have been said, "Thackeray must have had a few beers. He was drunk." A man who was either stone cold sober or had had a few beers may not have seen him and may not have been able to stop in time, and that could happen to any person in similar circumstances. It could happen to any hon. member in this Parliament.

I think it is up to the Minister for Mines and Main Roads to give serious consideration to the installation of traffic lights in the area to which I have referred. I do not want to have to raise the matter in this Chamber after the Minister has blood on his hands.

Reverting to "Eventide" homes, I say to the Committee that the "Eventide" home in Rockhampton has been run very satisfactorily and well by the manager, Mr. Taylor. My colleague the hon. member for Port Curtis will agree that Mr. Taylor has done an outstanding job, and I see the hon. member for Callide nodding his agreement. However, I believe that all hon. members will agree that extensions to "Eventide" at Rockhampton, particularly the women's ward, are long overdue. It is shocking that members of Parliament in Central Queensland should receive letters from people who have

written to Mr. Taylor and found that there is a delay of at least three months before they can have their mother or some other elderly relative hospitalised.

It is true, of course, that the superintendent has to check with the Government Medical Officer, who decides whether people should go to "Eventide" or to the annex at Westwood. However, the Government has not made any extensions to the women's ward at "Eventide" since 1957, and it is a shocking indictment of the Government that it is allowing old ladies who are pioneers of Queensland to be pushed aside. Some of them go to the general hospital; some have chronic illnesses and go to Westwood. In the majority of cases, people try to keep their relatives at home.

I believe that it is our duty as legislators to look at the humanitarian side of these issues. Our first and foremost duty is to care for our mothers and fathers, and the Government is not being realistic in this matter. A few years ago, when the late Dr. Noble was in this Parliament, I asked a question about additions to "Eventide" at Rockhampton, and he said quite plainly to me, "I do not intend to extend 'Eventide' homes anywhere in Queensland". That policy seems to have been adhered to by the Government.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: Who said that?

Mr. THACKERAY: The late Dr. Noble. If the hon. member wishes to check back through "Hansard" he will see that I asked such a question and received such a reply. If anyone on the Government side can tell me where extensions have been added to any "Eventide" home in Queensland, I will thank him for the information.

Nothing has been done about extending "Eventide" in Rockhampton, in spite of the fact that there is an abundance of room in a beautiful position, a wonderful staff with a good manager, and complete co-operation from the nursing staff and male wardsmen. I think it is a shocking indictment of the Government, which gives millionaire companies freight concessions and glories in doing so. Government members say, "We hand out this and that. We'll ship your coal for \$1.97 a ton", or something like that. They go out on the hustings and boast about it. The Deputy Leader was in Isis the other day. I suppose he was giving the people there a good old swansong, but he forgot to tell them how much he charged the wheat-growers and how much the cane-farmers there are going to pay for their haulage. However, he told them what he has done for the Japs and the good old Yanks.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: Did you say there is a waiting list for elderly women to get into "Eventide"? Is it easy for elderly men to get in?

Mr. THACKERAY: Yes.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: That is the problem everywhere.

Mr. THACKERAY: I would say off the record that, on the average, the waiting list would contain three women to one man.

Mr. Porter: That is the problem of women outliving their husbands—the stronger sex.

Mr. THACKERAY: Dealing with the Treasurer's report on schools, I notice that provision has been made for renovations or additions at only one school in Rockhampton. On several occasions I have raised the matter of two State schools in my electorate, namely the Lake's Creek State School and the Glenmore Road State School. The Lake's Creek school is 100 years old, and it has not been repaired for some time. It is falling down. There is no ventilation. Twelve months ago parents and pupils protested and it looked as though there would be a walk-out of pupils until a septic system or sewerage was installed by the Rockhampton City Council at the instigation of the Education Department. But no provision has yet been made for the new school that is required.

The Glenmore Road State School is a very old school; it is at least 100 years old. It has two rooms upstairs and one underneath. All the walls are of tin, and the surrounding area is all dirt. It is in an industrial area. Toilets are provided, but they are not satisfactory for pupils. I would say that for the number of pupils at the school the incidence of hepatitis has reached record proportions. For years the people in the area have been asking for a new school, and it is a genuine and sincere request. I believe that the Regional Director of Education in Rockhampton would say that if any school is to be rebuilt the Glenmore State School should have No. 1 priority. There is a drift of pupils to the adjoining school at Park Avenue. As the area is a growing industrial and residential one, parents are not prepared to send their children to a two-teacher school. That is why the school has the low attendance of approximately 80 pupils. It should be about 150. The Education Department is quite happy to maintain the school on its present basis because there is no need to build another school.

In this election year the department intends to build new schools in electorates that are not held by the Labour Party. It is clear to everyone that this is the political "gimmick" for the 1969 election year. If it were not, the Government would have built a State school at Glenmore. The Government knows that it cannot beat me in the election, so why does it not build a school there? The request is legitimate and quite above board, and no political strings are attached to it. So far the Government has not found a Liberal candidate for the electorate, but I believe that it will be trying to do something about this matter next year.

I turn now to tourism. This matter, too, concerns the Minister for Main Roads. I can remember when the Minister's late colleague and friend, Mr. Ernie Evans, was Minister for Main Roads. He was a great old fighter for the North. He used to come into this Chamber, pull out a handkerchief, rub his cuff across his chin, and spit out what he had to say. He used to call a spade a spade. "Old Ernie" might have been rough in many ways, and he might have been rough in his early career in the sugar industry. The father of the hon. member for Port Curtis knew him very well, and they used to knock around together. Mr. Evans promised the people of Central Queensland that he would provide a tourist road from Rockhampton through the St. Lawrence district within about five years. However, he did not live to see that road built. Construction of the road was commenced, but it has come to a stop since the present Minister has occupied the portfolio. I do not believe that the road is gazetted from Marlborough to Wumalgi, although I can be corrected on that statement. If the Minister was sincere in this matter he would open up a road in the electorate of Mirani, extending from St. Lawrence to Sarina, and from St. Lawrence back to Marlborough in the electorate of Callide.

This tourist road would shorten the distance to Mackay and would open up 10 small shopping townships, whereas on the present highway a motorist travels through two motel areas, which are about 100 miles apart, and sees nothing but black soil. The coastal road would go through Marlborough and Ogmoo, it would bypass the area from Wumalgi to St. Lawrence, and it would then pass through Kalarka and Clairview, which is one of the prettiest spots on the Queensland coast. It would go through to Westhill, Ilbilbie and Koumala, and on to Sarina. These are the places for which this road should be provided, to open them up and help the people in the area by giving them access to the markets in Sarina and Mackay. It would also give tourists an access road direct to and from Rockhampton. I believe it would shorten the journey by many miles, although I do not know the exact number of miles that would be saved. The people in the area are sick and tired of the lack of a good road.

When the Minister for Mines and Main Roads attended a meeting at Carmila he was very perturbed about the reception he received. I should like to know exactly what he intends to do—whether he intends to bituminise this road or let it go and concentrate on the Bruce Highway. It is a waste of effort to spend money on the Bruce Highway. The money should have been spent three or four years ago on the coast road to provide a direct route to the North. Forget about the few cattle properties which is all that the Bruce Highway serves.

I should now like to refer to the Keppel Sands Road. I will be quite open and say that I have a house property at Keppel Sands. On many occasions I have asked the hon. member for Callide to do something about this road. I have said to him, "See what you can do about this road," but he said, "My hands are tied. I cannot do anything about it." That is fair enough. I know he is honest and sincere. This road is in a shocking condition. Recently we held a picnic at Keppel Sands which was attended by 500 people. Whoever graded the road should have been sacked, because he graded heaps of gravel and sand a foot high into the middle of the road, and the dirt side-tracks were not even graded.

Keppel Sands is a pretty little seaside resort. About 4½ miles of bitumen road has been provided, but another 4½ miles is needed to finish it so that we can have a scenic drive from Rockhampton to Yeppoon, Emu Park, Keppel Sands and back to Rockhampton.

Keppel Sands does not have a water supply. That does not affect me—I have my own well and pump, and a septic system—but it concerns everyone else who goes there. If a water supply could be provided I would be quite happy to use it. The Livingstone Shire Council applied for a subsidy to help it to provide a water supply, but it was told that a subsidy of only 33½ per cent. would be paid. The shire council maintains that the subsidy should be 50 per cent. I should like to know why the Government decided to grant a subsidy of only 33½ per cent. when normally a subsidy of 50 per cent. is paid.

What is the reason behind this? Is the Livingstone Shire Council more or less side-stepping the issue, or is it sincere in its representations to the Government on the 50 per cent. subsidy issue? Many people in Keppel Sands have asked me how sincere certain people on the council are in forging ahead with this 50 per cent. issue. I told them that I would raise the matter. I said, "I do not live in your electorate but I shall certainly do this for you." That is why I am raising it today.

In his Financial Statement the Treasurer mentioned the police buildings in North Rockhampton, where there are five police officers looking after approximately 25,000 people. The police station, which is in the main area of North Rockhampton, on the corner of Musgrave and Armstrong Streets, is a complete barn. Five police officers occupy one 10-ft. by 8-ft. room. By comparison, at the Etna Creek Prison Farm the accommodation is referred to as a hotel-motel. It has tiled floors and the best of conditions, including wall basins and what-have-you. Yet at North Rockhampton the senior sergeant, sergeant and three other officers occupy a 10-ft. by 8-ft. room, with no conveniences whatever.

Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt: He is a first-class sergeant of police.

Mr. THACKERAY: Yes, a sergeant first class, a sergeant, and three other officers. I raised this issue two or three years ago and the matter was to be investigated. People are told that if they go to the police and take them into their confidence they will be looked after. How can people in this area discuss anything with the police when the office desk is no bigger than the one I have here, which is approximately 4 or 5 feet long? They are all crammed together. Anybody who wishes to interview the first-class sergeant is taken into the sergeant's private residence. That is shocking. People who come to see the sergeant or any of the constables are taken outside onto the front lawn to be interviewed in full view of members of the public who are going past. If people want to give information to the police, they should be given the opportunity to do so in confidence, not while they are standing on the main thoroughfare, with buses going past and people saying, "Who is getting 'hooked' now?"

