

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 31 OCTOBER 1968**

---

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

## SPECIAL LEASES, CLARE IRRIGATION AREA

**Mr. Davies** for **Mr. Tucker**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Local Government,—

(1) Were the original farm blocks in Clare Irrigation Area granted to applicants or did they go to ballot?

(2) Is portion 144, now vacant Crown land, to be opened up shortly? If so, how and when will it be offered to the public?

(3) When do the following special leases expire—(a) S.L. 25497, portion 138, (b) S.L. 25499, portion 140, (c) S.L. 25500, portion 141, (d) S.L. 25501, portion 142, (e) S.L. 25502, portion 143 and (f) S.L. 25504, portions 60, 62 and 64?

(4) Have any areas been excised from the special leases during the life of the lease and, if so, then in each case (a) how much, (b) when, (c) what tenure was given and (d) by whom?

(5) If areas have been excised, did the recipients ballot for the land and, if not, why not?

(6) How is it intended to dispose of the portions or their balance upon expiry of the special leases?

(7) Is all the land mentioned now considered to be good rice-growing land?

## THURSDAY, 31 OCTOBER, 1968

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

## QUESTIONS

DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURE ON  
ADVERTISING

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

How much has been spent by the various Government Departments on advertising their functions, campaigns or operations through radio, television, Press and theatre films or slides during the twelve months ended September 30, 1968?

*Answer:—*

"I take it the Honourable Member does not mean, by his reference to 'advertising their functions, campaigns or operations' matters such as public notifications, advertising of vacancies, etc. Nor perhaps does he mean material prepared for such activities, for example, as the extension programme of the Department of Primary Industries. Assuming this is so, and that what he seeks is information on the cost involved in the preparation of promotional and publicity material, then the details sought will take some little time to compile. If the Honourable Member will be more precise in his inquiry then the information sought will be provided."

*Answers:—*

(1) "All original farms and special leases were allotted by ballot."

(2) "Yes. Will be offered for Special Lease for 10 years by public auction at the Court House, Ayr, on November 14, 1968."

(3) "(a) Portion 138, December 31, 1981. (b to f) June 30, 1970."

(4) "(a) No excisions or conversions have been made in respect of Portion 138 and Portions 60, 62 and 64. (b) Portion 140, Lessee S. T. R. Hall—(i) 70 acres transferred in 1966 and a further 30 acres in course of transfer to L. Hall (son) who obtained cane assignment; (ii) 15½ acres transferred to adjoining owner P. Shadforth; (iii) 100 acres in course of conversion to perpetual lease by S. R. Hall. (c) Portion 141, Lessee K. P. McNee—100 acres in course of conversion to perpetual lease by K. P. McNee. (d) Portion 142, Lessee E. A. Shadforth—(i) 54½ acres transferred in 1966 and further 30 acres in course of transfer to P. E. Shadforth (son) who obtained new cane assignment; (ii) 100 acres in course of conversion to perpetual lease by E. A. Shadforth. (e) Portion 143, Lessee K. N. S. Lewis—100 acres in course of conversion to perpetual lease by K. N. S. Lewis."

(5) "Original special leases were allotted by ballot. Subsequent transfers and proposed conversions of tenure not subject of ballot because—(a) Lessees are exercising right to apply for conversion and subdivision; (b) Subdivision and transfers to sons granted new cane assignments permitted to enable more efficient joint working of father and son holdings considered desirable with low sugar prices prevailing."

(6) "No firm decisions yet made on disposal of balance of special leases on expiry. Conversion of part only of special leases permitted so that balance will be available for resubdivision and opening of new farms if found desirable with additional water from Eungella Dam or other water conservation works under investigation on Broken River."

(7) "Some of the land on the special leases is now considered suitable for sugar production and a good deal of the balance suitable for rice production."

#### ADDITIONAL SHELTER SHEDS ON PICNIC BAY JETTY, MAGNETIC ISLAND

**Mr. Davies** for **Mr. Tucker**, pursuant to notice, asked The Treasurer,—

Following the banning of buses and taxis from Picnic Bay Jetty, Magnetic Island, for ten minutes before and ten minutes after the arrival of passenger ferries, will he consider building for the convenience of those who will be forced to wait for transport further shelter sheds on the jetty before the next wet season?

*Answer:—*

"I have no knowledge of the circumstances outlined by the Honourable Member, but I have asked my officers to furnish me with a report, and when such is available I will consider the Honourable Member's proposal."

#### SHIPMENT OF MEAT FROM MERINDA MEATWORKS

**Mr. Davies** for **Mr. Tucker**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Primary Industries,—

Is it proposed to transport meat from Merinda meatworks, near Bowen, to Townsville and ship it through the latter port? If so, how will it be transported?

*Answer:—*

"I have no knowledge of any such proposal at the present time."

#### AUTHORITY TO PROSPECT FOR OIL SHALE IN NORTH QUEENSLAND

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

(1) Has Australian Aquitaine Petroleum Pty. Ltd. been given an authority to prospect

for oil shale in North Queensland and, if so, in what areas and under what conditions?

(2) In the event of economically workable oil-shale deposits being discovered, will the reduction plant be established in North Queensland and, if not, why not?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Yes. Australian Aquitaine Petroleum Pty. Ltd. holds Authorities to Prospect for minerals, including oil shale, in North-Western Queensland. The area of the two Authorities held totals 8,000 square miles. They are for a period of three years commencing on April 1, 1968. The terms of the Authorities provide for progressive relinquishment of the areas and expenditure of considerable sums on prospecting the areas."

(2) "Unless and until economically workable deposits of oil shale are discovered, it is impossible to speculate if, when and where a reduction plant could be established."

#### GOVERNMENT ALLOCATION TO UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

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

What has been the amount of the State Government's allocation to the University of Queensland for all purposes for the last four years and the projected amount for next year and how much of this allocation was spent on research at the University for those years?

*Answer:—*

"The State Government's allocation to the University of Queensland for the last four years for recurrent purposes (including research) has been—1965, \$3,878,506; 1966, \$4,866,166; 1967, \$5,667,531; 1968, \$6,426,515. As the University Budget has not been submitted for 1969, the allocation for this particular year has not yet been determined. The University has advised that the amount spent on research from State funds in the relevant years has been—1965, \$180,709; 1966, \$333,954; 1967, \$327,940; 1968, \$340,085."

#### ANNUAL RESEARCH REPORT, UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

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

In view of the decision of the Registrar of the University not to publish so far this year the customary Annual Research Report of the University of Queensland—

(1) Is it proposed to produce any report of this research this year and what form will it take?

(2) Will it be possible in future to indicate in the publication the actual amounts spent on each research project?

Answers:—

The University has advised that—

(1) "The publication of the Annual Research Report of the University of Queensland was discontinued by the Research Committee in 1967 as a measure of economy. A list of publications resulting from research is published annually in the University calendar. A sub-committee of the University Research Committee has been appointed to consider the production of an alternate type of publication. It is proposed that this publication be limited in size to a small brochure and cover only a restricted number of research projects."

(2) "Owing to limitation of size it will not be possible to include in the alternate publication the amount spent on all research projects, but this information can be made available by the University if required."

#### IRVINEBANK WATER SUPPLY

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

(1) Is he aware of the unsatisfactory water supply at Irvinebank?

(2) Will he have investigations carried out with a view to (a) having the quality of the water delivered to residents improved, (b) increasing the pressure of the supply in order to combat any fire which may occur in the reticulated area and (c) arranging for storage at the Loudon Dam?

Answers:—

(1) "Complaints have been made concerning the water supply of the townspeople of Irvinebank. However, it must be remembered that provision of a water supply for a township is primarily a matter for a Local Authority. At Irvinebank, the Ibis Dam is used primarily for the supply of water to the State Treatment Works. Since the Local Authority has not provided a water supply to the township, the State Treatment Works has permitted the townspeople to draw water at no cost from the mains supplied by the Works. The reticulation system is provided by the townspeople themselves, not the Local Authority or the Works."

(2) "The matter of possible improvement of supply to the townspeople from the State Treatment Works mains is receiving attention."

#### SITE FOR NEW SCHOOL, IRVINEBANK

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

Has a final decision been made as to the location of the new school at Irvinebank? If so, what is the area selected and when will building commence?

Answer:—

"A new site has been chosen for the Irvinebank State School but further facts are awaited respecting the re-location of a roadway before a final decision can be made. It is anticipated that the area, when finally determined, will be about three acres. Consideration will be given to the provision of new buildings when the new site is secure."

#### ACCOMMODATION FOR HOMECRAFT SECTION, ATHERTON HIGH SCHOOL

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

As the Works Department is at present carrying out additions at Atherton High School and as the school has been without a homecraft section for ten years, will he consider building a homecraft section when the present additions are completed?

Answer:—

"The provision of accommodation for a homecraft section in the grounds of the Atherton State High School was considered in relation to the Loan Works Programme for the 1968-69 financial year but the project could not be afforded a sufficiently high priority to enable it to be included in this programme. It will not be possible, therefore, to approve of this work being undertaken during the current financial year."

#### WAITING TIME AT HOSPITAL OUT-PATIENT DEPARTMENTS

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to a report in *The Sunday Mail* of October 20 headed "Patients Protest, Long waits at City Hospitals"?

(2) Did a middle-aged housewife have to wait for three hours for medicine at Royal Brisbane Hospital's dispensary?

(3) Was a patient, Mr. L. Jones, Gympie Road, Chermiside, who arrived at Royal Brisbane Hospital at 1.45 p.m. for a 2.00 p.m. appointment still waiting at 3.00 p.m. for his orthopaedic appointment?

(4) Are pensioners in some outpatients' departments treated "like a mob of sheep" as claimed by the State Secretary of the Pensioners League, Mrs. W. Barrand?

(5) What is the average waiting time for patients requiring prescriptions from the dispensary at Royal Brisbane Hospital?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "Without knowing the name and date of the attendance of the lady involved I am unable to Answer this Question."

(3) "I am advised that the Royal Brisbane Hospital has no record over the past six years of a man by the name of L. Jones, Gympie Road, Chermiside, attending at the outpatients' department for treatment."

(4) "No. I would point out to the Honourable Member that pensioners enrolled for Commonwealth Pensioner Medical Services are able to consult doctors privately without payment of any fee and also receive a wider range of Commonwealth Pharmaceutical Benefits than the ordinary citizen, without cost also."

(5) "This information is not available. No record is kept of the time of lodgment of the prescription by the patient nor the time of its being dispensed. I am informed that the reported long delays in the dispensing of prescriptions at the Royal Brisbane Hospital dispensary are currently being investigated by the hospital authorities."

#### SCHOLARSHIPS FOR AUSTRALIAN BALLET COMPANY

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

Has further consideration been given to the means to be adopted to encourage outstanding talent and to extend scholarships to exceptional Queensland students of ballet to enable them to attend the Australian Ballet School? If so, what are the details of the scheme?

Answer:—

"As the Honourable Member has already been advised, this matter will receive consideration when a proper survey of cultural activities in this State has been undertaken by the newly appointed Director of Cultural Activities."

#### DISAPPEARANCE OF MONEY IN TRANSIT FROM BADU ISLAND

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

(1) Further to the Answer to my Question on September 22, 1966, concerning a discrepancy of approximately \$17,000 in old currency, allegedly missing on a lugger en route from Badu to Thursday Island, have police enquiries been completed? If so, what is the result of the investigation and has the money been brought into account?

(2) If not, were any charges laid, what were the findings and/or is the case considered closed?

Answers:—

(1) "The Auditor-General, in his Annual Report to this Parliament for 1967, advised *inter alia*:—"Police officers have, over a period of many months, investigated the disappearance of this money without success, and have reported that further investigation would be fruitless."

(2) "The police and the Aboriginal and Island Affairs Departments, as well as Island Industries Board, do not consider the case as closed."

#### CONSTRUCTION OF PILOT SHIP "JENNY LIND"

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

(1) Where was the pilot ship *Jenny Lind*, now operating in Gladstone, built and when was it commissioned?

(2) Were tender documents drawn up and are the terms of the contracts available for sighting?

(3) What was the actual cost and was an inspector in residence at times during the course of the ship's construction?

Answers:—

(1) "The vessel was built at Maryborough and commissioned in July, 1967."

(2) "Contract documents were executed. It is not the practice to make such documents available for sighting, but if the Honourable Member desires to be furnished with information on any specific terms of the contract, I shall arrange for it to be supplied on request."

(3) "\$43,711. There was no inspector in residence but construction of the vessel was regularly supervised by officers of the Marine Board of Queensland."

#### UNLAWFUL USE OF NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT STICKERS, GOLD COAST AREA

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

(1) Will he have enquiries made into the unlawful pasting of stickers on buildings and cars without the permission of the owners on the Gold Coast, particularly at Surfers Paradise, by advocates of the National Liberation Front?

(2) What action will be taken against the offending parties in order to prevent a recurrence of the practice?