This is exactly what happens at the North Rockhampton Police Station. It is not the sergeant first class and the other officers who are whining about this. I am the one who is complaining on their behalf because I have seen the shocking conditions that exist and exactly what is going on there. The hon. member for Mackenzie knows the shocking conditions that exist there, because he knows the sergeant well. They were great footballers in the old days. Although they might have faced each other on the field, they respect each other's ability to pick a football winner.

Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt: That was a long while ago.

Mr. THACKERAY: I know. Those are the conditions at the North Rockhampton Police Station.

I hope you have recovered from your illness, Mr. Hooper. I am pleased to see that you are looking better.

Some time ago I raised in this Chamber, in the interests of amateur net fishermen, the matter of the fishing industry in Rockhampton. I do not know how any Government could be so stupid as to withhold licences for amateur net fishermen. Tomorrow I intend to present to Parliament a petition, signed by over 4,000 people in Rockhampton, a few in Gladstone, and a few in Yeppoon, protesting about the non-renewal of fishing licences after 31 December this year. The hon. members for Townsville North, Cairns and Mackay, and I, have raised this issue before.

I say that the greatest injustice has been done to fishermen in my area. I asked by means of a question what research the Government had done on marine life in the estuary of the Fitzroy River. I asked who were the members of the research team, what were their qualifications and how long they were there, and I found out that no research has been carried out in this area. I asked

how many amateur net fishermen have licences, and I learnt that the number decreased from 226 in 1962-63 to 159 in 1967-68. I also sought information on the number of licences for professional net fishermen in that area, and I discovered that there has also been a decrease in those numbers. I asked the Treasurer how many approaches each year were made to him by professional fishermen over the activities of amateur net fishermen, and he said that he was not aware of any.

I then asked the Treasurer to tell me why he has taken away the licences for net fishing by amateurs in Central Queensland, and this is what he said in answer to a question that I asked on 17 October—

"Amateur netmen interfere with the skilled professional units by breaking up shoals of mullet in South Queensland preventing them reshoaling, resulting in loss of fish."

Let us see what effect this has in Central Queensland. The Minister for Local Government and Conservation knows a bit about this; he is an old fisherman from way back. Appendix B, at page 7 of the annual report of the Fish Board for the year ended 30 June, 1968, shows that for the whole of the year only 20,786 lb. of mullet was received from Central Queensland, whereas in Brisbane 425,384 lb. was received. When there is a glut here, kerosene is thrown over the fish and they are burnt, or a bulldozer digs a hole and the fish are buried. How can the Treasurer talk about protecting fishermen and breaking up schools of mullet when fish are destroyed in that way? It is a shocking indictment of the Government that that is allowed to happen when people are starving.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member is not suggesting that the Chair is burning the fish.

Mr. THACKERAY: No, Mr. Hooper, I am not suggesting that. I am suggesting that the Minister in charge of the fishing industry has a finger in the pie.

The fish most caught in the Fitzroy estuary is barramundi. Admittedly the catch of this fish is higher in Rockhampton than it is anywhere else. That is to be expected because the Fitzroy estuary is a natural breeding ground for barramundi. Last year, 12,977 lb. of barramundi was caught. It was taken not only round Rockhampton in the Fitzroy River but as far north as Wumalgi and on the stations, and it was taken by both professional fishermen and amateur net fishermen, who are allowed to take barramundi under their licences.

King fish appear in the rivers in Central Queensland for about two or three weeks a year, and 142 lb. of king fish went through the board last year. The Minister says that he wishes to protect this species for the tourists. They will sit on the bank of the river for a long time before they catch 142 lb.

of king fish. All the Government really wants to do is sell out to Craig Mostyn and the other big companies.

As I said, 4,000 people have signed a petition in Rockhampton protesting against the Government's taking away their rights. The stage has been reached at which it is a question not only of black versus white but also of rich versus poor. The rich grow richer and fatter on the front bench on the Government side and the poor grow poorer and thinner on this side of the Chamber.

Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt: What about the hon. member for Port Curtis?

Mr. THACKERAY: He is in training at present.

Take the case of the amateur fisherman. He can go into a shop and buy a net and there is no notice on the wall to indicate what is the legal size. The Treasurer says that he does not think it is necessary to have such a notice because each size meets the requirements of a particular law. That is quite wrong.

In reply to a question that I asked recently, the Treasurer told me that I could catch mullet in a cast net. When I asked him under which section of the Act I could do that he said, "You can't catch them in a cast net." In my opinion, the only mullet in the cast net is the Treasurer; we have caught him. He does not know anything about fishing. At least the former Treasurer knew a gar from a shrimp when he was baiting a hook.

Mr. Hanson: The Treasurer is a good bite.

Mr. THACKERAY: I realise that he is a good bite. He has been advised by his officers on this question and has not gone into all the facts relative to amateur net fishermen at Rockhampton. They are only week-enders.

Prosecutions under the Act have increased since the number of patrolmen at Rockhampton has increased. Those men are doing a very efficient job. In view of that, I cannot see why the licences cannot be continued in force, especially as the report shows that there is no great need for them to be revoked. There are no mullet caught on lines—the Treasurer says he is worried about mullet—and very few king fish are caught on lines. No salmon went through the board last year, according to the figures in the report. Some of the 20,000 lb. of mullet that went through the board was caught in nets, but most of it was caught in traps on the beachfront from Joskeleigh and at places further north.

A man named Val Briggs has a fish trap at Stanage Bay, but the Army exercise, Coral Sea, has meant that blasting has been going on in the area day and night and he has not caught even a scale of a fish in his trap. He told me, "I will not get any until there is a change in the moon and the cycle of the tides comes round again. The fish are scattered; howziters have been firing shells

into the air; the Navy boats have been firing back onto the coast, and the whole area has been lit up at night-time. As a professional fisherman, I am duty bound to put in \$1,000 a year." I think that is the amount, and he has to take into consideration his good and bad times for his traps. The traps are knocked down, and they get blanket weed. There is also the Army bombardment as well as the monsoon seasons. All these things upset him.

Getting back to the amateur net fishermen, Japanese nylon nets do not wear out in two or three seasons; they will last forever. Anyone who has had anything to do with fishing and the nylon cord that can be bought today knows that it is possible to pull a car with it; it is so strong. There is a new type of nylon float on the nets. As the whole of the gear is made of nylon, it only needs a hose down and hanging up to dry and it will last for 20 or 30 years. Nylon cord can be purchased to repair these nets. They are not cheap to buy. If anyone tries to tell me that nylon nets will wear out in two or three years, I say he has not done any fishing at all.

I think it is a shocking thing for a Government to take away from amateur net fishermen in Rockhampton the freedom they have enjoyed, freedom that has been handed down from father to son. It has become a heritage. They use small boats not more than 16 feet long—just dories—fitted with 6-h.p. Clae engines. They abide by the rules laid down by the Department of Harbours and Marine, yet the Government has seen fit to take this right away from them.

I will conclude with that remark. I hope that senior members in the Government caucus will raise this issue and see that this regulation is revoked.

Mr. GRAHAM (Mackay) (5.8 p.m.): First of all, I preface my remarks by thanking the hon. member who has just resumed his seat for his kindly references to me. As one of the older brigade who will be retiring at the end of the term of this Parliament, I feel that I should express my thanks to all those people who, during my quarter-century or more in this Parliament, have extended to me the hand of friendship and at various times assisted me in my parliamentary duties and made my stay in this Chamber much more pleasant than it would otherwise have been.

It has been my privilege to serve under six Premiers. I entered Parliament in 1943, when the late Mr. Frank Cooper was Premier. He was followed by the late Ned Hanlon, then by V. C. Gair, the Honourable Frank Nicklin, the late Jack Pizzey, Mr. Chalk during his brief regime as Premier, and now the present Premier, Mr. Bjelke-Petersen.

Naturally, in 25 years I have seen many changes in this Parliament. At the end of that period, of the 62 members in this

Chamber in 1943 there are now only five remaining. That is an indication of the many changes that have taken place in personnel and representation. I have also seen many changes in the development of this great State. Before mentioning that, however, I pay a tribute to the electors of Mackay for their continued support and devotion to the policies of the Australian Labour Party. I pay a tribute, also, to the members of my branch of the party. They have always been loyal to the cause and active in its interests. During the ten elections that I have contested they have worked hard and assiduously towards my re-election.

I wish to express my thanks to the heads of the various Government departments with whom I have been associated. For the services given to me by officials with whom I have been in regular contact I say, "Thank you." Without the assistance rendered by those people, the job of parliamentarians would be made much more difficult. It is perhaps much easier for Government members to obtain information from departmental heads than it is for members of the Opposition. I know that when the Labour Party was in power, during which time I served as a Government member, I found that it was easier to obtain information from departmental heads than it is today. I am not saying that I have been denied very much information, but it seems that departmental heads are perhaps more apt to give consideration to requests by Government members than to requests by Opposition members.

I extend my appreciation to the members of the staff of Parliament House. I thank the head messenger and his staff, who are always willing to co-operate and give assistance. The staff of the Parliamentary Library give wonderful service to hon. members, and are ever-willing to meet the needs of members when they seek information. I have seen many changes, in the Refreshment Room staff, but they are always ready to attend to the needs of the inner man. Very few hon. members would have cause to complain about the service that is given to them.

Perhaps the most distressing feature of my parliamentary life was the defeat of the Australian Labour Party in 1957. Many reasons have been advanced for its defeat. Some people have been accused of being disloyal to the A.L.P., and some have been accused of being loyal to outside bodies. As a result of the split that took place within the Labour Party the present Government came into office, and in all sincerity I say that the State of Queensland has not enjoyed the same degree of prosperity under a Country-Liberal Government as it would have enjoyed if Labour had been given the privilege of retaining control of the Government benches. I say that because in the years preceding 1958 when the Labour Party went through troublesome times, the State progressed tremendously, and I compare that development with

the development that has taken place in the 11 years that the present Government has been in power.

This Government has had everything handed to it on a silver platter. I believe that in 1968 the people of Queensland, despite the apparent prosperity of the State, do not enjoy the same degree of security as they would if the Labour Party had control. During the 10 years of anti-Labour Government things have happened which, to my way of thinking, are not in the interests of this great State of Queensland, and maybe not in the interests of Australia as a whole. There is more discontent in Queensland today because of the activities of the Government, despite the availability of finance which, I believe, it is not handling to the best advantage. There is more unemployment and discontent in industry, and concern expressed by those in employment, than ever before. I cite the hospital nursing staff, school-teachers and many other people in employment. Discontent does not rest solely with those in employment; it is rife amongst those who suffer long periods of unemployment because of the Government's inactivity.

I admit that the Government has made tremendous financial gains by increasing taxation. One has only to refer to the Treasurer's Financial Statement to ascertain the tremendous increase in taxation in the Government's 10-year period of office, and to see how the underdog has been taxed. As a result of the tremendous financial intake which the Government has gained from the people, it has been able to undertake a lot of capital expenditure. However, when we consider the money the Government has had at its disposal, can we truly relate it to the industrial expansion in Queensland, with the exception of one industry, namely, the mining industry? Apart from that, Queensland fails badly in industrial expansion compared with the other States. It runs a bad last in industrial development, despite the fact that the Government has had a tremendous inflow of foreign investment.

This may be a suitable time for me to make some brief references to foreign investment. I know that there is a divergence of opinion amongst the higher authorities in the Commonwealth on this matter, and I know that there is a strong difference of opinion amongst political parties on whether the States are doing the right thing by allowing a huge inflow of foreign investment. I have here a brief reference from one of the newspapers, which says—

"How to live with a giant.

"American investment is pouring into Australia. It would be political suicide to shut it out, but there are dangers flowing from the increasing stake foreigners hold in this country. There are dangers which western Europe is now facing with regard to investment in Europe."

These same dangers are very evident in Australia today. In the period of 10 years we have seen Ministers of the Crown galavanting around the world, hawking Queensland's assets and selling them to the highest bidder. As a result of their activities we have seen a tremendous inflow of foreign capital to Queensland.

Why should not this capital come into Queensland when the companies have been offered such lucrative terms? A foreign investor would be mad not to accept the opportunities that are available in Queensland today to exploit our natural resources. Will the Government extend the same concessions and privileges to Australian investors who might want to develop the natural resources of this great State of Queensland? Could a foreign investor get better terms than he is being offered at the present? I say he could not because the terms are out of all proportion to the returns that Queensland will receive. Our raw materials—and we have many—could not be given away at better bargain prices. This Government is outdoing every other State. It puts to shame the great commercial stores in this country that every week or month have sales offering bargain prices. That is what the Queensland Government is doing. It is selling Queensland to overseas investors at bargain prices.

One would think that members of the Government are like some religious fanatics who believe that the world will end shortly. Will Queensland have these raw materials available in 150 years' time? Are there unlimited raw materials in Queensland that can be worked to the extent that they are being worked today? Even admitting that in 100 years' time there might be a different form of fuel, will we have coal then to feed our own industries? Will we have sufficient bauxite in 150 years' time to supply Queensland industry? One wonders when one considers the extent that the people controlling these industries today are exploiting our raw materials.

A question asked in the House about a week ago shows that in a short space of time—perhaps in a matter of under three or four years—5,000,000 tons of bauxite was exported from Australia. If my memory serves me correctly, when Comalco was given the privilege to mine bauxite, it was thought—I thought this and so did many other hon. members—that the bauxite would be used to establish an industry in Queensland. Admittedly we have the plant at Gladstone that is producing alumina for conversion into aluminium. But in the space of only a few years millions of tons of bauxite have been exported to Japan, Germany, Holland, Argentina, Nova Scotia, France, and other countries. They are gaining the advantage of getting material that should be preserved for the future of this great nation. The same is happening with our coal. Despite all the

Government's "blah-blah" about industrial development, it is guilty of treachery against Queensland's future.

Complaints are received even from supporters of the Government. I read an article in which the Minister for Mines, Main Roads and Electricity, who now occupies the front bench, defended the use of overseas capital. He said that he saw nothing wrong with allowing the inflow of overseas capital to exploit our natural wealth. There was also the statement of the present Leader of the Country Party in the Federal sphere, Right Honourable J. McEwen, in which he raised the danger of allowing foreign capital to enter this country without some form of governmental control. Recently the Prime Minister was forced into taking action to prevent the Mutual Life and Citizen's Assurance Co. Ltd. from failing under foreign control.

I therefore pose this question for the Government: who owns Australia? Has any Government the right to sell this nation to obtain the use of foreign capital? Who indeed owns Australia? Is it the banks, the politicians, the foreign investors, or the Australians who inherited this land? Did not our forebears pioneer Australia? Did they not cultivate the soil and develop the nation by sweat and hardship? If this country belongs to us, why are there over 1,000,000 people living at or near poverty level in a land of abundance? No-one can deny that there is poverty in this country. There is an under-privileged class which is forced to live on low incomes and is denied better standards. Why should foreign interests be allowed to take our land? Who gives them authority to do so? Nobody but the Government. I accuse the Government of being unaware of the great dangers inherent in selling this great land to foreign investors.

I am not against the development of our natural resources, and I am not against the use of foreign capital for that purpose, but I do say that it is the Government's right to insist that industry be established here in Queensland to provide employment for the thousands who are without jobs. The Government cannot deny that an unemployment problem exists, and one has only to look at the publications of the Federal Government on unemployment to realise how serious it is. In my area it has caused great concern for many years, and it will cause greater concern within the next few weeks. Because of the early termination of the crushing season, I can see not hundreds but over 1,000 people unemployed in Mackay before the Christmas season.

What does unemployment bring? It brings loss of income, a lowering of standards of living, and hardship. At Mackay even today, at the height of the crushing season, there are people who are out of work, and with the early termination of the crushing season a great body of workers will be unemployed. In January, 1968, there were over 1,000

people unemployed in Mackay, and that will be the situation again in January, 1969. I ask the Government what it is going to do about it, and I can give the answer now—nothing. The Government did nothing about it previously, and it will do nothing about it in 1969.

As I said, unemployment affects the home life of the individual. It is bad enough for a parent to be unemployed, but it is even worse when juveniles are unemployed and reaching a stage of frustration because they cannot get jobs. As late as yesterday a parent came to me in Mackay and asked if I could get a position for her daughter, 16½ years of age, who attended a commercial college and had commercial qualifications. Admittedly she had not passed the Junior public examination, but she had certificates in commercial subjects. She could not get a job. A parent who is out of employment can get sustenance, which gives him an income of some sort; a girl of 16½ cannot.

Let me draw the attention of hon. members to the figures relating to junior unemployment. In February of this year, 40 per cent. of juveniles in Queensland were unemployed. In earlier years the figures were—

| Year | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|
| 1963 | 37 |
| 1964 | 39 |
| 1965 | 38 |
| 1966 | 36 |

It is quite logical to expect that, with a figure of 40 per cent. in February, 1968, it could be higher in 1969. It is a shocking indictment of the Government of the day that unemployment amongst juveniles is so prevalent in Queensland, a State that the Government says is very rich in natural resources and has an abundance of wealth.

The Treasurer says in his Financial Statement that the Government has never been so well off. If one looks at the Tables relating to the Financial Statement, one can ascertain just how much money this Government has had. I do not claim to be an authority on finance or a financial wizard. On the other hand, the Treasurer sets himself up as a financial wizard, but I think he is in fact only a bird-brained financier. In 1967-68 the Government had \$376,000,000 in the Consolidated Revenue Fund. It showed a surplus of \$970,000 only because of the high taxation it imposed on the people of this State, together with the revenue it obtained from such things as the Totalisator Administration Board and licensing fees, and its increased allocation from the Federal Government. The figures in the Consolidated Revenue Fund show that expenditure has increased from \$178,000,000 in 1957-58 to \$376,000,000 in 1967-68. Despite that increase, on only four occasions in 10 years has the Government shown a surplus and over-all it is in deficit nearly \$12,000,000.

Let me consider for a moment the public debt for the State of Queensland. Some people will say, "The Battle of Waterloo is not paid for yet, so the public debt does not matter much". However, I believe that it matters a great deal. Probably the Government's greatest performance is in virtually doubling the public debt in 10 years. The public debt in 1958, according to the figures, was \$571 million. In 1968 it was \$1,077 million. The debt per head of population has increased from \$394.26 to \$621.92.

I suppose our Treasurer, with a shake of his head, will say, "What does that matter?" He would perhaps be right if he accused me of not knowing much about the Financial Statement, but I have enough sense to know that this sort of thing cannot continue. I know that the increasing of the public debt places greater charges upon the Government by way of sinking fund repayments, and I know that sinking fund repayments have to be met from somewhere.

The Treasurer can smile and say, "All is well because of the abundance of funds". I believe that, so far as Queensland is concerned, all is not well. I have mentioned the investment of foreign capital; I have mentioned the unemployment position; I have mentioned the discontent that exists today in the industries of Queensland. Within the last 24 hours we have seen, I think, three industrial disputes, mainly because of discontent within the particular industries because of the failure of the Government to give heed to the needs of those who are employed in industry.

Where can the worker in industry obtain justice if Governments of the day do not give heed to his needs and give him some protection? Today there is no protection of the lower-income groups. With the removal of price control, every increase that is granted by the industrial tribunals—and increases are granted only after pressure, continued agitation, and the showing of industrial strength—is absorbed before the worker receives it because of the failure of this Government to reintroduce price control. To my way of thinking, competition does not result in equilibrium between the cost of living and wages. Today there are many items, especially the essential items of life, the price of which should be controlled by the Government.

The position arises where the Government simply ignores the demands of the useful people of the community and continues to hand out concessions to those who support its political philosophy. One can get proof of this by referring to the Treasurer's own Financial Statement, wherein he gives figures relative to land tax. Land tax has been considerably reduced—and I am not entirely opposed to that—but although the man on the land is entitled to some protection it should not be all one-way traffic. If concessions are to be handed out to some sections of the community, then the Treasurer

and the Government should give some consideration to making concessions to those who perhaps need them most. As I said, today there are sections of industry that do need protection.