(3) Is he aware that there are at all times numerous wounded returned servicemen from Vietnam holidaying on the Gold Coast, made possible by the Surfers Paradise Rotary Club, and that they regard these signs as particularly offensive?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) "Police inquiries are already in train with a view to collating evidence to support the preferment of charges at Court arising from unlawful acts of the kind referred to perpetrated at Surfers Paradise by the distribution of stickers bearing the inscription 'Support the N.L.F.' The hand of the Society for Democratic Action, adherents of which have been in the forefront of unlawful demonstrations and processions, is very evident in this unlawful

activity. That Society, whose address has been given as P.O. Box 90, Brisbane University, not only, it is believed, took an active part in the printing and sale of these stickers but also lauded the ease with which these stickers could be quickly stuck anywhere and operated under the slogan 'No post, building, bus stop, etc., is safe from a "Support the N.L.F." sticker.'

#### PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

The Racing and Betting Acts, 1954 to 1967.

The Petroleum Acts, 1923 to 1967.

The Grammar Schools Acts, 1860 to 1962.

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

##### KARRALA HOUSE

**Hon. S. D. TOOTH** (Ashgrove—Minister for Health) (11.17 a.m.), by leave: In view of the repeated use by an hon. member of this Assembly of the term "solitary detention" to describe procedures at Karrala House, it seems desirable to place on record a clear account of the rehabilitative treatments undertaken there.

The following outline of the therapeutic processes at Karrala has been prepared under advice from the professional staff involved.

At the outset it should be understood that the girls sent to Karrala for treatment are never more than a small group, varying from eight to 13 at a time. They are girls who, for various reasons, cannot be retained in one of the larger custodial homes to which they have been committed after verdicts by the court. These reasons are many and various, and include such things as violent physical behaviour; attacks on staff and other inmates; intriguing amongst other inmates, leading to disorder and disturbance of the general recovery programme; self-destructive tendencies, sometimes of a very determined nature; aiding and abetting self-destructive tendencies in others; ungovernable fits of rage; and the complete absence of any elements of self-control. When any of these tendencies manifest themselves in an extreme form, it becomes impossible to retain the girl in one of the larger homes, none of which is under medical control, and she is transferred to Karrala for observation and treatment.

At this point, I wish to repeat that the term "solitary detention" conveys a false impression, is not true to fact and merely begs the question. The procedures at Karrala House are therapeutic processes, therapeutic in intention, and are carried out at medical direction.

The generally accepted meaning of "solitary detention" is that the person detained is almost completely, if not completely isolated from human contact. This does not happen at Karrala. When a girl is ordered to be secluded in what is known as the "unprivileged" side, she is for a time denied physical contact with other girls, but has frequent and planned contact with staff members in what has been described to me as a "therapeutic drive".

Contact with other inmates at this stage is denied, not only for the girl's own sake, but for the sake of the others. Amongst these girls, emotional storms may be generated in a flash, and to put a girl who has lost all self-control amongst others who are on the road to recovery could destroy the results of weeks of patient work by the staff. Furthermore, contact with others in like situations to her own, at a peak of emotional stress, could have the effect of delaying or preventing the settling-down process which is necessary before some progress towards normality can begin.

During this period of seclusion, when most girls settle down very rapidly—the average time on the unprivileged side being 16-6 days—these patients are subject to frequent contacts with the staff. Apart from those involving the satisfaction of normal needs, including the morning shower and evening preparation for bed, visits to the toilet as required, three meals and two refreshments daily, periods are spent each day by the sister-in-charge and members of the classified nursing staff, in endeavouring to promote proper communication and responsiveness in the girls. All these deliberately diversified contacts average 15 in any one day, by at least three different people. It will be obvious, therefore, how false is the impression conveyed by the use of the words "solitary detention". The girls are also visited frequently by a welfare officer. These girls are subjected to this planned "therapeutic drive" to communicate with staff because it is only by communication that co-operation can be obtained. There is a graduation of privileges, and at a certain point in the recovery process a girl is brought into contact with other girls in a constructive work programme for a minimum of an hour a day. Staff contact continues, and the special needs of individual girls are identified and efforts are made to meet them.

As progress continues and the need for seclusion diminishes, transfer from one type of accommodation to another, under continuing supervision, can usually be undertaken with safety. This is also a measure of the responsiveness to this relationship therapy, and the whole tenor of Karrala House is based on the inculcation of responsibility within interpersonal relationship. This therapeutic drive continues on the privileged side of Karrala and culminates, in most instances, in transfer back to one of the homes and ultimate release.

In a very few cases, however, close observation reveals psychotic conditions which are better treated in the special facilities of psychiatric hospitals.

#### FORM OF QUESTION

Mr. DEAN (Sandgate) having given notice of a question—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I remind the hon. member that seeking information on whether or not a newspaper article is correct is out of order. There is no problem in framing the question to obviate that objection.

#### SUCCESSION AND PROBATE DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

##### THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Chalk, read a third time.

#### LAND TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL

##### THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Chalk, read a third time.

#### GOVERNMENT LOAN BILL

##### THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Chalk, read a third time.

#### RIVER IMPROVEMENT TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL

##### THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Richter, read a third time.

#### WATER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

##### THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Richter, read a third time.

#### SUPPLY

##### RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—ESTIMATES—

##### FIRST AND SECOND ALLOTTED DAYS

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

##### ESTIMATES-IN-CHIEF, 1968-69

##### DEPARTMENT OF MINES, MAIN ROADS AND ELECTRICITY

##### CHIEF OFFICE

Hon. R. E. CAMM (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines, Main Roads and Electricity) (11.37 a.m.): I move—

“That \$630,663 be granted for ‘Department of Mines, Main Roads and Electricity—Chief Office.’”

##### DEPARTMENT OF MINES

Before outlining the main points of the endeavours and achievements of the Department of Mines, I should like to present a short summary of the financial position, set out under various fund headings.

For Chief Office, \$566,764 was appropriated for 1967-68, and an amount of \$630,663 is required for 1968-69. The increase of \$63,899 is due largely to salary increments, award variations, and staff appointments. Increased or additional provisions have been made for the protection of old mine shafts, fees for authorised surveyors, and the development of Sunset suburb, Mt. Isa. Increased provision has also been made for survey assistants, a scholarship-holder surveyor, relieving allowances, travelling expenses, payroll tax, maintenance of cars, and the purchase of an additional car.

The Mining Journal and Year Book shows an increase to \$30,500 from \$27,000 last year, mainly because of increased printing costs.

For Mining Fields, the appropriation for 1967-68 was \$1,117,263 and expenditure was \$1,464,587, of which \$714,725 was for salaries. For 1968-69 the amount required is \$1,295,933. In this section, also, the increase was due principally to salary increments and award variations, and also to provision for replacement of staff and additional staff, mainly in Inspection of Mines and Geological Survey. All non-graduate or temporary staff have now been included in salaries provisions.

Actual contingencies expenditure for 1967-68 was \$749,862. The reason for increased 1967-68 expenditure was the Treasury's special Consolidated Revenue allocation for selected works. Provisions for 1968-69 amount to \$478,276, with the main increases being on behalf of Wardens' Offices, Inspection of Mines, Geological Survey, and Petroleum Engineering. The drilling programme revenue provision has been increased to \$99,000 for 1968-69 in accordance with the special Treasury provision, with provision being determined at \$931,350 and contributions from the Queensland Coal Board and others \$107,000, making a total drilling programme provision of \$1,137,350.

Contribution to the Water Resources Investigation Trust Fund has been increased from \$27,000 to \$27,900 for 1968-69.

With regard to salaries for Mining Fields, the 1967-68 appropriation was \$714,216, and for 1968-69 \$817,657 is requested, an increase of \$103,441. The last-mentioned increased provision for 1968-69 is due to salary increments and also award variations. In addition, allowance has been made for the appointment of new and replacement staff. The staffing position is still difficult in regard to graduate and technical appointees. Therefore, the amount expected to remain unexpended, although increased, will be determined by staff offering.

Provision has been retained for the appointment of a relieving mining registrar with headquarters at Mt. Isa; otherwise, appointment provisions have shown no appreciable variation.

With regard to the Inspection of Mines section, provision is made for inspectors of mines, mechanical (2) (new), and special duties, Brisbane (new), and also clerk-typists at Chief Office and Redbank and also for the appointment of a clerk. Provision has also been made for a mineral economist, mainly in connection with the Queensland Energy Resources Advisory Council. Provision has also been made for appointments of replacement and additional staff to the Geological Survey Branch. However, some of these positions have been vacant for a considerable time owing to the unavailability of suitable graduate staff.

Seventeen geologists, an engineering surveyor, five cadets, a clerk and a clerk-typist are required.

It is expected that staff, if available, will only be appointed for portion of the financial year. Should local or overseas recruitment be more successful than in the past, the appointment of staff to the Geological Survey could need further funds as the amount estimated to remain unexpended has been increased owing to unexpended balances in previous years.

The amount shown as chargeable to other funds includes salaried staff under Inspection of Mines and Geological Survey whose services are directly applicable to the drilling programme or the coal exploration content thereof. Geological staff performing work for other departments, local authorities, etc., are also charged out.

An amount of \$27,900 has been deducted from Geological Survey salaries, this sum forming the nucleus of contributions to water resources investigations, such expenditure being subsidised by the Commonwealth.

Continued efforts to recruit graduate geologists to fill vacancies approved to meet the expanding demand for geological services have been largely unsuccessful. However, it is expected that the current level of field activity will be maintained in the Economic Geology and Petroleum Geology Sections and will rise substantially in regional mapping. After allowing for the charging of expenses for hydrological investigations to water resources investigation trust funds (which are subsidised by the Commonwealth), reimbursements on account of engineering investigations and the charging of the cost of coal exploration to drilling programme funds, and allowing for special increased provisions, it is expected that over-all contingencies requirements will increase.

Special provisions have been included for scholarship holders (\$5,000 extra), contract drafting (\$2,000) and equipment (\$30,000 extra). General provisions have been decreased on account of temporary assistance \$2,810, travelling expenses \$3,000, maintenance of cars \$1,750, also consultant geological services, etc. The sum of \$17,000 has not been reprovided, but increased

allocations have been made for postage \$150, publications, etc., \$600, seismic equipment maintenance \$375, and motor-cars \$4,876.

Expenditure for 1967-68 included \$118,650 from the special Consolidated Revenue allocation.

In regard to the departmental drilling programme, estimates are based upon the current rate of expenditure of the Drilling Branch and the coal exploration element of the Geological Survey. They include the cost of operation and maintenance of a new drilling plant which was purchased late in the last financial year, and also provide for the replacement of one existing drill and other items of equipment which are necessary to maintain the department's drilling and exploration activities on a sufficient scale to satisfy the demands of both Government and industry.

At present the department operates 16 drills, six proving coal for future power-station use, three proving coking-coal reserves, four testing metalliferous deposits, one in stratigraphic drilling, one assisting to resolve certain engineering problems and one testing clay deposits on a part-time basis.

The main items of expenditure on plant to be used by the Drilling Branch during 1968-69 are a replacement for the "Gemco" drill, replacement of drill pipe, bore casing, etc., and replacement of vehicles. Provision is also made for the purchase of a limited number of huts for drillers' quarters and also for caravans. In regard to Geological Survey-Coal Exploration, the major items of expenditure are for wages, analyses, equipment, etc., mainly for the core library.

Special Treasury allocation of \$30,000 is responsible for the increase in revenue funds.

For coal miners' pensions, \$175,354 was provided for in the 1967-68 Estimates, which, with unforseen expenditure of \$700, brought the appropriation to \$176,054. For 1968-69, the provision sought is \$175,217, which is a decrease of \$837. This Vote provides for the salaries and expenses of the staff and the contribution made by the Government. Payment of pensions is made from a separate fund administered by the pensions tribunal.

The actual expenditure on salaries and expenses is a charge against the pension fund, from which a refund is made to the Treasury for expenditure incurred. The Government contribution is the only charge against State funds.

The appropriation under the Gas Acts, 1965 to 1967, for 1967-68 was \$44,845. For 1968-69 the requirement is \$51,430, an increase of \$4,585. The increase is due mainly to increased salary, plant requirements, replacement and new cars, pay-roll taxes, etc.

The Department of Mines has continued to pursue a very active policy in assisting mining in the State. This is being done in various ways, the principal ones being—

Financial assistance for prospecting, mine development, installation of machinery,



road construction, and the provision of compressors, pumping and winding plant on a hire basis;

State-owned customs mills operated at Irvinebank and Charters Towers;

Drilling of coal and metalliferous deposits in various parts of the State;

Technical advice by mining engineers, geologists, and inspectors stationed on the important mining fields of the State;

Free identification and assay services for prospectors by the Geological Survey, Government Analyst, Brisbane, and Government Assayer, Cloncurry;

The granting of authorities to prospect to reputable companies which are technically equipped to carry out exploration.

Funds totalling \$58,000 were made available during 1967 as assistance for prospecting, mine development and road construction, compared with \$45,000 for 1966. In addition, \$250,000 was made available in the 1966-67 financial year as a special Consolidated Revenue allocation with which major road reconstruction projects were completed. In connection with advances for the purchase of machinery, an amount of \$10,000 has been allocated, while an amount of \$20,000 has been allocated in connection with the provision of compressor units, winches and pumps.

The State Treatment Works at Irvinebank during 1967 treated 11,123 tons of tin ore for the production of 135.3 tons of tin concentrates, compared with 13,473 tons of ore and 148.7 tons of concentrates during 1966. In addition, high tungsten prices brought forth an offering of 390 tons of wolfram ore which were treated for a yield of 2.4 tons of wolfram concentrates. Based on the weights of concentrates recovered, the average grades of ore treated were 1.217 per cent. for tin and 0.621 per cent. for wolfram.