Now, let me come closer to home. I want to say something appertaining to my own electorate. There is talk—again this refers to the activities of foreign companies—about the building of a railway line to the coast adjacent to Mackay for the development of Goonyella coal. I posed a question to the Premier the other day on a statement attributed to the Minister for Mines, Main Roads and Electricity when he spoke at the opening of the Alligator Creek school. I understand that he was reported to have said that extra school accommodation would be required in that vicinity in the near future. In my question to the Premier I asked if the Minister was referring to Hay Point. In keeping with the Government's policy, of course, I got a very evasive reply. However, I am quite convinced that the Government has already made its decision.

Mr. Chalk: How could it?

Mr. GRAHAM: Why couldn't it? If the Government has not made a decision on the matter, it is handing over its authority to a foreign company. Who will decide where the Goonyella coal is to be transported to? Will it be the Government of the day or a Japanese company?

Mr. Chalk: I will tell you.

Mr. GRAHAM: The Minister will tell us, in his good time, as he always does. What has the Government got to hide? It is aware of the fight that is being put up by the Mackay Harbour Board on this matter. It knows perfectly well that the Mackay Harbour Board would like to see the coal transported to Mackay Harbour, which would be to the benefit of Queensland. But if the coal is transported to Hay Point who will derive the benefit? It will be an overseas company, which will finance and develop the project. It will dictate the terms to the Government, as other overseas companies are doing at present.

Why has not the Government let its decision be known? The Government says, "We believe that the State of Queensland would be better served," and so on. The Government knows that the members of the Mackay Harbour Board have said that it would be to the board's advantage, and to the advantage of the State as a whole, if the railway line terminated at the Mackay Harbour.

I raise now the matter of education. I will not speak at length on this subject because it has been extensively debated in the Chamber, and when the Estimates of the Education Department are being considered hon. members will have the opportunity of speaking generally on education. However, I wish to refer particularly to the use of

parents and citizens' associations for political purposes. In my electorate some people associated with political parties have been using the parents and citizens' associations for their own political benefit. I say this advisedly, and I am prepared to stand by what I say.

Recently I asked the Minister for Education a question on this matter, because the chairman of the Mackay branch of the Country Party was approached by the chairman of the Victoria Park School Committee on the matter of providing extra school accommodation at Victoria Park. If the Government is going to accept representations from outside bodies, irrespective of their political colour, and ignore the demands and representations of local members of Parliament, it is doing the wrong thing. The Minister for Education was very evasive—I hate to say that he was telling an untruth—when he said that the representations were conveyed to the hon. member for Mirani as a result of the approach made to the chairman of the Mackay branch of the Country Party. I want to know why. The trouble is that the Ministers are far too weak and gutless; they are prepared to accept outside representations and ignore hon. members. It cannot be denied that over the years I have made representations on behalf of the Victoria Park School Committee in putting its needs before the Government.

The matter has become a political one, because the Government has been able to weed out all the supporters of the Labour Party and put in supporters of the Country Party. The Government has been able to bypass me and go direct to the chairman of the Country Party. I object strongly to this course: it is not fair play.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: Who is president of the Bulimba High School Parents and Citizens' Association?

Mr. GRAHAM: I am not concerned with that.

I mention, too, the number of Ministers of the Crown who use speech nights for the purpose of making political speeches. At the Mackay High School, for example, the Minister for Mines and Main Roads made one of the best political speeches I have heard. He has a name for this sort of thing. On every occasion that he is on a platform he uses it to push his political barrow. These things should be made public, because I believe that it is not in the interests of the public that they should be as they are. I will leave it at that.

To those who have used me, accused me and abused me during my long political life, I extend my regards. There are people in this Chamber, and out of it, who have helped me in my career. There are those who have tried to besmirch me and defeat me, and there are those who, sometimes, have perhaps been unscrupulous in their attacks upon me. But I am a forgiving type of man, as I

demonstrated the other day when I fell foul of Mr. Speaker. I accused him of being biased and of being a bigot. I believe that Mr. Nicholson in his position as Speaker sometimes oversteps the mark, but being the boss, he calls us to heel and we must obey. I firmly believe that in this Chamber all men should be equal and that there should be no line of demarcation between us. We are here to represent our constituents, and I do not think there is one member who does not give of his best.

Admittedly the Government of the day will try to make capital out of a man's failings. Government members try to make capital out of the fact that one man has not the same fluency of tongue as someone else, and sometimes we are misled by information that is not always authentic. But that does not give any Minister of the Crown, or any other member of the Government, a privilege to belittle and besmirch the good name of other hon. members in this Chamber. In my 25 years in Parliament I have tried to give the electors of Mackay the representation that I thought they were justly entitled to. The fact that I have had such a long period as a member indicates that they have been satisfied. There are few men in any political field who can contest 10 elections and come through each one successfully.

Mr. Houston: Irrespective of boundaries.

Mr. GRAHAM: Yes, irrespective of boundaries, although I have not been affected in that way to any great extent. What has been done to my boundaries has not had any effect on me.

I leave this thought with members of this Assembly who are contesting the 1969 election, particularly the members of my own party: I wish them well, and I am certain that when the figures go up in 1969 the Opposition will be on the other side of the Chambers.

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer) (5.48 p.m.), in reply: I must say to the Committee that I have waited throughout the debate for the development of some firm lines of argument that clearly show what I might describe as the Opposition's attitude to the Budget.

Mr. Bennett: You say that every time.

Mr. CHALK: I am not like the hon. member. I do not yap all the time. He yaps most of the time, and keeps on yapping.

Irrespective of the party in power, one can reasonably expect some criticism of any Budget from the Opposition. Different parties have different views on priorities of work to be carried out. In fact, within one's own party there are differing views on what should have priority and what should be rated lower down. Consequently, some criticism of a Budget is always expected when it is presented to the Parliament.

My first comment on the debate is simply this: that it has been particularly bereft of concerted attack by the Opposition. As I have said on other occasions, the Government puts its financial policy into the Budget speech, it justifies that policy, and it is for the Opposition to find weaknesses in it, if it can. I have little doubt that on this occasion the Opposition has been caused some embarrassment. I have listened to speaker after speaker and have not yet heard any serious criticism from members of the Opposition of the Budget that I have presented. Indeed, I suspect that the Opposition knows that this is really a good Budget, one that is in the interests of this State, and because of that it is endeavouring to give some silent approval of it. As I said, there has been no serious criticism of it during the debate.

Much can be said in reply to a debate such as this. However, practical considerations make it impossible for a Treasurer, whoever he might be, to refer to all the pertinent points that have been raised by hon. members who have spoken. Consequently, while I propose to endeavour to reply to most of the major points that have been made by hon. members, if I fail to comment on some points that have been raised I am certain that the Committee will appreciate that there must be some limitation.

The Leader of the Opposition apparently examined the Budget in detail, as is his responsibility. He led the debate for the Opposition. It was apparent from his remarks that he had few points of real criticism. In fact, to me his reply was what one might expect will be his policy speech in 1969. His speech was a criticism of some of the actions of the Government rather than of the Budget as presented. I think that his most serious charge was this—and I am not suggesting that these were his exact words: that over the past two years the Government has overtaxed and under-spent, thus enabling the present favourable Budget to be introduced. I want to examine that position dispassionately.

In my first Budget, for the year 1966-67, I introduced measures of increased taxation. No Treasurer likes to take such a course, especially in his first Budget. But in September, 1966, I had to face the grim financial position that then existed. In the first place, there was an accumulated deficit of some \$7,250,000 in the Consolidated Revenue Fund. The State was still in the throes of a terrible drought and this was progressively and adversely affecting the level of much of our revenue. At the same time, the Government, having kept a very close rein on expenditure in the earlier drought period, was faced with certain unavoidable additional expenditure which had to be met.

What courses of action faced the Government? It could have run further into deficit without the resources to finance it; it could

have retrenched essential services; or it could have increased local taxation, obviously a politically distasteful task. But it had to make a choice. With an accumulated deficit of \$7,250,000 and with no sign of an end to the drought, the State was reaching a stage where the temporary use of trust funds could no longer be depended upon to supply cash for day-to-day needs.

The Government decided that the responsible approach was the politically distasteful one of taxation increase. I again remind the Committee that at that time there was no sign of a break in the drought, and the financial effects of the drought were compounding. As things turned out, the drought did break later that financial year and our finances started to improve. Admittedly it was a slow improvement at first, but later it was at a faster rate. Our first task was to reduce the accumulated deficit. When we could see that covered, the Government took action to step up certain items of expenditure where there had been a lag. I endeavoured to explain this position when the Financial Statement was before the Committee.

Coming to the current year, the Government endeavoured to strike a fair balance between the competing claims of taxation reduction and added expenditure efforts. It made some substantial reductions in freights and taxation. Naturally, it did not fully cut back the added imposts made in 1966. There were good reasons for this. If the Government had further cut back levels of taxation, obviously it would have had to cut the levels of expenditure. In consequence, much deserving expenditure in this year's Budget would have had to be excised.

I put it to the Leader of the Opposition that he should state his attitude clearly. Is it his view that the Government has been too generous in its expenditure levels this year? If so, in what respect is the Government too generous? In what departments would the Leader of the Opposition be prepared to make cuts? Would he have substituted some new avenues of added taxation to make good the revenue so lost and thus enable the present levels of expenditure to be maintained? No State Government can spend more money than it receives. I put it to the Leader of the Opposition that he should clearly state where his party stands in this matter. There is no magic formula by which the Government can conjure funds out of thin air. The matter has to be faced squarely.

The hon. member complained that the expected level of rail-freight earnings this year was only a small percentage increase on those of last year. He asked why the increase was not higher in view of the new coal traffic. I feel that he has completely missed the whole point that this year's estimate reflects the reductions in rail freight announced in the Budget. The increased returns will be up this year in spite of the reductions effected in other freights.

The hon. member made the amazing claim that the provision for loans and subsidies to local bodies showed—and I use his words—“a clear indication of the Government's lack of intention to increase the amounts available to local bodies by way of loans and subsidies, and this is a very regrettable fact”. Let us examine his claim. On hearing a statement like that, I can draw only one of two conclusions: either the Leader of the Opposition shows a complete inability to examine the Budget properly, or he is guilty of gross misrepresentation. Candidly, I would not charge him with that, so all that I can conclude is that he does not understand the position.