Although there was a marked falling off in the supply of ore for treatment, particularly in the last quarter of the year, sufficient material was forthcoming to keep the plant operating on three shifts except for a short period in April, and for the last week before the Christmas shut-down two shifts were worked.

Unlike the drought conditions experienced during the previous year, the water position was quite good, with ample reserves in the Ibis Dam. On the advice of technical consultants from the Department of Mining and Metallurgical Engineering of the University of Queensland, a P.I.F. analyser has been installed to provide information on the tin content of ore at various points in the circuit. In addition, the regrind rod mill has been converted to a ball mill. Investigations into the use of a mineral jig in the grinding circuit, and of screens for the preparation of table feed, were carried out. Orders were placed for a 16-in. by 24-in. jig and D.S.M. screen (70 mesh) for operation in the primary grinding circuit and a D.S.M. screen (150 mesh) for the

classification of feed to the secondary mill. Two 24-in by 24-in. batch flotation cells were also ordered.

The Venus State Battery at Charters Towers continued to operate under lease. Owing to lack of ore supplies and in order to maintain the plant and keep gold-milling facilities available, it was necessary to retain the lessee as caretaker-manager during the greater part of the year. It is essential to have a plant available in North Queensland for the testing of parcels of ore. In this connection a test-crushing of 982 tons of dump material from the Pyramid Mine at Ukulunda was completed, for a recovery of 100 tons of silver-lead-zinc concentrates.

The Government Assay Office at Cloncurry again handled a record volume of work, reflecting the growing interest of both individual prospectors and exploration companies in the mineral potential of North-west Queensland. In all, 5,704 samples were received and 8,191 assays carried out, compared with last year's figures of 3,464 samples and 5,061 assays. I point out that 63 per cent. of the assays done were for major exploration companies. The staff was increased to three to cope with the additional work. Plans were prepared for relocating equipment in the sample-preparation room and a new jaw-crusher was ordered. A Spekker absorptiometer was purchased in order to accelerate the analysis of copper, in particular.

The demand for hire of departmental equipment continued at a high level, and 12 compressor plants and 18 "quick" winches were made available to small-scale miners, mainly in the Mt. Isa-Cloncurry and Herberton areas.

The value of the State's mineral production during 1967 amounted to \$159,137,071, as against \$153,109,822 during 1966. This constitutes another increase and is also an all-time production record. This production reflects the vast mineral potential of the State.

Significant increases, both in production and value, were recorded in 1967 in respect of bauxite, lead, silver, zinc, rutile and zircon. In the case of tin concentrates, production was slightly higher in 1967 than in the previous year, but, owing to the lower metal price in 1967, the value was slightly less. The production of copper was some 20,000 tons less in 1967 than in 1966, and its value some \$14,000,000 less. This was due mainly to the lower grade of ore mined by Mount Isa Mines Ltd., where the method of mining is such that higher-grade reserves cannot quickly be exploited.

The output of gold, at 98,126 oz., was almost 30,000 oz. less than in 1966. This was occasioned by the lower grade of ore mined by Mount Morgan Ltd.

Mount Isa Mines Ltd. continued as the State's major producer of copper, silver and lead and the sole producer of zinc. In spite of the lower copper production, the

total value of all the mine's products was \$84,500,000, only \$5,000,000 less than in 1966.

Golden Plateau N.L., Cracow, produced 41,138 tons of ore during 1967. Ore milled was 37,378 tons, from which was obtained 14,172 fine oz. of gold and 34,175 oz. of silver, which, compared with previous year, was an increase of both gold and silver won. Value of production was \$494,244. This company, which, outside of Mount Morgan, is the only significant producer of gold in the State, is considering an expansion of its operations. The combined footage of surface and underground drilling completed in 1967 was 13,291 feet.

Extensive mining and prospecting activities were continued on the Herberton field during the year by several large mining companies, with most work being carried out in the Herberton and Irvinebank areas.

The total value of production from the Herberton gold and mineral field for the year amounted to \$3,526,085, compared with \$4,067,272 for the year 1966 and \$3,323,564 for the year 1965. The decrease in the value of production was due mainly to Loloma Mining Corporation N.L. ceasing alluvial mining operations in the Stanary Hills area early in the year, and the lower average price obtained for the tin concentrate.

There were three mills which crushed public ores during the year.

The State's two dredges continued to supply over a quarter of Australia's output of tin.

Bauxite production during 1967 was 2,809,921 tons, valued at \$16,021,350, as against production for 1966 of 973,250 tons, valued at \$5,550,590. At Weipa, approximately 3,520,000 tons of crude ore was treated to yield a screened and washed product of 2,806,300 tons of bauxite.

Mineral prospecting now covers virtually the whole of the State. The boom in such prospecting can be attributed largely to the fact that modern large-scale prospecting has been finding many new and important deposits of minerals. The rewards from these successful ventures have encouraged more and more companies and persons to take part in the search.

Australia has been a favoured country in this exploration because it is regarded as a country of stable and reliable government, with legislation and administrative methods suited to this kind of prospecting and, most important, a country in which many of the world's major mineral discoveries have been made in recent years. Among Australian States, Queensland is rated as one of the best for large-scale prospecting, with the result that there has been a remarkable increase in activity.

Prospecting for minerals can now be regarded as an important industry on its own, bringing much wealth to the State, quite apart from the benefits that follow

from the discovery of workable deposits of minerals. For example, reported expenditure in Queensland on authorities to prospect for minerals other than coal and petroleum was \$2,400,000 in the year 1966 and \$5,300,000 in the year 1967. It more than doubled in one year. As hon. members can imagine, this great increase in activity has put a great strain on my department.

Last year, about \$20,000,000 was spent in Queensland on the search for all minerals, including coal and petroleum. That activity is continuing unabated in 1968.

Uranium prospecting and development are being vigorously conducted in North-west Queensland. Already proven reserves have been increased greatly, and it is expected that Mary Kathleen Uranium Ltd. will re-open in the not-too-distant future.

Mineral sand-mining output increased greatly with the commissioning of the largest plant in the world on South Stradbroke Island by Associated Minerals Consolidated Ltd. From the coastal region of South Queensland the production of both rutile and zircon rose by almost 60 per cent.

Large-scale developmental work has been carried out on Cape Flattery by Cape Flattery Silica Mines Pty. Ltd. on leases in the area. The company has constructed a stockpile area, mole and jetty, two barges, stockpile conveyor and hopper, barge loading conveyor, navigational aides and haul roads, and has prepared a mining face and accommodation facilities. Export of silica sand to Japan commenced this year.

Mount Isa Mines Ltd. has overcome many of its mining problems associated with the working of its "500" copper-ore body and is steadily increasing its output. Underground development totalled 74,556 feet for the year and comprised 35,371 feet of stope development in the "500", "1100", and "650" copper-ore bodies, and 8,184 feet in the Black Star and Racecourse lead-ore bodies.

In the K57 ore-handling complex the primary crusher excavation and the secondary crusher installation were completed. Work was continued on the orepass system, and included the installation of several chain controls. A total of 1,948,366 tons of copper sulphide ore was mined. Lead-zinc ores mined aggregated 1,041,209 tons. The No. 1 copper concentrate ore treated 1,942,771 tons of sulphide and 233,592 tons of oxide ores. The No. 3 concentrator treated 170,416 tons of copper oxide ore from the Young Australia mine, and 68,905 tons from the Black Rock mine. The No. 2 concentrator treated 1,037,783 tons of silver-lead-zinc sulphide ore.

The copper smelter produced 44,000 tons of blister copper, compared with 64,420 tons in the previous year. Shortage of concentrates and the high silica and alumina content of the Young Australia ore both caused difficulties. The lead smelter produced 83,350 tons of crude lead, containing 6,568,212 oz. of silver.

The announcement in late 1966 by Broken Hill South Ltd. of the discovery of major phosphate deposits some 90 miles south-south-west of Cloncurry sparked unusual activity in the search for further deposits. Not only did Broken Hill South Ltd. prove additional areas, but International Minerals and Chemical Corporation also announced in October, 1967, that its subsidiary, I.M.C. Development Corporation, had discovered a deposit near Yelvertoft, about 60 miles north-west of Mt. Isa, and that some 500,000,000 tons of reserves were indicated.

The investigation by the Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd. and the International Nickel Company of Canada Ltd. of the nickeliferous laterite deposits near Marlborough was continued, and beneficiation tests undertaken. Similar work was carried out by Metals Exploration N.L. in association with Freeport of Australia Incorporated in respect of deposits at Greenvale, approximately 120 miles north-west of Charters Towers, and in January, 1968, it was announced that the deposits appeared to contain 45,000,000 tons of material averaging 1.55 per cent. nickel and 0.11 per cent. cobalt.

At the year's end some 35,642 square miles of the State were held under 120 authorities to prospect for minerals other than coal and petroleum, the area held being more than 50 per cent. greater than that held at the end of 1966. At the present time some 146 authorities are held covering 46,565 square miles.

Production of coal again showed an increase, 4,782,455 tons valued at \$25,641,697 being produced in 1967, compared with 4,701,699 tons valued at \$25,569,321 in 1966. This again constituted a record.

With the construction of huge power-stations throughout the State that will require vast quantities of coal and the increased tempo of mining for coal for export, the year 1968-69 shows bright prospects and augurs well for the future of the coal industry.

Coal exported during the year 1967 created a record for Queensland. A total of 1,746,635 tons was shipped to Japan and Malaysia. All of this coal was shipped from Gladstone and produced at Moura and Baralaba, with the exception of 18,463 tons of coal produced at Collinsville and shipped from Bowen. Coal out of Gladstone is expected to continue to increase annually with production coming from Blackwater in the central district.

No coal was imported into Queensland during the period.

Coke consumption showed an increase of 1,604 tons over last year. The Bowen State Coke Works produced 20,648 tons, used mainly by Mount Isa Mines Ltd., whilst Tivoli Collieries Pty. Ltd., in the southern district, produced a reduced quantity of 161 tons from the Haighmoor coke ovens. This was used mainly in local markets comprising

foundries and forges. During the period, the quantity of coke imported and railed was 1,601 tons. No coke was exported.

For the year 1967, the number of producing coal mines remained constant at 52. Though some mines closed as a normal sequence of their activities, they were replaced by new openings. The operating mines satisfy production for market requirements. Groups of small mines owned by various companies are condensed into minimum numbers of more highly productive mines.

The greatest development in the industry is in the Moura and Blackwater areas in the central district, where coking coal is produced for export. The highlight of the open-cut operation at Moura in 1967 was the commissioning of the Marion 8900 dragline, which at that time was reported to be the world's largest walking dragline. It operates a bucket of 130 cubic yards capacity. This unit, in conjunction with the 7900 dragline of 35 cubic yards capacity, removes overburden. To keep pace with increased production demands, a second Marion 151 coal-loading shovel went into service during the year.

The increased construction of dwellings and shops and the improved facilities in Moura township reflect the general increase in productivity of the mine. The sealing of the highway between Moura and Biloela and progressive sealing of the Biloela-Rockhampton highway afford improved travelling conditions for those working in this area.

There was a general expansion of operations at Callide open cut to give increased production to supply the requirements of the Callide Power Station. A vigorous prospecting programme has continued throughout the year to establish further reserves at this mine.

The Utah Development Co. commenced operations in raiiling coal from the Blackwater open-cut mine on a regular basis to the port of Gladstone on 1 November, 1967. This raiilage of coal was the culmination of what must be one of the State's most extensive exploration, evaluation and mine construction programmes. Access to the mine site is by a formed road and railway spur line. The mine office, single men's living quarters, coal preparation plant, loading area and workshops form the central point of the open-cut operation, where large deposits are to be exploited to meet established overseas markets.

Extra duties and inspections made necessary by new equipment, following the requirement in the industry of increased use of electrical equipment in coal mining, required the appointment of two electrical inspectors of coal mines, one each at the Rockhampton and Ipswich offices.

Two mines rescue stations, one in the Bowen district and one in the Ipswich district, at Booval, have been maintained at a high standard of efficiency with modern

equipment and trained personnel, each under the efficient control of approved committees. Equipment is very modern and comparable with the best world standards.

The increase in expenditure in the departmental drilling programme is due mainly to increases recently approved under the Core Drilling Award and to the increased costs of stores and supplies, and is essential if the department's drilling activities are to continue at their present rate.

The footage drilled by the department in the year ended 30 June, 1968, totalled 171,760 feet, which constitutes an all-time record and represents an increase of 36 per cent. during the last five years. Much of the drilling was devoted to the proving of the State's coal resources, both steaming coal for power generation, on which the industrial growth of the State is largely dependent, and coking coal which, in view of the projected expansion of exports, must be reserved in sufficient quantities to meet the future internal requirements of the State.

It is pertinent to mention that as early as 1965 discussions were held at ministerial level between this State, New South Wales and the Commonwealth regarding the known position in respect of coking-coal resources and it was agreed that the information available was inadequate and that the only remedy lay in an intensified rate of drilling. My department is undertaking this vital work from funds made available in its Estimates.

During the past year, drilling for steaming coal was completed at Collinsville and Callide, and was continued at West Moreton, Theodore and Blackwater. In respect of coking coal, drilling was continued at Moura and Blackwater and a programme was begun in the North Bowen basin.

In the testing of metalliferous deposits, drilling has been undertaken during the past year at Kilkivan (copper and gold), Wateranga, Mt. Perry district (nickel), Silverwood, near Warwick (copper), Chillagoe-Mungana (silver-lead and fluorspar), Cracow (gold), and Tansey (gold). The drilling of a silver-lead deposit at Monsildale began recently. At Cracow the mine is largely dependent for its continued operation on ore disclosed by departmental drilling. In addition, as a result of departmental drilling, the reopening of a second gold mine in the Cracow area is likely.

Stratigraphic drilling was continued in the Surat-Bowen Basin and was recently begun in the Moreton Basin. This work will provide very valuable information on underground water resources and coal measures, in particular. Drilling for underground water resources in specific localities for dam sites and for industrial minerals, notably clays, was continued. At present the department is operating 16 drills, of which two were purchased in the last financial year.

A workshop and a store have recently been established at Moura for the repair and

maintenance of the increased quantity of departmental drilling and ancillary equipment in Central Queensland.

Production of crude oil continued from Moonie, Alton and Bennett fields, the amount sold in 1967 being 2,800,337 barrels, valued at \$8,788,418 and contributing some \$690,000 to the State in royalties. In petroleum exploration the most notable features were the drilling of three off-shore wells in the sea. Unfortunately these wells were dry.

Late in 1967 the joint State-Commonwealth off-shore petroleum legislation and agreement were enacted. These came into effect on 1 April, 1968, and since that time numerous titles have been transitioned and at the present time applications are being called for certain vacant blocks in Queensland's adjacent area.

Production of natural gas is still confined to the use for electrical generation at the Roma power-house and for domestic purposes at the Roma Hospital. However, agreement has been reached between the Associated Group and Austral-Pacific Fertilizers Ltd. and the South Brisbane Gas and Light Co. Ltd. for the marketing of natural gas from Roma, and firm contracts have been signed. It is now expected that natural gas will be delivered by pipeline to these companies in Brisbane early in 1969.

A company called Associated Pipelines Ltd., 50 per cent. owned by the Associated Group and 50 per cent. owned by Southern Union Gas Co. of Dallas, U.S.A., was formed during 1967 to manage the construction and operation of the Roma-Brisbane gas line. At the beginning of 1968 a contract for the construction of the pipeline was let to the local company of Thiess Bros. Pty. Ltd. in spite of international competition. Construction of the pipeline is now under way and, as I stated earlier, it is expected to be providing natural gas to Brisbane early in 1969.

Petroleum exploration has slackened off owing to the lack of success and the generally discouraging results from exploration. The discoveries made in some other States of Australia no doubt attracted capital which may have otherwise been spent in Queensland. Activity on land can be expected to diminish further because of the falling-off in geophysical operations, thereby decreasing the number of targets that could be drilled. However, the cycle of boom and recession is well known in the petroleum industry, and a worth-while discovery could reverse the situation at any time.

During the past few years the laboratory facilities at the office of the Government Gas Engineer and Chief Gas Examiner have been upgraded to meet requirements for testing or analysis of any type of gas.

Safety aspects within the industry have been receiving considerable attention, and the results of inspections carried out have more than justified the appointment of a gas examiner last year to do mainly this work.

Most areas of the State have been visited, and the industry has gained considerably from the help and guidance of the department's inspectors.

Liquefied petroleum gas licensing under the regulations gazetted last year is fairly well established. The commencement of specialised gas-fitting courses at the technical college will reinforce the system, and a slight change in regulations to give better acceptance to those holding a pass from the technical college is at present in hand.

The Geological Survey is primarily concerned with coal investigations, the exploration and assessment of deposits of economic minerals, engineering geology, including underground water resources, regional geological mapping and petroleum geology. Work in all these fields is assisted by specialist research on rocks and fossils and by studies in geochemistry and geophysics.

With the rapid expansion of the mining industry in Queensland in recent years and the rising tempo of mineral exploration and developmental projects, there has been increasing pressure on all sections of the Geological Survey. These challenges are being met, but the loss of trained staff and difficulty in recruiting replacements because of competition from industry pose formidable problems.

Departmental coal drilling has been in progress in the Ipswich, Callide, Theodore, Moura, Blackwater and Bowen River coalfields, as well as in the Nebo and Banana areas. Data from departmental and private exploration are being assessed for the compilation of the coal reserves and the industrial potential of the various regions. The Coal Petrology Laboratory at Redbank is now fully operational and is yielding valuable information on coal properties, including those of coking coals.

The economic geology section is supervising diamond-drilling programmes on several mineral deposits, while a major survey of the Kilkivan mineral field, supported by geochemical prospecting, is approaching completion. Studies in the State's resources of limestones and other non-metallic minerals are continuing. Economic investigations in northern areas are carried out from the district office in Charters Towers, as well as the supervision of a drilling programme to test fluorospar deposits in the Mungana area.

The availability of regional geological maps and reports is basic to geological investigations in all spheres. The joint Bureau of Mineral Resources-Geological Survey of Queensland programme of geological mapping has operated successfully, and it is proposed to initiate a supplementary joint programme for mapping mineralised areas in more detail, commencing in 1969. Currently the Geological Survey is participating in work in the Torres Strait, Dalby, Goondiwindi and Warwick areas. It is collaborating with the Geological Survey of New South

Wales in mapping the Tweed Heads sheet. Work on the Monto and Maryborough areas is being finalised, as independent projects, and mapping of the Bundaberg area has commenced.

Investigations in engineering geology relate mainly to dam sites and other foundation problems. Major projects under way relate to the Copperlode Falls dam site and the Albert River dam site. The section also undertakes hydrogeological studies for governmental authorities as well as implementing part of the systematic programme of examination of underground water resources, financed by the Water Resources Investigation Trust Fund. Included in this is the continuing large-scale investigation of the aquifers of North Stradbroke Island. Other major studies relate to the Lockyer and Condamine Valleys. Geophysical techniques are employed in some of these investigations. Compilation of a series of hydrogeological maps for the State has commenced.

In petroleum geology, progress of company explorations is followed closely, and processing of current well data is maintained. An increasingly important aspect of the work of this section involves detailed studies in the rock sequences of the Eromanga, Bowen, Surat and Moreton basins. This work bears on coal and underground water exploration as well as petroleum. Data are obtained from departmental and other bore-holes by electric logging and lithological studies, supported by palynology (study of plant microfossils).

Two new projects with direct economic implications recently commenced by the palaeontology section are a study of the origin and occurrence of phosphates in North-west Queensland and a study of aspects of the Barrier Reef environment based on microfossils, both from surface samples and from off-shore drilling.

With the intensification of search for minerals within the State, there are increasing demands on the information and advisory services of the Geological Survey. These involve the facilities of the reference library, with textbooks, periodicals and open file reports, the core library at Redbank, the sale of maps and publications, the free mineral testing and assay service, as well as personal contact with officers.

Every effort is being made to step up the volume of published works presented in the Geological Survey of Queensland publications and reports, as well as short contributions in the Queensland Government Mining Journal.

An outstanding event earlier this year was the visit to Queensland and subsequent report on the Great Barrier Reef by Dr. Harry S. Ladd, of the United States Geological Survey. This visit was arranged at my direction by officers of the Department of Mines and the Commonwealth Department of National Development. It was made possible by the generous gesture of the

United States Department of Interior in supplying Dr. Ladd's services without fee. Dr. Ladd is the world's leading authority on coral reefs. His report on the conservation and controlled exploitation of the mineral resources of the Great Barrier Reef has attracted much interest.

The Queensland Energy Resources Advisory Council was established late in 1966 and has recently submitted its report for the year ended 30 June, 1968. Its members were selected having regard to their knowledge of the various sections of the energy industries and the technical facilities available to them.

This Council has prepared statistics showing the current reserves of energy in Queensland for the various forms of uranium, crude oil, natural gas, hydro-electricity, and black coal. The council has had the assistance of specialist officers in preparing such statistical information, and has also prepared figures dealing with the consumption and utilisation of various forms of energy in Queensland. In this regard, it is interesting to note that bagasse, which serves the captive market of power for sugar mills, supplies some 13 per cent. of the total energy consumed in Queensland.

The council's activities during the past year include the presentation of reports concerning natural-gas reserves, coking-coal reserves, advice relating to the export of coking coal and the matter of parameters for determining coal reserves. The council is continuing its work and making further studies regarding the usage of natural gas and coking coal from Queensland sources.

Of concern to my department in the past has been the shortage of serviced home sites in Mt. Isa for the genuine home-seeker, and I approved that my Under Secretary and other senior departmental officers visit the area in an endeavour to ease this problem. It was apparent from discussions during this visit that there was in fact such a shortage of home sites which had the necessary services provided by the council. Many people were living in temporary accommodation, flats at exorbitant rentals and sub-standard premises, such as garages and other equally unsuitable places.

It was also apparent that there were many allotments in Mt. Isa held under miners' homestead tenure on which the improvement condition had not been fulfilled, either in whole or in part. It became known that some of these allotments were being held for speculative purposes only and, in some cases, excessive prices were being asked for unimproved blocks. A policy was then implemented to ensure that the improvement condition attaching to these homesteads was fulfilled, and approval of the transfer of unimproved blocks was denied unless there was a good and just reason. These actions touched off an unprecedented building boom

in the town, which put an effective brake on the speculator and helped considerably to ease the accommodation position.

To help further in this matter, the department, together with the council, planned the development of a new suburb, now named Sunset. The council was experiencing great difficulty in providing services to outlying blocks, but, if these building operations were grouped, the difficulty would be overcome.

Consequently, my department obtained finance from the Treasury to develop initially 105 home-site blocks at Sunset and the council gave the undertaking to supply each block with water, electricity and sewerage. The department called tenders for its part of the work and the contract to provide storm-water drainage, earthworks, gravel-paving and bitumen-surfacing of roads with concrete kerbing and channelling at the corners has now been completed. Several of these blocks have already been reserved for housing purposes for various State departments, the Commonwealth and church purposes. The over-all design caters also for adequate school sites and park lands. The auction of the remaining 92 blocks takes place on 18 November, and the department will recoup its development costs from the successful purchasers. These costs are very moderate indeed.

I feel that this action by my department, with the co-operation of the council, will be of great benefit to the genuine home-seeker in Mt. Isa in making fully-serviced home sites available, and will do much to ease the accommodation situation in the city.

A similar scheme also is underway, in co-operation with the Mt. Isa City Council, to provide much needed fully-serviced industrial blocks at Breakaway Creek, and the auction of the first stage of these blocks is set for 25 November.

For a very appreciable time I have had under consideration the matter of coloured sands fringing the Cooloolooloo Sand Mass. Following protracted discussions with the companies concerned, namely, Queensland Titanium Mines Ltd. and Cudgen Rutile (No. 2) Pty. Ltd., which hold authorities to prospect, I have now been informed that those companies have offered immediate surrenders of some 1,000 acres for national park purposes. The area to be surrendered extends over all the exposed sections of coloured sands in the Rainbow Beach section of Wide Bay, from 8 Mile Rocks easterly to a point adjacent to the lighthouse reserve.

In this regard I must commend the outlook and attitude of the mining companies, whose testing programmes to date have established the existence, in the areas to be surrendered, of some 7,900 tons of rutile and a similar tonnage of zircon. Total value exceeds \$800,000. However, in the public interest they are prepared to surrender.

In regard to the foreshores of Laguna Bay from Double Island Point to the Noosa River, I would mention that a number of companies hold mining titles. However, all mining leases which include any coloured sands exposures have conditions prohibiting interference with the coloured sands. In regard to authorities to prospect, leases must be granted by me before mining can be carried on. I have full power to condition such leases adequately.

I desire to place on record the dedicated and untiring efforts of my staffs, throughout all branches and all districts, to give to this most important industry the service that it deserves.

#### COAL BOARD

For the current financial year the moneys requested for the Queensland Coal Board amount to \$30,000, a figure that has remained constant over the past few years. Of this amount \$15,000 has been allocated towards the administration expenditure of the board which comprises, in the main, salaries, contingencies, some allotment to its Welfare Fund, contributions to the Department of Mines towards the cost of drilling in the coalfields, and coal research commitments.

The balance of \$15,000 for the financial year has been specifically allocated to the board towards the liquidation of a loan account which the board will require to create to meet its commitment of damages and costs in recent litigation. This litigation followed a decision by the board in its fixation of a selling price for coal to be supplied to the Swanbank "A" Power Station, and this decision, whilst made in accordance with the powers and functions of the board under the Coal Industrial (Control) Acts, 1949 to 1965, unfortunately conflicted with certain clauses embodied in an agreement between the board, certain coal-producers and the Southern Electric Authority of Queensland for the supply of coal to that consumer for its Swanbank Power Station.

The Coal Board has continued to carry out its aims and functions according to the provisions of the Coal Industry (Control) Acts, at times in the face of strong opposition by some coal-producers and even consumers, but, over all, the industry generally has made great progress under the board.

The colliery proprietors have been assisted financially, and, in general, coal quality has improved to a great degree with the constant supervision and insistence on quality by the members and officers of the board. This has been to the benefit of all consumers, who have also received the advantage of strict control over selling prices of coal, resulting in coal-producers being required to absorb, where possible, rising production costs which would otherwise be reflected in ever-increasing selling prices of coal. This policy has also assisted in retaining for

the industry markets which from time to time are very vulnerable to the attractions of alternative fuels.