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

Mr. CHALK: Before the dinner recess I was dealing with the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition relative to subsidies paid to local government. If the hon. member looks carefully at the relevant figures, he will see that the Government paid out \$14,044,344 by way of loans and subsidies to local bodies in 1967-68, \$1,959,005 coming from Consolidated Revenue and \$12,085,339 from Loan Fund. This year the Estimates provide for a payment to local bodies of \$16,522,000, \$1,470,000 coming from Consolidated Revenue Fund and \$15,052,000 from Loan Fund. The increase on last year's expenditure is \$1,007,656, or 7.17 per cent. Queensland's Loan Council allocation increased by 4.9 per cent., and Government assistance to local bodies increased by 7.17 per cent. Surely that explodes the argument put forward by the Leader of the Opposition. Do these figures show a reluctance on the part of the Government to provide increased moneys to local bodies in this State by way of loans and subsidies? For my part, I am prepared to leave the very obvious answer to the intelligence of each hon. member.

Later in his speech the hon. member stated that the rate of subsidy has been reduced continually over the years that Country-Liberal Governments have been in office. It is true that the Government did review subsidy rates in 1958 and 1961, and that some reductions in rates were made. These are the only general reviews of the scheme that have taken place in our 11 years of office. In my opinion, the hon. member ought to be a little more careful and check the facts before making statements of that nature in this Chamber. On each occasion the Government found that the subsidy growth far exceeded the growth rate in its Loan Fund allocations—for example, from 1956-57 to 1960-61 the subsidy costs had risen 58.96 per cent., and Loan Fund allocations had increased 25.45 per cent. While this situation was continuing, other segments of the capital works programme were suffering. Does the hon. member suggest that we should have cut back in education buildings, forestry, irrigation, etc., to allow subsidy costs to increase out of proportion?

At the time of the last subsidy review in 1961, subsidy payments to local bodies were running at the rate of \$12,645,788 per annum. Despite the revised scale of subsidy rate after that review, last year's subsidy payments reached \$13,656,695, and this year it is expected that the figure will rise to \$15,697,000.

To further explain the position, I would add that over the past four years the Governmental borrowing programme has moved from \$73,352,000 in 1964-65 to \$89,790,000 in 1968-69, an increase of 22.41 per cent. At the same time, semi-governmental raisings have increased from \$49,956,000 in 1964-65 to \$67,490,000 in 1968-69, or by 35.1 per cent.

This clearly shows that our debenture borrowing programme is growing at a faster rate than the governmental borrowing programme. As subsidies are paid on debenture-financed works, it is obvious that our subsidy payments are increasing at a faster rate than the loan funds from which they are provided. Despite this trend over the past four years, the Government has continued to meet the increased subsidy payments to help local bodies in their capital works programmes. This is the best scheme in Australia and is recognised as such by the local authorities themselves. I believe that the Opposition is out of step in its criticism of this form of subsidy.

The hon. member became quite excited about the financing of the Moura-Gladstone railway. Because of what would seem to be insufficient research, he came to some very mistaken conclusions. Unfortunately, on this false premise he then went on to accuse me of giving him an inaccurate answer on a previous occasion when I had told him that the company had contributed half the cost of this line.

The facts briefly are these: the cost of this line was \$27,500,000. The financial transactions involved in its construction have been recorded in total through the Moura Railway Project Fund, which has been fed from the Loan Fund. The company deposited in cash with the Treasury \$14,800,000 as a security deposit for the due performance of certain of its commitments under the agreement. To secure this deposit, certain Commonwealth inscribed stock held by the Treasury has been placed in trust—on behalf of the company but still in the name of the Treasurer of Queensland—to be released from the trust over a period of 10 years as the deposit is repaid to the company from the earnings of the line, or, in the case of default by the company, without repayment to it.

All of this \$14,800,000 deposited cash has been used in the over-all Government works programme, most of it, as it happens, through the Agricultural Bank Fund. In other words, we will spend \$27,500,000 out of Loan Fund on the Moura-Gladstone line, but at the same time we had \$14,800,000 of company cash

which has been used for other capital purposes. I think it must now be very clear to the hon. member that the company has contributed \$14,800,000 which has been used in governmental works expenditure. A knowledgeable appraisal of information in the tables accompanying my Budget speech would have supplied this information on the use of counterpart funds.

The hon. member then found fault with the proposal to pay a student allowance to non-State primary schools, contending that before the Government made such grants it should have conducted an investigation into the activities of each school and made the payment according to needs. I wonder if the hon. member gave this suggestion much thought. Who, for example, in his scheme of things would be the arbiter to decide that one particular school needed less assistance than another, or conversely, that one was worthy of greater assistance than another? What sort of complicated measuring stick did he have in mind? What sort of administrative machine had he contemplated to run this arrangement, which would have bred complete dissatisfaction throughout the length and breadth of the private school system in this State?

The fact is that the Government saw the need for financial relief to these schools to ensure that all children had somewhat equal educational opportunities. A simple measure was called for, and I trust the authorities of the various non-State schools to apply these funds to the best educational advantage of their children, and I believe that they will.

I should also like to correct an apparent misapprehension under which the hon. member is labouring relative to the Trust and Special Funds. He made a particular point of the underspending of appropriations in these funds. As he is no doubt aware, Trust Funds are established for a specific purpose, and the revenues available to such funds cannot be diverted for other purposes. Furthermore, unlike Consolidated Revenue Fund Votes, moneys not physically spent in a year are carried forward in the funds for the purpose of the trust to the next year. These carried-forward moneys are committed in many instances under firm contracts, and the fact that cheques have not been drawn against the fund at 30 June means very little.

Take, for example, some of the construction funds with unspent cash balances at 30 June that he specifically mentioned. The unspent appropriation in the Commonwealth States Housing Fund represents almost exclusively commitments for Army housing at Townsville, where contracts have been let and house construction is proceeding at a very rapid rate but where builders had not reached the stage where payments to the extent of the balance could be made. The same type of circumstances applies to the carried-forward sums in the University Capital Works Fund and the Commonwealth Education Fund. A good example of the

situation in the Moura Railway Project Fund, where the work is virtually completed and the line is operating, but where further payments to the extent of \$1,200,000 have still to be made.

Let me put it another way. During 1967-68 a programme of work sufficient to utilise the appropriation in the Construction Trust Funds was put in hand, but owing to varying circumstances cash payments to the full extent could not be made before 30 June. However, the moneys remain in the funds for the payment of these commitments this year.

The hon. member cannot comprehend how the Government can spend \$50,000,000 more this year through the Trust Funds than it spent last year. Let me assure him again that the Government has massive construction programmes at all stages. Admittedly some are on the drawing boards, whilst others are under tender and others in progress nearing completion. Surely it must now be clear to the hon. member that this is really a "march to progress" Budget.

The hon. member got his figures mixed up again, and, consequently his conclusions, when he criticised the increase in numbers of police personnel. He bemoaned the fact that there was to be a reduction of 16.66 per cent. in the number of policewomen. If he takes a second look at the figures he will see that there is to be an increase of 20 per cent. and not a reduction of 16.66 per cent. How he arrives at his figure, I do not know.

The increase of only 47 in the number of police constables, when I had referred to an additional 95 in the strength, also gave him concern. He recognised that the difference in numbers was in other ranks, but he saw something detrimental to the over-all efficiency of the force in this fact. Obviously the action of the Government last year in creating new senior positions in the Police Force has in no way depleted the strength of the force or reduced its efficiency. In fact, it has increased its effectiveness, and that is the reason for creating additional senior ranks. So we find that we do have an additional 95 members in the Police Force. I want to point out to the hon. member that the force is even more effective than this increase of 95 members indicates. In addition, of course, the further 40 civilian staff has the effect of releasing additional police officers for police duties. All in all, I should say that the hon. member has really very little to be critical about in this regard. We have an additional 95 in the force, but I point out to the hon. member that the force will be even more effective than is indicated by the increase of 95. In addition, a further 40 civilians will be added to the staff to undertake police duties.

All in all, I should say that I believe the hon. member really had very little criticism to offer on the Budget. Certainly any criticism that he did offer was not in any way in keeping with the Budget as presented.

I should like to touch very quickly on the comments of the hon. member for South Coast in his contribution to this debate. He advanced his view on the milk report and other matters that, I know, will receive due consideration from the appropriate Minister. His concern about the needs of the State's Aboriginal people is shared by the Government, and has been recognised by it in the Budgets of the last few years. The Government's efforts together with the financial assistance that is now coming from the Commonwealth, should make a very noticeable improvement in the welfare and well-being of these people in a very short space of time.

The hon. member for Barcoo had some very laudatory remarks to make about the Budget. I believe he had good reason for doing so as, after all, his electorate was very fairly treated. Indeed, it is a very good example of the fact that the Government places the weight of expenditure where it is most needed, and is not influenced by narrow, political considerations. Indeed, the Government's development programme is running along so fast in the hon. member's electorate that, quite candidly, he is embarrassed. I can understand his endeavour to attempt to attract some credit to himself—I do not blame him for that—but, it is true that he found this Budget the most embarrassing Budget ever put forward so far as his electorate is concerned. The two main contentious issues he raised concerned the Government's freehold land sale policy and the provision of access roads into new developmental areas. The points he was attempting to make in both these issues were, I believe, quite pertinently and correctly answered by way of interjection.

The hon. member for Chatsworth, very correctly I believe, gave the lie to the claim of the Leader of the Opposition that the Budget was designed as election bait.

An Opposition Member: So it was.

Mr. CHALK: That is the hon. member's idea.

As the hon. member for Chatsworth pointed out, the Budget merely represents a milestone in the continuing and obviously successful financial policies of this Government. The hon. member made a plea for parliamentary reform and for anti-litter laws, which no doubt Mr. Speaker and the responsible Minister will consider at a later time.

I now wish to make a few brief remarks in reply to the hon. member for Toowoomba East. Quite candidly, he seemed to have very little about which to attack the Government, although he was one of the principal

speakers on the first day of the debate. It is true that he spent quite a lot of time on the \$4 deposit required by the S.E.A. on electricity accounts. The Minister for Mines, Main Roads and Electricity has already completely answered him on that point.