Coal production continues to rise (it exceeded 5,500,000 tons last year), as does its internal usage, whilst coal exports steadily soar, and in this respect the exports of Queensland coal for the year ended 30 June, 1968, were nearly 2,500,000 tons. The Coal Board will continue to carry out its functions and take such measures to ensure the stability and prosperity of the coal industry as were envisaged when the Acts were contemplated.

#### DEPARTMENT OF MAIN ROADS

In introducing the Estimates for the Department of Main Roads for 1968-69, I should like first of all to give hon. members a brief outline of the department's operations.

The department is charged with the responsibility of constructing and maintaining 24,662 miles of roads declared under the Main Roads Acts, comprising 6,242 miles of State highways, 4,377 miles of developmental roads, 5,150 miles of main roads, and 8,893 miles of secondary roads. There are more than 2,100 bridges on the declared road system totalling about 147,000 linear feet, or nearly 28 miles, in length.

The department's principal sources of revenue are funds made available by the Commonwealth Government under the Commonwealth Aid Roads Act and under other Acts for special developmental projects, and funds collected by the State itself by way of motor vehicle registration fees, charges imposed on vehicles of over 4 tons capacity as a contribution towards the cost of maintaining roads, and, to a lesser extent, repayments by local authorities of a proportion of the annual expenditure on declared roads. These normal sources of revenue are supplemented to a limited extent by Loan Funds, if and when these can be made available.

The works programmes are implemented with the assistance of the plant and manpower resources of local authorities, which act as constructing authorities for much of the work. Councils are required to repay a relatively small proportion of the expenditure on declared roads, and these repayments are ploughed back into further road works. Generally speaking, the charges now made to local authorities are—

#### Permanent works—

- State highways—Free of cost
- Developmental roads—5 per cent.
- Main roads—10 per cent.
- Secondary roads—25 per cent.

#### Maintenance—

- State highways—10 per cent.
- Developmental roads—10 per cent.
- Main roads—20 per cent.
- Secondary roads—30 per cent.

The average over-all charge is now only 4 to 5 per cent. for permanent works and 16 per cent. for maintenance, compared with

about 8 per cent. for permanent works and 26 per cent. for maintenance prior to 1 July, 1963.

Perhaps at this point it would be opportune for me to remind hon. members of the magnitude of the task confronting the department in its endeavours to provide an adequate road system to meet the needs of all sections of the community.

It must be remembered that Queensland, being the second largest State of the Commonwealth, having an area of 667,000 square miles and extending about 1,300 miles from north to south and 900 miles from east to west, has a high degree of decentralisation of population, and that virtually the whole of its area is in economic production. Adequate road communication is therefore of prime importance to Queensland; but, having such long stretches of road to construct, serving virtually all of its area, and having fewer persons per mile of road than most other States, the task naturally is somewhat more difficult here. The Bruce Highway, for example, is only one of many highways competing for available funds in Queensland. But when people are critical of its construction standards, do they stop to realise that the length of this one highway is almost equal to the distance between Melbourne and Brisbane? Nevertheless, having regard to the road funds that it has been possible for the State to muster and the demands placed on these funds to develop such long lengths of road to serve the needs of such a vast area, we have just cause to be proud of what we have achieved within the limits of our resources.

Expenditure by the Department of Main Roads from all sources in 1967-68 was \$77,166,242, and, in addition, a total of \$13,562,388 was collected on behalf of other authorities and paid to them.

Expenditure was as follows:—	\$
Main Roads Fund .. .. .	60,754,231
Beef Cattle Roads Construction Fund .. .. .	3,745,374
Urban Roads Construction Fund .. .. .	3,812,292
Other Special Funds .. .. .	8,854,345
	<u>\$77,166,242</u>
Collections for other authorities were—	
Treasury Department—	\$
Motor Vehicle Stamp Duty	2,722,011
Motor Vehicle Insurance	
Nominal Defendant Fund	227,446
Operators' Fees, Motor Vehicles	977,864
Traffic Offences .. .. .	565,122
	<u>\$4,492,443</u>
Insurance Companies—	
Compulsory Third Party Insurance Premiums .. .. .	9,069,945
Total .. .. .	<u>\$13,562,388</u>

Funds required for 1968-69 will amount to \$86,151,026, made up as follows:—

	\$
Main Roads Fund .. .. .	63,508,026
Beef Cattle Roads Construction Fund .. .. .	6,300,000
Urban Roads Construction Fund .. .. .	7,018,000
Other Special Funds .. .. .	9,325,000
	<u>\$86,151,026</u>

Last financial year, 888 miles of roads controlled by the department were constructed and bitumen surfaced. Of this, 261 miles represented bitumen-surfaced construction in replacement of sections which were previously bitumen surfaced but which were no longer adequate for the requirements of today's traffic, and the balance of 627 miles represented new bitumen-surfaced construction. Fifty-four new bridges were also completed during the year, and, in addition, major repairs were carried out on 68 existing bridges.

Hon. members will realise that it would not be practicable for me to endeavour to give a detailed account of the works proposed to be done in 1968-69, especially since the programme to be financed from the Main Roads Fund consists of well over 700 separate projects dispersed throughout the whole of the State. However, it can be expected that works of approximately the same magnitude as for last year will result from the proposed 1968-69 programme, to be financed from the requirements of \$31,289,587 included in the Estimates for permanent works.

We are faced with pressing and constant demands from all areas of the State for accelerated improvements to our roads. Since World War II, road traffic has increased at an alarming rate—far beyond the expectations of road planners of earlier years. Not only has there been a rapid increase in the number of vehicles on our roads, but also the speed and loading capabilities of vehicles have increased. This has all had an adverse effect on our road pavements. For example, in 1939, at the start of World War II, there were 129,000 vehicles (excluding tractors and trailers) registered in Queensland. By 1964 the number had risen to 500,000, and at present there are about 630,000. The rapid growth in the number of vehicles using the roads naturally results in an increased availability of road revenue, but it also increases the demand for road improvements and pavement restoration.

Queensland is divided into 131 local-authority areas, and very many councils press strongly for greater annual expenditures on the development of the roads in their areas. There is the tendency for some to feel neglected if the amount spent in their area is less than that for the previous year. No matter how much we would like to be able to meet their wishes, it is simply not



possible to spend more and more every year in every area, nor would this be likely to achieve the best over-all results.

The point to be remembered is that every cent collected in Queensland by way of motor vehicle registration fees and all the funds received from the Commonwealth for road works, together with any loan funds that can be obtained to supplement these, are spent on road and bridge construction and maintenance or their associated activities, such as surveys, designs, land acquisitions and the like.

The selection of specific projects for inclusion in the annual works programmes is made only after a critical examination of many factors to determine relative priorities, in a genuine endeavour to ensure that reasonably equitable treatment is given to the road needs of all areas of the State, consistent with the total funds available.

The Department of Main Roads has devoted a considerable amount of energy for some time now in marshalling a great deal of information in an endeavour to use it for the purpose of getting the best return to the State for the investment being made in roads. The new Road Plan of 1963 and its regular reviews, the State-wide traffic surveys that it conducts, the needs surveys done in conjunction with other States, and the transportation surveys in urban areas, are all means to an end. That end is to know the full details of the problem so that its solution can be handled intelligently.

This year another road-needs survey was conducted by each of the State road authorities of Australia. This is the third such survey to be carried out by the State road authorities, and this time it was done to standards agreed between the National Association of Australian State Road Authorities and the Commonwealth Bureau of Roads. It seems probable that this survey would be one of the most extensive carried out by any Western country today. The degree of co-operation afforded by the local authorities was of the highest order, and it is pleasing to note that Queensland completed its work in the time allotted.

With the impending expiration of the current Commonwealth Aid Roads Act at the end of the present financial year, it is hoped that the new Commonwealth legislation for roads assistance to the States will take a positive step towards bridging at least a substantial part of the gap between available funds and road needs. There is certainly no lack of awareness of what needs to be done. Finance is the main factor limiting our rate of progress, and this requires special emphasis to be placed on the consideration of priorities.

The Department of Main Roads works on a five-year planning programme, which is drawn up in consultation with local authorities and is, each year, projected

forward one year. But the whole five-year programme is reviewed each year in the light of developments and changes.

With the comprehensive data that it has collected and collated, the department is undoubtedly in the best position to give informed advice on the projects on which available funds should be spent each year to derive the best results in the interests of the community as a whole. Indeed, this is one of the main reasons why we have a Department of Main Roads.

An amount of \$218,543 provided in the Estimates for works under section 19 of the Main Roads Acts will afford financial assistance to certain local authorities for developmental projects on roads under their control. The projects concerned are those that the local authorities are unable to finance from their own revenues or funds from other sources that are normally available to them.

Maintenance of roads accounts for a requirement of \$8,930,000 for 1968-69, compared with an expenditure of \$9,094,864 in 1967-68. This expenditure is necessary for the inevitable process of preserving assets in roads and bridges from deterioration.

In over-all magnitude, maintenance represents an ever-increasing commitment to the department and to local authorities in terms of both work-force and finance. By the very nature of the work, frequently involving small gangs and limited usage of materials, the final value for money spent compares unfavourably with that resulting from permanent works. In terms of money spent per man employed, the cost of maintenance work is approximately double that involving permanent works.

In 1962-63 expenditure on maintenance was of the order of \$6,000,000, so that within the space of five years our annual expenditure on this type of work has increased by about 50 per cent. The department is concerned that this trend could continue as more miles of road are constructed and as existing roads tend to deteriorate because of age and the ever-increasing burden of more frequent and heavier axle loadings.

The more money that is spent on maintaining roads naturally means that there is so much less available for expenditure on permanent improvements. However, the road assets, in which there is a large public investment, must be maintained, and it becomes a question of limiting the expenditure to that necessary to maintain pavements to predetermined minimum tolerable standards.

This is a problem that has aroused increasing interest, and, with the appreciable amounts now being spent annually on this work, the department proposes to initiate a specialised study and control of maintenance operations with a view to raising efficiency and getting the best over-all economic results.

The amount of \$4,250,000 shown in the Estimates as being required for expenditure from the Roads Maintenance Account represents the anticipated collections under the Roads (Contribution to Maintenance) Act. This Act provides for the operators of vehicles of over four tons capacity to pay charges based on the mileages travelled on public roads. These charges are paid to the Department of Transport, the collecting authority, and are then passed to the credit of the Roads Maintenance Account at the Treasury. These moneys, without any deductions for collection expenses, are then distributed between the Department of Main Roads and the local authorities on the principle that they should be paid to those authorities financially responsible for the maintenance of roads used by this heavy traffic.

During 1967-68 the local authorities received \$1,510,000 from this source, whilst the balance of \$2,408,420 was paid to the credit of the Main Roads Fund and spent on the maintenance of declared roads. It is partly as a result of the use of these funds by the Department of Main Roads that local authority contributions to the maintenance of declared roads could be cut by about 10 per cent. over all, as previously mentioned. For 1968-69 the local authority distribution has been increased to \$1,630,000, representing about 38 per cent. of the estimated collections. When it is considered that only about 20 per cent. of these moneys would be collected on account of running on local authority roads, I think it will be agreed that the local authority distribution is, if anything, on the generous side.

The department's Estimates for this year also include an amount of \$3,500,000 as proposed expenditure from the Commonwealth Aid, Local Authority Roads, Fund. This is for payment to councils for works on suitable rural road projects of their own choice. This figure does not really reveal the true position, since it is a net amount excluding allocations the councils themselves have chosen to set aside for work on declared secondary or developmental roads with the object of attracting dollar-for-dollar matching contributions by the Department of Main Roads. It also includes some unspent money reprovided from last year and excludes an amount estimated to remain unspent at the end of the current financial year.

A better appreciation of the situation can be gained from considering the position in terms of the allocations made available to councils. In 1968-69 a total amount of \$4,289,170 was allocated to councils from Commonwealth Aid Funds, from which they elected to set aside \$1,144,318 for works on declared secondary and developmental roads, to be matched dollar for dollar by the Department of Main Roads. The total amount made available to them for rural road projects of their own choice, to be financed from Commonwealth Aid Funds, is therefore really \$5,433,488.

The determination of the total amount to be allocated to local authorities each year is not directly related to the State's total receipts, but rather to an assessment of the relative needs of the declared and undeclared road systems.

When the new Road Plan of Queensland was introduced in 1963, not only did the Department of Main Roads take over some 3,800 extra miles of road, but also the charges to local authorities for works done on declared roads were considerably reduced. This action increased the Main Roads Department's commitments fairly substantially, but it resulted in a corresponding saving to local authorities.

In point of fact, the reduction in charges to councils for Main Roads works during the five-year period of the present Commonwealth Aid Roads Act will be in excess of \$9,000,000, and the saving in the amounts they will have had to raise by way of annual payments in respect to these charges for the same period will be nearly \$5,000,000. This is considered to have afforded them much greater financial assistance than they could have hoped to get by way of increased allocations from Commonwealth Aid Funds, particularly as the savings in the charges can be applied by councils to any works they desire and not necessarily to road works only.

Furthermore, the Road Plan is subject to periodic reviews to cater for adjustments in the declared road system where the road transportation and developmental needs of areas have changed. One such review carried out in 1966 resulted in an increase of some 200 miles of the declared system and it can be expected that future reviews will result in some further increases.

The development of the declared road system is undoubtedly of paramount importance to local authorities themselves, and the benefits they derive from the department's operations under the Main Roads Acts have to be borne very well in mind when the equity of road works allocations is being debated.

Any increase in the Commonwealth Aid allocations to councils for undeclared roads cannot help but result in a corresponding decrease in the funds available for works on the declared roads. The roads-needs surveys which have been conducted indicate that, even under present conditions, the local authorities' needs are likely to be met faster than those of the declared roads.

An amount of \$6,300,000 is shown in the Estimates as required for expenditure from the Beef Cattle Roads Construction Fund. These funds are provided by the Commonwealth under an agreement with the State, and are used on approved roads in northern and western districts to promote the production and export of beef cattle. Not only are they proving of very great benefit in this direction, but they must also have a very big influence on the general development of the State as a whole.

Up to the end of June, 1967, the Commonwealth had provided \$20,500,000 for beef road development in Queensland, \$8,550,000 of which is repayable, with interest, by the State.

Following further negotiations, the State Grants (Beef Cattle Roads) Act, 1968, was passed by the Commonwealth Parliament. Under this legislation a further amount of \$39,500,000 is to be made available to the State over a seven-year period which commenced from 1 July, 1967. In addition to this amount, the State proposes to provide from its own resources an amount of \$7,000,000 for expenditure on similar works over the same period. The funds being made available by the Commonwealth under this Act are in the nature of a grant and are therefore non-repayable by the State. The total scheme embraces about 2,400 miles of roads. Construction of 817 miles has been completed since 1960 and a further 286 miles is under construction.

From 1 July, 1960, to 30 June, 1968, a total of \$26,269,497 was spent on the development of the beef roads network. The roads included in the programme for development from beef-road moneys over the seven-year period covered by the new Act are Julia Creek-Normanton, Georgetown-Kennedy Highway, Mt. Isa-Dajarra, Battery-Townsville, Mareeba-Laura, The Lynd-Charters Towers, Cloncurry-Burketown, Normanton - Croydon - Georgetown, Mt. Douglas-Collinsville, Mungana-Highbury, Winton-Boulia, Dingo-Mt. Flora, May Downs, Oxford Downs-Mackay, Mt. Coolon-Nebo, and Currawilla.

The Estimates require the provision of \$7,018,000 for expenditure from the Urban Roads Trust Fund during 1968-69. Expenditure from this fund last financial year was \$3,812,292, which consisted of \$773,066 towards the Government's one-half share of the new Victoria Bridge project and \$3,039,226 on works associated with the construction of expressways. From the requirement of \$7,018,000 for 1968-69, it is expected that \$678,000 will be spent on the Victoria Bridge project and the balance of \$6,340,000 on expressway works, the main projects being the Riverside and Story Bridge Expressways and the South-east Freeway. These works are, of course, part of the continuing programme to implement the Government's modified version of Stage I of the Brisbane Transportation Study Report.

I remind hon. members that not only are we taking positive steps to deal with the growing traffic problems of Brisbane, but we are also giving due attention to the traffic problems in the urban areas of other large cities of the State. Transportation surveys of Toowoomba and Townsville were completed in 1966, and works to commence implementing the recommendations arising from these studies are included in the department's normal works programme for 1968-69. The Ipswich Transportation

Study was recently completed, and a transportation study of the Redcliffe area is expected to be completed later this year. It is also proposed soon to conduct a regional transportation study to include the Proserpine-Mackay-Sarina area.

#### STATE ELECTRICITY COMMISSION

The financial year 1967-68 produced further consolidation and expansion of Queensland's electricity supply industry. The growth-rate of the industry in this State has exceeded the national average in recent years, and the year just concluded has produced one of the highest average growth-rates ever achieved, the increase in units sold being approximately 11½ per cent. for the whole State.

This exceptional growth-rate reflects in the main the extensive industrial development which has occurred, particularly in Central Queensland, where the 1967-68 growth-rate was 56.6 per cent. These developments are of national as well as State importance, and contribute substantially to the buoyancy of the Australian economy through increased export earnings. Electricity is the prime force behind this expansion of industry. The electricity supply industry does not itself create the demand for electricity; it satisfies the demands made upon it by the community and industry generally.

The past 10 years have seen great strides made in Queensland's electrical development in both the physical and organisational spheres. In the North, the Tully Falls hydro-electric generating station was commissioned in 1957, and this was followed by the inter-connection of the Cairns and Townsville networks, the completion of the Koombaloo Dam, the water storage for the Tully Falls station, and the inter-connection of the Mackay regional network with that of Townsville and Cairns.

The Barron Gorge hydro-electric station was commissioned in 1963, and this was followed in 1964 by the creation of the Northern Electric Authority as the generating and main transmission authority for the three northern regional electricity boards.

To augment existing generating facilities for the northern grid, construction is now proceeding on the 120 megawatt power-station on the Collinsville coalfield, estimated to cost, when completed, \$26,000,000. In June last the first 30 megawatt turbo-generator in this station was commissioned, and the second is scheduled for commissioning in the near future. The third and fourth units are planned for commissioning in 1970 and 1971 respectively. This new station will provide base-load power for the northern network, and, when fully developed, will render the economics of the system less dependent upon the occurrence of dry and wet seasons, which affect the output of the hydro-electric stations.

To convey the power from the generating stations to the distribution networks supplying the final consumers, a 132,000-volt transmission system now links all the generating stations in the North, extending from Barron Gorge to Mackay.

In Central Queensland the first great impetus to development came with the commissioning in mid-1963 of the transmission line from Rockhampton to the Moura-Kianga coalfield, where the world's largest dragline is now in operation. To cater for further large industrial development and increasing demands generally, the Callide Power Station was constructed, the first 30 megawatt set of which was commissioned in 1965. Three such sets are now in operation at Callide, and the fourth and final set in the present planned development will be commissioned in April, 1969.

A 25 megawatt gas-turbine station, the first built in Australia by a public supply authority, was commissioned at Rockhampton in December, 1967. This is a peak-load station, and its commissioning made possible the deferment of construction of a second 132,000-volt circuit from Callide to Rockhampton.

In Central Queensland 132,000-volt transmission lines now radiate from Callide to Moura, Blackwater, Rockhampton and Gladstone. In this area the sale of industrial units represents a higher proportion of total units sold than anywhere else in Queensland. It is also the area exhibiting by far the greatest electrical growth in Queensland, owing to the great diversity of industrial projects embracing the alumina works at Gladstone, the major coal export developments at Moura and Blackwater, the long-established mining projects at Mt. Morgan, meatworks, coal-loading plant, cement works, salt works and other enterprises.

The construction of a transmission line from Blackwater to Emerald has been commenced, and this will connect the small western system, embracing the towns of Clermont, Capella, Emerald, and Springsure, with the main central grid. This followed the Government's decision to construct the Fairbairn Dam.

In Southern Queensland, the last decade has seen the commissioning of the transmission line from Toowoomba to Dalby, the conclusion of the rationalisation agreement between the Southern Electric Authority and the Brisbane City Council, the installation of final plant items at the Bulimba and Tennyson Power Stations, and the 132,000-volt transmission link between the areas of supply of the Southern Electric Authority and the Wide Bay-Burnett Regional Electricity Board.

Major development in this area has, of course, centred on the construction by the Southern Electric Authority of the Swanbank generating complex. In Swanbank "A" Power Station, the first 66 megawatt set was commissioned in 1966. The fifth set

has just become operative, and the sixth and final set is scheduled for commissioning before the winter of 1969. At the adjoining Swanbank "B" Power Station, construction work is well advanced and the first of four 120-megawatt generators will be commissioned early in 1970. The remaining units will be commissioned annually until 1973.

In addition to this, two gas-turbine power-stations are to be installed by the Southern Electric Authority. The first, Swanbank "C", of 30-megawatt capacity, will be commissioned early in 1969, and the second, of 60-megawatt capacity, will be commissioned at Middle Ridge, near Toowoomba, in 1970. These will be peak-load stations.

Whilst the existing high-voltage transmission system is based on 132,000 volts in the central and northern networks, it is predominantly 110,000 volts in the southern network. In the near future, construction of the first stages of a 275,000-volt transmission system within the southern network will be commenced. This will provide a significant increase in the capacity of the system, and it will become technically possible to interconnect the three major networks of the State at a later date when it proves economically practicable to do so.

In Western Queensland the accent has continued to be on the centralisation and consolidation of electricity supply facilities. In the more populous areas of the State the industry is organised on a regional basis that is complementary to our decentralised population. In the West the trend has also been in this direction but, for geographical and other reasons, progress has necessarily been slower, as distances are longer and loads are smaller. Nevertheless, within the limits of available finance and economic feasibility, the concentration of production of electricity at the most economic centres of generation, with the smaller centres being supplied by transmission, has proceeded at a fast rate.

Aiding this trend has been the progressive westward extension of the boundaries of the regional electricity boards and the constitution of the Central Western Regional Electricity Board. In all these areas, substantial schemes of rural electrification are proceeding.

During 1967-68, over 150 megawatts of installed capacity was added to the State's generating facilities and a record capital expenditure of over \$55,000,000 was incurred. An amount of approximately \$65,000,000 is programmed for 1968-69.

To date, a total of approximately \$600,000,000 has been invested in the industry in Queensland, and it is estimated that over \$300,000,000 will be required in the next five years. Some of this must necessarily be found from internal resources, as is the case with the electricity supply industry throughout Australia and the rest of the world. This was an important reason

behind the increases in electricity charges last year which affected most parts of the State.

Despite these increases the price of electricity has, over the years, remained one of the most stable cost elements within the State's economy. This stability has been due to the economies of large-scale operation and improved efficiencies arising from rapid growth of the industry. This is illustrated by the fact that the cost of production of electricity per unit has increased by only about 10 per cent. since 1953. In that period the Consumer Price Index has risen by almost 50 per cent.

Concerning future developments, the State Electricity Commission has already carried out extensive investigations into the most economic way of catering for the normal increase in the State's power requirements, and in this process has collaborated with the electric authorities concerned.

It has been apparent for some time that power-intensive industries have a great deal of interest in the possibility of establishing plants in Central Queensland where low-cost steaming coal is available, in some cases produced as a by-product of the mining of coking coal for export purposes.

One of the obstacles faced by the industry has been the small size of the Central Queensland network, which has prevented very large sets, for example, 200 megawatts or larger, being installed. Such sets would produce much cheaper power than the 30-megawatt units at Callide, provided there is a market for their output.

The full economic advantage of large sets can only be achieved by intergrating them into a large power system, and in Queensland this would require interconnection between the Central Queensland and Southern Queensland grids. Up to date this has not been possible because of the heavy costs of transmission, but as total loads grow this obstacle is reduced in magnitude.

Indications are that it may be possible to have operating in Central Queensland a new major power-station capable of producing power at a cost which would be attractive for smelting and other high power-consuming industries to which the cost of power is of considerable importance. Technical and economic investigations of this possibility are at a very advanced stage, and if these indications prove to be correct the State will be able to offer power to new industries at competitive prices. The attraction of such large new industries to Queensland will increase the plant installation programme and involve the provision of capital funds substantially in excess of the normal resources available to the industry.

It is estimated that the installation of 600 to 700 megawatts, additional to normal requirements, would involve additional capital requirements of close to \$100,000,000. If national funds could be found to finance these requirements, it would be a very small

price to pay for the vast contribution these industries could make to the nation's export income.

The price at which such money can be found is also a prime consideration, as approximately half the cost of producing a unit of electricity is in capital charges. Whatever the outcome of current investigations and negotiations, the paramount criterion is development of the State's natural resources, whilst still ensuring that electricity is made available to the greatest number of consumers at the lowest cost.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Order! I inform the Committee that, on the Chief Office Vote, I propose to allow a full discussion on the whole of the ramifications of a department (Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Funds, and Loan Fund Account) and then to confine the discussion to each particular Vote.

For the information of hon. members, I point out that the administrative acts of the department are open to debate, but the necessity for legislation and matters involving legislation cannot be discussed in Committee of Supply.

**Mr. HOUSTON** (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition) (2.30 p.m.): I am sure that all hon. members listened with great interest to the Minister's speech. I certainly could not charge him with not having given a detailed report on the departments under his control.

**Mr. Walsh:** Of course, some of his details were wrong.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** Each hon. member can make his own submissions on that point.

It is unfortunate that the annual reports of the various departments are not in the hands of hon. members at an earlier stage. We receive some annual reports only one or two days before the Estimates for those departments are debated. To make the situation even worse, some annual reports cover the period from 1 July to 30 June—that is, the financial year—whereas others cover the calendar year. As a result, the Minister mixes the two periods together and quotes figures that do not coincide with those published in some reports. I am not saying that the figures that he quoted are inaccurate—that is not my suggestion at all—but the point is that he can be referring to an annual report and quoting amounts of royalties received during the calendar year, whereas the royalties referred to, for instance, in the Auditor-General's report are those received for the financial year. It is possible that from time to time some variation will arise between figures quoted by the Minister and those quoted by other hon. members, and the reason for it is that the two periods of time are referred to.