The hon. member for Nudgee made what I would describe as one of his usual impromptu contributions to the debate. He became completely tangled in his criticism of the education provisions when he claimed that the additional 850 teachers mentioned in the Budget would not even be sufficient to match the resignations. If he would only take time to study the Budget he would see that the 850 teachers provided for in the number of primary and secondary-school staff are in addition to the current strength. In other words, funds have been provided for an expected increase in the actual numbers of teachers net of resignations.

The hon. member was critical also of the Government's decision to provide the \$25 student allowance to non-State schools. Despite taunts in an endeavour to get him to do so, he would not come out and say exactly where he stood on this matter. However, I charge him now: is he in favour of it or is he not? That is what the electors of Nudgee want to know, and that is what the people of Queensland will want to know on election day from the hon. member for Nudgee. Anyone who reads his speech will see exactly what he said. I am prepared to go into the Nudgee electorate and read his speech from "Hansard" and my reply to it. I challenge him to tell the people in his electorate exactly where he stands.

The hon. member spoke of improving the conditions of the nursing profession, but he could not see that the recruitment of additional nurses and the addition of a further 100 sisters to the over-all establishment numbers would do just that.

At this point, he seemed to run out of ideas. He filled in the rest of his time by repeating the old story we have heard from him here, year in and year out, about the dental profession, and relating a particular instance of an apparent oversight by a doctor at the Royal Brisbane Hospital and, in his own story, admitted the same oversight by the complainant's own doctor. How in the name of heavens can anybody take this hon. member seriously?

The hon. member for Carnarvon disclosed a very lucid appreciation of the effects of the wheat freight concessions, and I thank him for that. His speech indicated that he had done his homework in this direction.

The hon. member for South Brisbane gave us his usual verbiage. He spent most of his time rehashing police matters that had been aired and debunked weeks before. For his sake it may be as well that he did, because I say, quite candidly, that his brief excursion into Budget matters

indicated that he knows less about the finances of this State than he does about law.

He saw something sinister, of course—and this is his usual attitude—in the steadily rising revenues from liquor, traffic and betting taxes. There has of course been no increase in this taxation in this Budget; nor was there during the years he mentioned. Increased revenues are simply indicators of the prosperity in the community under this Government. The fact is that there is more spending power in the pockets of the people at the present time, and if that spending power is there, an Australian will not be stopped from spending it in the manner that he decides he wants to.

The hon. member then saw fit to attack the Department of Education and the instructors at the teachers' colleges. He claimed mismanagement, inefficiency, inadequate training and so on because 30 first-year students were dismissed at the end of last term. The facts are that, because of unsatisfactory examination results, 31 first-year primary students at Kelvin Grove were dismissed. The hon. member should not interject, because I know.

Mr. Bennett interjected.

Mr. CHALK: I do not want to spill the whole of it. Seventeen of these who were prepared to work, and who it was thought had some hope of success, were allowed to return this term, without allowance. They returned on the condition that if they pass the exams at the end of this year their scholarships will be restored.

How can this be construed as a reflection on the Education Department or the teachers' college instructors? Over 1,700 trainees were recruited to the colleges this year, and I am sure that the drop-out ratio would compare favourably with like experience elsewhere. What was the hon. member's motive in bringing forward such a spurious argument as a point of criticism of the Government? So far as I am concerned, he is obviously clutching at straws when he does that.

I very much appreciate the argument put forward by the hon. member for Toowoong and his excellent assessment of the shortcomings in Commonwealth-State financial relationships. I assure him—the hon. member for Bundaberg also recognised this to-day—that this whole question is a very complex one, and I am prepared to study the problem in the way in which he put it forward. Speaking briefly to the hon. member's proposal, I will make some brief observations. As Treasurer, I must ensure that any scheme substituted for the present arrangements has regard to the differences in taxable capacity as between States. If this essential difference between the States is forgotten, then Queensland could find itself in a very unhappy position. It might well be a case in which the "haves" will have more and the "have-nots" will have less—and unfortunately we would be among the "have-nots".

Altogether apart from this point, there must be an equitable base on which to start a new formula, and special attention must be paid to the growth aspect of any new formula. It is equally obvious that any new State taxes must match the increasing demands of State services.

The hon. member has recognised and emphasised that the stakes are high. It is a case of Federalism or centralism and, for my part, and for the good of all Australians, a solution which preserves Federalism in the true sense must be found. I commend the hon. member for his contribution.

The hon. member for Belmont justified additional expenditure for the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs. I can assure the hon. member that the improvement in the welfare of these people commands a very high priority in the Government's thinking, and our sincerity in this direction is borne out in our Budget proposals.

The hon. member for Mackenzie put some of the comments of the hon. member for Belmont on Aboriginal welfare into their correct perspective when he compared the Government's effort with that of previous Labour Governments.

I appreciate the hon. member's views concerning the limit of \$20,000 on Agricultural Bank loans. However, such must be considered against the total moneys available and the total volume of advances by the bank. I recognise that a very strong case can be made to increase this limit substantially. However, it all comes back to the question of available funds. In recent years funds have been found to allow advances to increase at the rate of approximately \$1,000,000 a year, and since 1960 the total advances have more than doubled. This is the maximum effort that can be made without unduly depleting funds required for other public works and services. If we increased the maximum load limit from \$20,000, the consequence would be a reduction in the number of loans that could be made. The question thus resolves itself into the simple proposition of serving a greater number of clients on a limited basis or a lesser number on a more generous basis. The hon. member can be assured, however, that the matter will be kept under review continuously, having regard to the availability of funds for such purpose, and I hope that eventually I will be able to meet his suggestion.

I turn now to the comments of the hon. member for Townsville North. I have read his speech, and I think it is fairly clear that he is quite satisfied with the assistance that it is proposed to grant to the sugar industry by way of rail freight and other concessions. However, in respect of the freight concessions envisaged for grain-growers, he apparently adopted the views of someone else, who described these concessions as an "insult".

I must confess that I have given up trying to understand how the hon. member's mind works. The value of freight concessions to

the grain industry amounts to \$1,000,000 per annum. The concession was applied in such a way that the greatest aid was given to those with the greatest need. How, in the light of these circumstances, the hon. member can say that a \$1,000,000 concession is an "insult" is beyond my comprehension. I am prepared to leave it to the electors of Queensland to judge whether this substantial concession is an insult or a very real aid to the grain-growing industry. I stand squarely behind the Budget proposals on grain freights, and I have received enough messages of encouragement from growers in the Far West to lead me to believe that the Government's new proposals are sound and have a firm backing within the grain-growing industry. I believed in the case for decentralisation—it was a case for decentralisation—that the Graingrowers' Association put to me. I believe that the Government has to assist the needy and, quite candidly, I am not very concerned about the vocal greedy few.

Of course, the hon. member side-stepped the issue as far as North Queensland was concerned by ignoring the effect of general freight reductions on livestock, log and sawn timber, fruit, and general merchandise. These were all substantial concessions, and the Government is well aware of the appreciation of residents of the North and more remote areas for the rail freight concessions provided in the Budget. I suggest to the hon. member that he ought to inform himself better on issues such as these. I know that the commendation which the Government is receiving is an embarrassment to him, but it is no excuse for not informing himself.

The hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha spoke at length on the recent milk report. The hon. members for South Coast and Barcoo also contributed their ideas on this subject. The views expressed by each of them have been noted, and I can only repeat that they will be carefully considered by the Minister for Primary Industries and by Cabinet before any firm decisions are taken on the matter.

The hon. member for Wynnum made an impassioned plea for a brighter railway station at South Brisbane and for a more convenient cloak room at that station. This is a good example of my earlier remark that different persons would place different emphasis and relative importance on certain matters. This human trait will always be with us, particularly where funds available are less than required for all the tasks a Government wishes to carry out. If the Government had sufficient money, many of these small things would be done and would pass without notice or comment.

The Government sees the need to give high priority to the relaying of track on the South Brisbane-Kyogle line, and substantial funds are being diverted for that purpose. The hon. member for Wynnum, however, chose instead a new railway station at South Brisbane and a better waiting-room. All I can say to the hon. member is that I believe that the Government's scale of priority is the

more realistic. I, too, would like to see a brighter railway station at South Brisbane, but I cannot put it higher in priority than other railway work now in hand.

The hon. member for Redcliffe made quite a long submission on the fishing industry, and I will certainly ask my officers to examine this submission in full detail. He mentioned especially prawning in the Gulf of Carpentaria. I think the hon. member will appreciate that control of this industry in the Gulf presents some very real difficulties. These are not only practical difficulties; there are also constitutional difficulties of some magnitude. There are very few areas bordering on the Gulf which are suitable for shore-based processing stations. As the hon. member knows, the Gulf area is an isolated one and the provision of essential services presents some problems of very real substance. One example of this type of problem is that of a supply of sufficient pure water for Karumba. The Government has spent quite a deal of money endeavouring to provide water at a reasonable price. There are also difficulties in providing other essential services, and in maintaining those services.

In addition, there are many problems of a constitutional nature. Much of the fishing waters of the Gulf are situated outside the 12-mile limit. In addition, almost all the shore processing is for export, and consequently the legislative powers of the State are particularly limited. The Commonwealth Government has quite detailed regulations for the licensing of export processing works, and it is very doubtful whether, as a matter of law, the State can legislate in this behalf, especially if the Commonwealth has covered the field of legislation. This is a matter that is being discussed in some detail by my officers with Commonwealth authorities, and I can only hope to have early answers to some of the problems. I do not propose to go blundering in. Whatever legislation is brought to this Chamber will be fully considered and will supply an answer to many of the problems facing the industry in this region at present. When we were prepared to grapple, under section 92, with some of the problems, when we were prepared to "have a go," as was the present hon. member for Toowoomba West, we attempted to cover some of these things, but until the Commonwealth makes up its mind on what the position is I do not think that this Government should go further in the matter.

The hon. member for Merthyr raised a number of matters, which I have no doubt he has taken up with my ministerial colleagues. For this reason I do not propose in the course of this debate to attempt to give any detailed answer.