I suggest to the Government that it is about time that all annual reports were prepared on the same basis, whether on the

calendar year or on the financial year. Of course, it is a matter for the Government to decide, but I would suggest that, as the financial reports are based on the financial year, it would be easy to bring the departmental reports into line with them instead of interfering with the financial reports.

**Mr. Davies:** Otherwise they are nearly 12 months old.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** That is a factor to be considered. Take, for example, the report of the Under Secretary for Mines for the year 1967. Ten months of 1968 have passed, and the latest figures available on the operations of that department are to 31 December, 1967, so they are not of any great value. Drastic changes take place from time to time, and they certainly can take place in a period of 10 months.

The Minister gave a speech that would be apt for an election year, and he tried to paint a very rosy picture of the departments that he controls.

**Mr. Sullivan:** He is telling the true story.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** I have never said that any Minister told a deliberate lie.

**Mr. Sullivan:** I am not suggesting that.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** The point I make is that the important matters are those that were not mentioned. I am not doubting that what the Minister said was factual when based on the information that he used, but whether or not his conclusions were correct is a matter for debate. Of more importance are the matters that he did not mention. In other words, the Minister is basing his statements on half-truths.

The Minister went to a lot of trouble to give hon. members figures of production of coal and minerals. He took nearly two hours to present his speech—and I have no quarrel with that—but in order to reply to his speech in 25 minutes it is necessary to cut a few corners. In view of that, I intend to speak on only some aspects of his speech, but I believe that they set the pattern of the other activities that are under the Minister's control.

The Minister referred to coal production. I believe that the benefit that the State is deriving from mineral and coal production is reflected in two avenues: firstly, employment that is created, and, secondly, royalties that are paid to the Crown.

I have spoken about royalties on many occasions, and I will continue to do so while I believe that the State is getting such a raw deal in this source of income. On looking at the coal position, we see that, in 1957, 3,387 men were employed in underground coal mining in Queensland and 169 in open-cut mining, giving a total of 3,556 men employed in coal mining when this Government came to office. With all the talk about expansion in coal mining, development and everything else, the total

number of men employed in this industry during the first half of 1968 was only 2,235. In other words, approximately 1,300 fewer men were employed this year than in 1957.

**Mr. Hinze:** This has occurred in every industry.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** It has not occurred in every industry. I will guarantee that the Minister for Industrial Development will tell us later about expansion in employment in certain fields. The Government will argue that way when it suits it, but it does not suit the Government to tell us about the decrease in the number of men employed in this field.

**Mr. Armstrong:** You know as well as I do—

**Mr. HOUSTON:** I know plenty of things that the hon. member does not know. One is that the Government is not stating the true position as it exists in this industry.

The Government is suggesting that we are doing very well from royalties. I will now examine the returns from Mount Isa Mines Ltd. In 1966-67 royalty payments totalling \$1,068,990 were received by the Government, but this year only \$431,218 was received, representing a decrease of more than \$637,000. What a great return that is, in the light of all the boasting about Mount Isa Mines Ltd. and the return to the State! I know that employment is provided at Mt. Isa, but we should not forget, as I pointed out in the Budget debate, that the number of people on the roll in the Burke electorate, and at Mt. Isa, has decreased since the last census.

Royalty payments from Mt. Morgan have increased substantially on production there, but royalties from oil and natural gas decreased from \$833,295 to \$778,009, a drop of over \$45,000 in the return to the State from the oil industry.

The Minister told us how many millions of barrels of oil were produced and their value, but that is the value to the company operating the field, not the value to the State.

**Mr. Ahern:** What about the return to the State in freights?

**Mr. HOUSTON:** Freights are an entirely different matter. If the hon. member wants to argue about freights, I will accommodate him. Freights have nothing to do with royalties. Freight is paid on the carrying of a commodity. The hon. member is trying to argue that if oil was found on the coast we should not receive any royalties at all. How ridiculous can he be? Freight is only the logical charge made for carrying a commodity. It has nothing to do with the return to the State. If the railway was carrying any other commodity, freight would be paid on it.

**Mr. Armstrong:** Every barrel produced is sold here.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** There, again, it is the return to the State from the barrels sold that is important. But production dropped last year. Do not talk to me about our expanding oil industry.

Last year the company that produces bauxite made a profit of over \$5,000,000, yet the increase in royalty was only from \$57,466 to \$212,018.

Hon. members opposite talk about the great expansion in our coal-mining industry. That is the item that is reported to be returning so much to the State in decentralisation, and about which we hear so much propaganda. In 1966-67 we received in royalties a total of \$143,834. That is all we got last year. This year we increased it, certainly, but the Minister said that the total value of coal production this year exceeded \$25,000,000. And we received a measly \$171,460 in royalties this year! That is a trivial amount, considering the value of the coal being exported from this State to Japan and other places. In 1966-67 the total royalties from minerals dropped from \$2,241,575 to \$1,711,503.

There is all this talk about our being the great coal producer, and that Queensland will be the State showing the rest of Australia what to do. This is nonsense. Let us see what New South Wales gets from coal royalties. The figures are—

	\$
1965-66 .. .. .	1,525,428
1966-67 .. .. .	1,667,365
1967-68 .. .. .	1,937,107

Compare those amounts with the trivial amount of \$171,460 for Queensland. In other words, New South Wales gets more than 11 times the royalties that we do on the same commodity exported to other countries. The total coal royalty that we received last year was less than the increase in royalty in one year in New South Wales.

**Mr. Ahern:** You don't think we are making any profit on the railing of coal from Moura?

**Mr. HOUSTON:** Does not the hon. member realise that New South Wales is making a profit too? In any case, this Government refuses to tell members of the Opposition the rail freight rate from Moura, so how can we work it out? No doubt we will then be told that an excess profit is being made. As my Deputy Leader reminds me, we are not even told the base rate paid by Utah.

**Mr. Davies:** Secrecy!

**Mr. HOUSTON:** That is the type of thing. Then the Minister says that we are doing all right. In the recent electioneering campaign he said that we are making over \$7,000,000 profit out of the railways and mining. Yet the total profit on the railways, income over working expenses, was

under \$1,000,000, so what about the other \$6,000,000 that has been lost? Where does the loss come in? The Government is supposed to be making the extra \$6,000,000 from mining, so where is it giving it away? Where is the inefficiency? None of the Budget or other figures made available to hon. members have shown this be accurate.

If any profit is being made, it is being made on the Mt. Isa line, not on the Moura-Gladstone line or the Blackwater line. This is where the Minister tells half-truths. He did not say "profit from coal-mining", in which he claims there is overseas investment; he said "profit from mining", and he knows full well that Mount Isa Mines Ltd. started mining operations many years before this Government came to power.

Let us have a look at what it costs the State to develop the mining industry. After all, what we receive from mining should surely exceed what we spend to develop it. Administrative costs, including mining fields and geological surveys, this year cost \$1,550,124, and mining assistance \$286,617, a total of \$1,836,741, which exceeds the total amount of royalties received. In other words, although we received a certain amount in royalties, we spent more than that in assistance to the mining industry. Then the Government talks about the great expansion in this industry. There is something wrong with the administration when the State is being sold, or given away, at this rate.

I point out, too, that we now get less from rents. Surely the State is entitled to some return from the use of the ground, whether it be for mining or other purposes. When reference is made to returns obtained from rents, it must be remembered that if the land is being used for mining no return is being obtained from what is taken from the land.

I think the whole basis of determining whether or not the State is getting a fair deal is a comparison between royalties and administrative costs, and I say quite definitely that this State is being sold out. I say that whatever arguments the Minister or his supporters may use, they cannot justify the royalties at present being charged on our natural resources, particularly coal which is shipped overseas and is not used in the production of further work in this State. At least some of the bauxite is being used at Gladstone.

The Minister now states that further electrification is required throughout the State. If the Government had taken our advice eight years ago there would now have been a power-station in Central Queensland, together with an aluminium works and other subsidiary industries. I have heard hon. members opposite say that these things are not wanted, and that building them would be a waste of money.

**Mr. Armstrong:** You sat on this side for long enough.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** I have never sat on that side of the Chamber, but I will be sitting there next year.

Oil and natural gas royalties are, I believe, also significant, and I trust that the Minister can give us some explanation of why there is a reduction in the amount received from them. I trust that that position is only temporary and has not come about because production rates are decreasing.

The expenditure on mining is not the only expenditure that the State is incurring. When we have a look at the drilling programme, we find that this year \$784,998 was used in that programme which, of course, exceeded the returns from lease rents, so I think that it can be said that, over all, the State gained nothing in a material sense from the year's operations. Much more is being put in than is being returned.

I now wish to refer to a couple of other matters that I think are important, as they show the problems associated with road works in this State. In the first place, I say that more should be done to provide four-lane strips on two-lane highways.

**Mr. Hinze:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. HOUSTON:** I am glad the hon. member agrees with something that I say. His Government has had 11 years in which to do something about this matter. It astounded me that during the campaign preceding the Landsborough by-election the hon. member for Landsborough said that he was quite happy with the new two-lane highway in his area. When that work was being done, I think it was a shocking thing to make it only a two-lane highway.

**Mr. Ahern:** There are some four-lane sections there.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** There are, but they are so short that they were constructed purely for their propaganda value. If the Government is sincere in its professed desire to reduce the toll of the road, it should, through the Main Roads Department, construct more four-lane highways so that slower vehicles can be passed with safety. Anyone who travels the Bruce Highway to Maryborough will see time and time again that slow vehicles produce dangerous situations. So often one sees five or six cars following a slow-moving vehicle, till finally one of the drivers in the line gets impatient and moves out to pass in a dangerous situation. On a trip to Maryborough a few days ago I saw four such incidents which could have caused accidents. If the Government is really concerned about road safety, let it be "fair dinkum" and build at least stretches of four-lane highway at intervals along two-lane roads. The Minister will agree that there are many roads in coastal and inland areas that lend themselves to this type of construction. I suggest to the Minister that he have this work done in the interests of road safety, if for no other reason.

In the few moments that I have left to me, I wish to refer to the Electrical Workers and Contractors' Board, which is under the Minister's control although he did not refer to it. I have said many things in this Chamber about the training of electrical apprentices to fit them as qualified electricians, but one thing for which the Government will always stand condemned is the way in which it has interfered with the training of electricians in this State. The stage has now been reached at which an electrical apprentice who comes out of his time—

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. HOUSTON:** Mr. Hooper, the Electrical Workers and Contractors' Board comes under the control of the Minister.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I remind the Leader of the Opposition that the Committee is not discussing apprentices under this Vote.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** I do not wish to disagree with your ruling, Mr. Hooper, but I point out that the Electrical Workers and Contractors' Board is under the control of the Minister for Mines, Main Roads and Electricity, and that board issues a certificate on the passing of an apprenticeship examination. If I cannot tie those two matters in, I will sit down.

The Government has made a real mess of the training of apprentices. I told hon. members opposite three years ago that if the Government interfered with the hours of training at the schools—

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The Leader of the Opposition is entitled to speak about the Electrical Workers and Contractors' Board, but he cannot discuss apprenticeship under this Vote.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** What a shocking administrative decision the Government made when it placed the administration of the Electrical Workers and Contractors' Board under a department other than the one that is responsible for the training of electricians! That is what the Government has done.

I wrote to the board relative to the granting of a ticket after a person has passed an examination on a syllabus that is now inferior. I asked—

"Does the Board consider the standard of the present Four Year Apprenticeship with Three Year College Course of the same standard as the Five Year Apprenticeship and College Course just superseded?"

I remind hon. members that a ticket is usually granted on the results of an examination.

The answer was—

"The relative standard of a tradesman prepared through a 4 year apprenticeship period and a 3 year college course cannot



be academically compared to a tradesman prepared through a 5 year apprenticeship period and a 5 year college course."

What a lot of nonsense! I do not know who wrote that letter or who thought it up. When standards are determined, they are not determined merely on the basis of a period of time; they are determined on the basis of a syllabus and the standard of the final examination. The question of time has nothing to do with it. The point I was making—it was the point that the Board did not want to see—was that if the standard of the material in the syllabus is reduced, the ultimate standard of the tradesman is lower.

I am concerned about this because my information from the South is that, within two years, a Queensland tradesman will not be accepted in any other Australian State. In all good faith, boys will become apprentice electricians and serve the time laid down by the State—I have no fight with the four-year apprenticeship period, but I have plenty of fight with only a three-year college course and what is in it—and then find that Victoria, New South Wales and other States will not accept Queensland tradesmen as having a standard equal to theirs. If the Minister is happy about that, I am not.

I asked the board—

"Has it been definitely ascertained whether or not the tradesman having the new standard of Apprenticeship Training will be recognised in other States as at present?"

Its answer was—

"The position in this regard has not been definitely ascertained."

It is the board's responsibility to ascertain it, and I remind hon. members that this is years after the course was introduced.

I asked the board also—

"How will the completion of the Advanced Trades Course compare with the standard of the tradesman prior to 1968?"

The Board replied—

"Under the Electrical Workers and Contractors' Acts the advanced trades course does not come within the purview of the Board and therefore the Board is not in a position to make this comparison."

I do not know what the board is supposed to be doing. What is the good of having an advanced trade course, getting lads to complete it, and then, when it is all over, having the board say, "We cannot tell you whether your study has given you any more qualifications"?