Similarly, the hon. member for Sandgate brought up several matters which we know are close to his heart. He spoke about a new police station at Sandgate, a boat harbour for Sandgate, the rebuilding of "Eventide" and the shifting of Boggo Road gaol

to the country. I can assure the hon. member that the Government is fully aware of the relative needs in these matters. Again it is a case of putting first things first and the Government, in fixing its Budget for the year, gave full consideration to relative needs and priority of work.

The hon. member for Kurilpa spoke on the need for the updating and standardisation of textbooks at the primary and secondary levels of education. I remind him that a considerable sum has been provided in this year's Budget as the first cost of the development and printing of a new syllabus for English and social studies and for the purchase of new textbooks for mathematics. This work will extend over a two-year period, by which time the textbooks in use will be right up to the minute. I will not attempt to discuss the hon. member's views on standardisation, but I would suggest that he discuss them with the Minister for Education. If he so desires, he can develop his argument further in the Estimates debate.

The hon. member for Toowoomba East spoke on a wide range of subjects, as has been his practice in this Chamber for many years, but he always concludes with a light discourse on the delights of socialism. As he said very little in relation to the Budget, I can only conclude that his silence in this direction signified his approval of the Budget.

Mr. Bennett: You are mixed up again. You said "Toowoomba East".

Mr. CHALK: I meant Ipswich East.

Mr. Bennett: You said "Toowoomba East".

Mr. CHALK: I am sorry.

Mr. Bennett: You are blundering.

Mr. CHALK: The hon. member for South Brisbane is the biggest blunderer who has ever walked into the Chamber; but he was not game to come in when I was talking about the matter that he raised.

Mr. Bennett: I was here.

Mr. CHALK: He was not game to interject.

Mr. BENNETT: I rise to a point of order. My courage has been queried by the Minister in saying that I was not game to interject. I challenge the Minister to say what he wanted to say, and to be as dirty as he likes to be.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Smith): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr. CHALK: I want to deal now with the the assessment made by the hon. member for Landsborough of what the State's financial policies were doing for the good of the people of Queensland. He was one hon. member who really applied himself to the Budget, and he concentrated on matters that more keenly interest him. I thank him for his contribution.

I agree with the hon. member's contention that we must take all reasonable steps to hold good officers in our State service. I made special mention of this in the Budget speech and outlined the measures that the Government was taking relative to senior executive and professional staff. However, I should not wish the hon. member to get the problem out of perspective. As his concern was with the Department of Primary Industries, I shall quote some statistics which, I hope, will place the problem in perspective.

In 1967-68 the appointment of graduate staff to this department numbered 55. The total loss of graduate staff during the year was 34, four of whom retired in the normal course of service and four of whom were females who resigned because of marriage. There was one death, and one whose services were terminated. The voluntary resignations, all of which are regretted, but some of which, in a staff as large as the one in that department, must be expected, numbered only 24. Thus, in the year we appointed 55 new graduate staff and lost only 24 by resignation. Taking the total number of professional and technical officers for the year 1967-68, we appointed 201 and lost 118 by resignation, retirement and similar causes.

I deal now with the remarks of the hon. member for Baroona. I always regard the contributions that he makes to this debate as being of a useful nature, but on this occasion his usual cold appraisal of the Budget was not there. He resorted to the use of figures and percentages, which unfortunately distort the true picture and create a very wrong impression, but which may seem to give some support to the weak argument that he put forward.

Let me look at the percentages that he used in his attempt to decry the Government's efforts in education. He complained that, in 1967-68, 29.42 per cent. of the Consolidated Revenue Fund was devoted to education, whereas this year there was an increase of only 1.38 per cent. of the total earmarked for education. He went on to say that in the previous year there was an increase of 1.79 per cent. in the Education Vote, when it rose from 27.63 per cent. to 29.42 per cent. In other words, on his figures the proportion of the total Consolidated Revenue Fund devoted to education purposes in the two years increased by 3.17 per cent.

I will say that perhaps the hon. member forgot to state the obvious. In the period that he covered, the total Consolidated Revenue Fund cake increased from \$233,291,000 to \$281,357,000, and education received a much bigger slice of a much bigger cake. On the figures that the hon. member used, the amount of money made available for education in this two-year period increased by \$22.2 million, from \$64.5 million to \$86.7 million, that is, an increase of 34 per cent. over this two-year

period. If the hon. member wants to criticise this fact, I am prepared to leave him to his own devices.

He then went on to tread some really dangerous ground when he attempted to show how generous Labour was to education. In the course of his argument he had to mention the proportion of the total Consolidated Revenue Fund that Labour devoted to education. This, out of his own mouth, was merely 24.34 per cent. I say that his own figures destroy the argument that he was endeavouring to make. Labour provided for education a much smaller percentage of a much smaller cake. The hon. member cannot deny that.

To further show up the fallacy of the hon. member's argument, we need only turn to his next conclusion. The tenor of his previous argument was that an insufficient portion of the total Consolidated Revenue Fund was devoted to education. He immediately followed with the conclusion that the additional appropriations being made for education were at the expense of hospitals, law and order, public safety, primary industries, and so on. I surely do not have to remind the hon. member that if a proportion of a total is increased for one service, then it follows that the remaining proportion of the total available for other services must of necessity decrease.

Mr. Hanlon: Surely hospitals and law and order are not the places to get it from.

Mr. CHALK: We have the hon. member on record as saying that hospitals are more important than education.

The hon. member then went on to criticise the Government's efforts in negotiations on the tax reimbursement formula, and once more he quoted figures. He saw some folly in this Government's representations when the 1959 financial assistance grants formula was negotiated. He complained that Queensland's proportion of the total grant fell from 15.56 per cent. to 14.88 per cent., while South Australia's grant rose from 9.26 per cent. to 11.47 per cent. The reason why South Australia's grant was increased is simple. In that year South Australia ceased to be a claimant State, and its previous separate Grants Commission payments were included in the total grant to all States and were written into South Australia's entitlement. It follows that, if a particular amount is added to the Australian total and this amount is paid to one State only, all other State percentages of the new total must fall. The same position occurs this year. Western Australia, which was formerly a claimant State, has had its separate Grants Commission grant of \$15,000,000 added both to the total amount and to that State's entitlement. All States except Western Australia have shown a decrease in the percentage of a new and higher total. The whole position is clearly shown in the Tables, and I am surprised that the hon. member did not make the position more clear.

The same distortion was used in the hon. member's claim that the Labour Government reduced State taxation during its period of office from 12.7 per cent. in 1947-48 to 11.9 per cent. in 1956-57. This was not the result of any changes in the rates of taxation by the Labour Government, as the hon. member's argument implied, but rather to a fortuitous circumstance of increasing Commonwealth contributions during that period. The total revenues increased extraordinarily because of this reason, State taxation increased normally, and as a natural consequence the State taxation percentage of the total thereby declined. There is nothing in these figures that can give the Opposition any comfort.

In any event why would the then Labour Government have worried about increasing State taxes out of hand when the good old milking cow of railway freights was always available and there for its convenience to get the extra money. The Committee will note that the hon. member excluded rail freights when he was quoting these percentages.

If he felt that he had a case that Labour reduced State taxation, why did he not include all the figures and let us see the true picture? The reason of course is that he had no case. Had he included in his comparison the nine rail freight increases in 10 years by Labour, and the two increases and one reduction in 11 years by this Government, we would have had the true picture under Labour.

The hon. member for Logan acknowledged the merits of the Budget. He also spoke on a matter which I know concerns him, namely, jetties for some of the smaller settled islands in the southern part of Moreton Bay. The hon. member has already raised this matter with me, and I am having it investigated.

The hon. member for Ipswich West, I believe, was pleased with what the Government has done at Westbrook. She also recognised the added assistance to deserted wives. She raised some matters of accommodation and facilities in the House which I am sure will be considered and for which, I believe, there is every reason for consideration.

The hon. member for Burnett, in speaking on succession and probate duty, compared the returns from this source in 1956-57 and in 1967-68. I am sure he will recognise that this bald comparison is not valid. Particular circumstances in 1967-68 produced abnormally high receipts, as I endeavoured to explain in my Budget speech. Hence the figure for 1967-68 requires to be suitably discounted to give a truly comparative figure for a normal year. Moreover, there are other qualifications to such a comparison. There is the increased prosperity in the community generally which allows for the accumulation of comparatively larger estates. If the hon. member compares the taxable capacities of the various States, he will at once notice

that, in Queensland, the average value of estates lagged badly behind that of the other more populous States. Moreover, with increasing costs over the period of 11 years mentioned by the hon. member, the collection from this source must rise even if only to preserve the purchasing power of the collection from that source.

I am not unsympathetic to the points which the hon. member made. All I ask is that he recognise the State's difficulty in securing sufficient funds for the development and services of the State. I remind him that succession and probate duty has not been singled out for imposts out of proportion to those on other sources of State revenues.

The hon. member for Port Curtis summarised the trials and problems at present being experienced in Commonwealth-States financial relations. I think he did a fairly good job in this behalf. He defined the issues very well. His solution to the problem, when he came to it, was something of an anticlimax. His proposition was for the welding of an index to the present formula which would allow the total financial assistance grant to rise at the same rate as Federal income tax. It would mean that any variation in income tax rates imposed by the Commonwealth for economic purposes, for defence or any other emergency, would reflect itself in the revenue resources of the States. It is, of course, clear that the needs of the States have no relation to the cause and effect of many possible income tax adjustments. On the other hand, if the Commonwealth reduced income tax as an economic measure, the States would find themselves with less money than in the previous year although their costs had risen. I know that the hon. member has made a sincere approach to this problem. It must be apparent to all hon. members that this problem of Commonwealth-States financial relations is not easy of solution.

The hon. member also raised a question regarding the use of certain Thiess Peabody Mitsui installations at Gladstone by Murphys. I want to say to the hon. member that I know nothing of the circumstances of this case but I will make some inquiries. However, I would remind him that the wharf and loader in question were built, and paid for, by the company, and it seems to me that the question is one of terms and conditions of use of a privately-owned facility by another private enterprise. The remedy might thus well be in the hands of Murphys by that company's providing its own private facility. However, I again emphasise that I should like to ascertain the circumstances of the case to see if there is anything in the hon. member's comments.

The hon. member for Warwick spoke on the economies of the distant grain-grower, the mid-inner grower and the inner grower.

He also spoke of his fears about the establishment of a lion park in the Beenleigh area. I am sure that those views will be given every consideration by the appropriate Minister. They deal with matters which are outside the Budget.

The hon. member for Cairns opened his contribution to the debate with a story from Greek mythology. He made the conclusion to suit his line of argument. I can assure the hon. member that the Government, unlike Atalanta, will win the race next year, and will win it well. To win, we will not have to throw down golden apples during the race. The Government has been continually passing out golden apples during its term of office. These apples have taken the form of a better standard of living, a better educational system, great development and an intensive policy of decentralisation. As a Government, we stand on our record.

He then went on and quoted long lists of statistics associated with State taxation. He climaxed his views on these figures by saying that the Budget was not in the interests of the majority of the people of Queensland. He said that little progress had been made by the Government, and he charged the Government for its failure to overcome what he called the obstacles to progress.

I really do not know if the hon. member was serious with this remark, or whether his tongue ran away with him. Surely the hon. member knows that if a State wishes to expand, and if it wishes to provide better and increased services, then the Government has to find the necessary moneys for those purposes. And where are those moneys to come from? The Government has no money tree; it does not possess a printing press to churn out money bills. It is a simple fact of life that the people themselves must provide the money by way of taxation. It is up to the Government to keep rates of taxation at as low a level as proper expenditure demands will allow. It is also the Government's responsibility to set the tax levels. The hon. member would, no doubt, wave a magic wand and increase expenditure while lowering taxation. I leave it to the House to form its own conclusion on that.

All the works listed in the Financial Statement did not happen by chance. They were instigated and sought out by the Government. Long-range planning, hard work and tough negotiations were necessary to bring these projects to fruition. Whatever charges the hon. member might throw at the Government, he should stay off the question of progress. The plain fact is that progress has been the Government's watchword.

The hon. member spoke of the drift of population to major cities. As the hon. member for Toowoong interjected at the time, this is a world-wide trend. However, there is a very high degree of decentralisation in Queensland. The 1966 census showed that Queensland had 11 urban centres with a

population of over 20,000, New South Wales ten, Victoria five, South Australia three, Western Australia two, and Tasmania two.

The hon. member also made a comparison between Canberra and Cairns on a growth basis. His comparison is not real, because Canberra is a case of growth stimulated by the extraordinary factor that that city is the national capital. It is the attraction and development of new industry that triggers growth in most ordinary urban communities, and the Government holds its head high on its record in that regard.

The hon. member for Rockhampton South was disturbed by, amongst other things, the salary rates payable to lecturers at the Capricornia Institute of Technology.

The staffing of institutes is a problem that is being experienced by all colleges throughout Australia. During the rapid development of these institutes to the standards we envisage, some staff shortages no doubt will be experienced for some years. To ensure that salary anomalies do not aggravate this shortage, a committee of inquiry appointed by the Commonwealth Government and headed by Mr. Justice C. A. Sweeney is at present examining the salary scales of lecturers throughout Australia. The Government is awaiting the report and recommendations of that committee.

The hon. member for Aubigny's main line of criticism of the Budget was the new freight rates for the wheat-growers. I believe that I have referred to that in replying to other hon. members; I do not propose to deal with it further.

The hon. member for Norman touched on a wide range of subjects, and time does not permit me to deal with his speech in full. However, he alleged that there was a substantial increase in the cost of living in Queensland. As did so many of his colleagues, he hung his hat on a particular figure to prove his point. Of course, he was referring to the bulletin issued recently by the Commonwealth Statistician relative to the Consumer Price Index for the September quarter. The figures in that bulletin showed that Queensland had registered the highest percentage increase of all the Australian States in the previous quarter. But let us look at the index over the 12 months ended September, 1968. Here we find that the Consumer Price Index in Sydney increased by 1.86 per cent., Melbourne by 2.14 per cent., Brisbane by 1.82 per cent., Adelaide by 1.49 per cent., Perth by 2.20 per cent., Hobart by .74 per cent., and the average of the six State capitals by 1.89 per cent. In other words, Brisbane recorded the third lowest increase among the States for the 12-month period and its increase was below the average for the six States. So much for the hon. member's argument.

The hon. member for Townsville South, in exposing the shortcomings in the Australian Labour Party, effectively gave the

lie to the Opposition's claim of insufficient development in North Queensland. He very ably replied to the tongue-in-cheek criticism by the Opposition of this Government's education record.

The hon. member for Ithaca recognised the merits of the Budget proposals. Other matters he raised have already received, or will in the near future receive, due consideration.

The hon. member for Flinders was full of praise for the Budget. He raised certain matters concerning hospitals and ambulance brigades in his electorate which I feel sure will receive the careful attention of my colleague the Minister for Health.

The hon. member for Mirani expressed the thanks of the sugar industry for the sugar rail-freight concessions provided in the Budget, and I thank the hon. member for his kindly remarks. He also raised the question of local government finance. I do not propose to debate that issue at any length now, but I do say to him that he might well make a comparison of the relative financial position of local government in all States. I believe that he will find that Queensland's local authorities are particularly favourably treated, especially under our unique subsidy scheme.

The hon. member for Albert made some very laudatory remarks concerning my work in the portfolio of Treasurer. I do not expect praise for the efforts put forward. I have particularly noted the hon. member's remarks concerning the need for further expenditure on small boat facilities in the Broadwater and the Nerang River. I agree that further expenditure is desirable in these areas; they are important areas for small craft. Unfortunately, from a Treasurer's point of view there is always a limit to the amount of funds available each year in the trust fund. The annual amount available is of the order of \$366,000. However, I propose to keep the hon. member's representations in mind and he can rest assured that it is the Government's earnest desire to see the position rectified as soon as possible.

The hon. member for Burke made a short contribution to the debate in which he raised several matters. He particularly mentioned rail freight rates to Mt. Isa and other western towns. He said that the 5 per cent. reduction provided in the Budget was not sufficient. I want to say to him that I, too, would like to have been able to make a greater reduction but this could only have been done at a sacrifice in some other direction. In my remarks on the speech of the hon. member for Baroona I compared the performance of this Government with that when Labour was in power and I am sure that this is a comparison that the A.L.P. would prefer to forget.

The hon. member for Salisbury attempted to make the case that the wage earner in Queensland has been put at some disadvantage by this Government. In doing so, he fell into the same trap as his colleague, the hon. member for Norman, in using the Consumer Price Index figures for the September quarter. He deduced from these figures that Queensland was the lowest-paid State with the highest cost of living. Before I go on, I want to stress that he very loudly and deliberately chose this ground for his attack.

Let me point out to the hon. member that the index does not make a comparison of retail prices between States, and Bulletin No. 47 from which he was quoting, states this very clearly on its first page. So much then for any charge that Queensland is the State with the highest cost of living. What the index does is compare the movement in retail prices in each capital city since 1952-53, taking the 1952-53 prices as the base, 100. For various reasons, the Queensland index has risen at a greater rate than the Australian average. The Queensland index now reads 148.8 against the national average of 143.4. But let us turn to the average weekly earnings per employed male unit over the same period. In 1952-53 the average weekly earnings per employed male unit in Queensland according to figures prepared by the same Bureau of Census and Statistics was \$26.64. In 1967-68 it was \$58.80. If we take the 1952-53 earnings as base 100, as was done for retail prices, we find that the 1967-68 earnings figure has improved to 220.72.

For the hon. member's information, I would point out that not only have the average weekly earnings per employed male unit in Queensland increased at a far greater rate than the increase in the retail prices index over that period but so also have the Queensland earnings increased at a greater rate than those of all other States except Western Australia.

Before I conclude I want to deal with the remarks of the hon. member for Bundaberg. His main theme seemed to be that the Government was diverting funds from education and other Government services to development. He claimed that these funds were being made available for the benefit of overseas companies.

It is patently untrue that massive funds are being diverted away from education; the opposite is true. Massive funds are being diverted to education, and evidence of this can be seen in any comparison that a fair judge would care to make.

I was sorry to see the hon. member joining with the Opposition in attempting to "knock" the Government's efforts in the field of industrial development. I am quite happy to let the people of Queensland judge this Government on its records in that direction.

The hon. member for Mt. Gravatt had a local issue, which he aired with his usual eloquence, and I am sure that hon. members noted the points that he made.

The hon. member for Tablelands ranged over the industries that have been developed or could be developed in the Gulf and areas north of the 16th parallel. This matter was raised by the hon. member for Redcliffe also and I believe that I spent some time in outlining my reply to him.

The hon. member for Rockhampton North made his usual contribution to the debate. It was very hard to follow, very unintelligent, and not worthy of my comment.

In the concluding remarks of the hon. member for Mackay he said that he was not entirely opposed to a reduction in land tax. In other words, he means that he is not entirely opposed to it and favours some tax. Then he went on to talk about Hay Point. I say to him that the decision on where the company will send its coal is a matter entirely for the company to decide. Until that decision is made the Government will not be in a position to negotiate with it relative to harbour facilities. All I say is this: the Government will see that the State obtains the best possible deal.

Before I conclude my remarks on the Budget, I should like to take the few minutes left to me to express one or two personal thoughts.

During the years that I have been a member of Parliament, and particularly during the years that I have been a Minister, I have been embroiled in quite a number of arguments with some hon. members. I know that this Budget is the last opportunity on which 10 members of this Chamber will have a chance to debate a Budget. I refer to Messrs. Muller, Duggan, Mann, Beardmore, Graham, Donald, Byrne, Dufficy, Adair and Coburn. All of those hon. members have indicated that at the end of this Parliament they will go into retirement. I say to them that I believe that they have all endeavoured to their utmost to carry out their responsibilities as members of Parliament.

As one who is now among the older members, in years of service, I often look back on those with whom I was associated in the early days, both in the time when we on this side were in Opposition and in the time when we have been the Government of this State.

I conclude my remarks on this 1968 Budget by saying to those hon. gentlemen who will be retiring, "May you continue to enjoy good health, and may you have happiness in your retirement. I believe that the years of service that you have given to the State are years that you will always remember and that the State will appreciate."

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

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

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 8.31 p.m.