In my opinion, the administration of this part of the Act is a scandal. Good lads who want to go ahead in their trades are being crucified. They want to become good tradesmen and work for the nation, but, firstly, the Government is reducing the quality of the syllabus that they are being

taught; then, when they do extra studies—the Government has admitted that extra studies are required by advocating the advanced courses—the Electrical Workers and Contractors' Board says, "We are not interested; we cannot do anything about it; we have not made any reports or anything else."

I finally said—

"Will a certificate be issued on completion of the advanced trade course? If not, why not?"

The Board replied—

"The Electrical Workers and Contractors Act does not provide for the issue of a certificate upon the completion of the advanced course."

I say that the administration is completely out of step and wrong, and I ask the Minister to do something about it.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. LONERGAN** (Flinders) (2.55 p.m.): I welcome the opportunity to take part in this debate and to make some comments on the great improvements that have taken place in Flinders since 1957. It was rather strange to hear the previous speaker say, amongst other things, that this Government has had 12 years in which to construct four-lane highways, and so on. Might I remind the hon. gentleman that the A.L.P. had 39 years in which to carry out these improvements? (Opposition laughter.) They were in power from 1932 to 1957—they cannot deny that—and they did nothing at all about it.

**Mr. Houston:** I used to ride a horse to work once, too.

**Mr. LONERGAN:** On the hon. member's performance today, he should still be there.

**Mr. Houston:** I would, if the roads were safe to ride on.

**Mr. LONERGAN:** Never have I seen, in the short time I have been here—I will be here much longer than many on the other side—such a weak exhibition from a Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Davies:** Your parties opposed the setting-up of the Main Roads Department.

**Mr. LONERGAN:** I know I would be out of order if I mentioned how the hon. member for Maryborough is referred to. I am not saying this, I am simply repeating what has been said by others, that is, that he is known as "Birdbrain". How right that is!

As one who has lived in western areas for the greater part of my life, I feel that I am in a position to express an opinion and, when I do so, it is factual and not coloured by politics in any shape or form.

**Mr. Hanson:** It is coloured with political bias.

**Mr. LONERGAN:** I say of the hon. member who has just interjected that wealth and Labour principles do not go hand in hand. However, that is beside the point.

I take the opportunity, in the very limited time at my disposal, to make passing reference to some of the remarks made by some of our opponents in far-western Queensland. One gentleman, Mr. Newbury, has been referred to out there as a political refugee from New South Wales. How right that is. His remarks were supported by my A.L.P. opponent in Flinders. Would either of these gentlemen be in any position to pass an opinion on whether or not Western Queensland is neglected? Before anyone can pass an opinion on such a matter he must live there for some years, know what the conditions were before the present Government parties attained office, and compare them with the conditions today. These people do not know what they are talking about; it is only hot air that they talk. Therefore, in case some misguided person might be gulled into believing and taking some notice of what they say, I make those remarks. They know nothing at all about the area, and I feel sure that they have no interest in it, either. If the gentleman who hails from New South Wales is such a good A.L.P.-ite and is as bright as he would have us believe, why is it that he must come to Queensland to find a seat? He came up here because he could not obtain an endorsement in New South Wales and the A.L.P. did not itself have the means to contest this seat.

I intend to touch briefly on some of the improvements that have been effected since I have represented the Flinders electorate. I can well remember the time when, in wet weather, it took me two days to travel from Hughenden to Townsville. Nowadays that trip can be made in a matter of a few hours because an all-weather road covers the distance of nearly 230 miles between those two towns. In addition, on the Flinders Highway an all-weather road extends for 36 miles and a further 46 miles of roadway is under construction.

To give the Committee some idea of Labour's neglect of the roads in my electorate, I should like to quote some figures. They may not be absolutely correct, but they are near enough to correct and would be acceptable to members of the Opposition because they have been guessing ever since they have been in the Chamber.

In the period till June of this year, on permanent road works the Government has spent approximately \$8,000,000. That amount has not been spent in one year but over a number of years, and has been the pattern of the Government's policy relative to expenditure on roads. That would give hon. members some indication of how great Labour's neglect was. In the future a similar amount needs to be expended in order to provide an all-weather road to Cloncurry.

**Mr. Houston:** Why is it taking you so long?

**Mr. LONERGAN:** In 12 years we cannot overcome the neglect shown by the Labour Party over 39 years, irrespective of how good and efficient we are. The expenditure of that amount indicates in no uncertain manner the good job that has been done by the Main Roads Department. May I pay a tribute to the officers of the department and to my genial friend, the Minister.

**Mr. Houston:** Your what?

**Mr. LONERGAN:** My genial friend. We on this side of the Chamber are all friends. There is no-one looking over the other fellow's shoulder waiting to step into his shoes. That does not apply to this side of the Chamber. We are not divided within ourselves. As the hon. member sitting in front of me has said, we do not have to go up to the Trades Hall looking for friends.

The remarks that I have made are endorsed by all the people who live in western Queensland, and particularly by the local authorities in that area. They appreciate what main roads work means. They hire out their plant and carry out the work by day labour. This provides jobs for over 200 local employees. I am in favour of that principle, in certain instances. It is a happy state of affairs, and I believe it is in the best interests of the small towns that the council should do the work.

In addition to the work already done, other big contracts are coming up on the Charters Towers-Lynd section of the Gregory Highway, which is a beef road. I should not like to hazard a guess at the total cost but it will be substantial. It will confer a great benefit on the people who live north of Charters Towers.

I find myself not completely in accord with one aspect of the work carried out by the Main Roads Department. It is being a little inconsistent in its practice of sealing roads—I am in favour of that—and leaving watercourses unbridged. That is a bad policy. What is the use of a bitumen road if, when people come to a watercourse, they cannot cross it? I raised this matter with the former Minister for Main Roads, the late Honourable Ernie Evans, who agreed with me, and some improvements were subsequently effected. A blanket cover was not provided, but it was an improvement. I will later name some of the worst crossings.

Motorists are the most important people to be considered in relation to main roads work. As they provide the money, they should be considered. However, I feel that in many instances the motorists' interests are a secondary consideration. In one section on this side of Cloncurry big bitumen jobs are being carried out on hard country which motorists could travel over after inches of rain, but further on motorists come to what are known as the Gilliat Channels, only to

find them impassable. When they run, they usually run for weeks. This approach is quite wrong. Great hardship is often caused to people who are not in a position to pay for putting their vehicles on trucks. I suggest to the Minister that he raise this matter with his engineers and take a definite step by making it an instruction that, henceforth, the policy will be "Bridges before bitumen".

**Mr. Houston:** That is your slogan, is it?

**Mr. LONERGAN:** No, it is not my slogan. My slogan is, "Never fear, old Bill's here". It has been endorsed and approved by the people of Flinders, and I commend them for their good sense.

That is not the only place where delays occur. From time to time people travelling from Darwin to Brisbane are held up for weeks because a few little tinpot creeks between McKinlay and Kynuna are impassable. That should not happen, and once again I ask the Minister to note my comments and to give his engineers a nudge and say to them, "It is about time this was stopped. We expect some action from the motorists' point of view."

**Mr. Houston:** You are very critical of your Government.

**Mr. LONERGAN:** I am very happy to be critical. Hon. members opposite are envious because they have not the intestinal fortitude to be critical. If they were, their endorsements would be withdrawn.

I hope that the Minister is listening to my next comments. I am not being parochial in raising this matter. It affects not only the people in my electorate but all those who travel between Townsville and Mt. Isa and Darwin. There is a small watercourse between Hughenden and Richmond known as Sloane Creek, and in wet weather it frequently delays road traffic. I asked a question in the House recently on this matter and the Minister, in a very brief reply, said that something would be done next year. But Lord knows when! Even if a bridge cannot be built, at least a temporary crossing should be put in.

I believe it is a waste of money for the Main Roads Department, year after year, to renew the wooden decking on bridges. Nothing could be more annoying, and it would be difficult to imagine anything more wasteful. I have raised this matter before. I hope that on this occasion some notice will be taken of my remarks. I feel that at times these bridges have become unsafe. Recently the bridge across the Haughton River between Haughton Valley and Charters Towers was verging on being dangerous. Fortunately the Main Roads Department saw fit to put a little bit of gravel in the holes on the bridge and pour some bitumen over it, and so the hazard that existed was eliminated.

I ask the Minister to press for more beef roads in the Flinders electorate. He has done an excellent job in this regard in the past and, with the assistance of the Federal member for Kennedy, Mr. Katter, his efforts will be just as successful in the future. I have three roads in mind. The first is from Julia Creek to Kynuna, and the second is from Charters Towers to Clermont, the traffic on which is increasing. Quite recently the Dayrmyple Shire Council opened new saleyards in Charters Towers, which is becoming the leading cattle-selling centre in North Queensland because it is centrally situated. More cattle are run in the Dalrymple Shire than in any other local government area in Queensland. It is only natural that it should be regarded as the centre because three meatworks are in close proximity there.

The third road is from Aramac to Torrens Creek. This job warrants investigation, because that road would tap possibly a good reservoir of cattle which would be diverted to the Cape River meatworks instead of having to travel a long distance to Central Queensland or Cannon Hill.

Unfortunately I have not had an opportunity to study the Annual Report of the Under Secretary for Mines. It is probably in my office and I have overlooked it. I thank the Minister for keeping open the battery at Charters Towers. We went through a very lean period for a while, but he and his officers saw the wisdom of keeping this battery open. It serves a useful purpose for small miners in the district. After all, we must keep in mind that, of recent years, all the big finds have been made by small men. At present they are not putting through a great deal of ore, but we are providing a facility that is badly needed and is taken advantage of by those whom we term gougers or prospectors.

In Charters Towers most of the land is under miners' homestead perpetual lease or miners' homestead lease. The land that is not occupied is overgrown with chinee apple or rubber vine, and I feel that any person who wishes to lease it should receive it rent free on the understanding that it is cleared of noxious weeds. In my area *Harrisia cactus* is starting to grow again, and I think that giving the land rent free on the condition that it is kept clean would help to eliminate this scourge, which has got out of hand in the Collinsville district.

I understand that the Minister made some reference to making funds available for the fencing of old mine shafts. I am happy to hear that, because these shafts are a very real menace to adults and children in and around Charters Towers. I do not mind admitting that it has been a hard tussle to get Government departments "to come to the party" and provide funds for this work. The Premier's Department would not do it, and the Mines Department said that it was not their responsibility. If my memory serves me correctly,

it was the Department of Local Government that made funds available, and they were put to very good use.

Time will not permit me to make any comments on electricity undertakings, including the Townsville Regional Electricity Board. However, I shall be back here in this Assembly next year, and I shall then take the opportunity to deal with those matters.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON** (Salisbury) (3.17 p.m.): Whilst the Minister dealt with the various departments under his administration, it is my purpose this afternoon to concentrate on only one facet of the Mines Department. I refer to the Coal and Oil Shale Mine Workers (Pensions) Act, and I do so because I am concerned about the pensions of miners particularly since the recent amendment to the Act.

Since 1956 efforts have been made by various unions and federations throughout Australian to effect changes in this legislation, and at all times it has been the desire that no change should be made at the expense of those in receipt of miners' pensions. The 1968 amendment, passed by this Parliament, did exactly what those employed in the industry had been trying to avoid. That amendment extended the age of voluntary retirement from 60 to 65, and, as a result of that provision, a miner over the age of 60 can remain in employment whilst living next door to a young married miner of 35 who has been retrenched because fewer men are now required in the coal industry.

The Treasurer described his Budget in glowing terms as a "march to progress" Budget, and this morning the Minister for Mines spoke of an all-time record in coal production. I believe it is the Minister's bounden duty to bring to the attention of the Committee the plight of miners who have retired and are receiving benefits from the pensions fund, and the way in which their position has deteriorated, particularly since the 1968 amendment. In my opinion, the miners who are in receipt of pensions in this State have been literally kicked in the teeth by the Government, and because of its actions they are suffering great financial hardships when their position is compared with that of the rest of the community.

It is quite evident that this is a pattern being set by the Government, because one sees it also in other fields. It was apparent recently when there was an increase in the effective Commonwealth pension paid to widows and deserted wives and the Government of this State chose to reduce by \$1 the amount that it paid to them. In my opinion, the situation is so serious that the Government must take action to correct the anomaly.

Let me detail first to the Committee the series of events that has led to the present position. Before the 1963 Federal Budget, which increased Commonwealth pensions, miners' pensions in New South

Wales and Queensland were the same. The relevant Pensions Act in each State at that time provided that miners' pensions should be increased by an amount equal to the increase in the Commonwealth pension. In effect, therefore, a person who was receiving a miner's pension had the benefit of a flow-on whenever the Commonwealth Government increased pensions.

As a consequence of the 1963 Budget, most miners' pensions were increased. However, on that occasion, because the Commonwealth pension was increased only in the case of single pensioners or in the case of a married couple only one of whom was qualified to receive a pension, the rate remained the same for married pensioners who were both receiving a pension.

Following representations made to it by the Miners' Federation and other coal-mining unions, the Government of New South Wales moved very swiftly to overcome the problem and correct the anomalous situation that had arisen, and it legislated to increase the miners' pension. As a matter of fact, it introduced special legislation increasing the miners' pension in New South Wales by \$2 a week. However, similar representations to the Government of Queensland, at that time met with no response, and since then, despite repeated efforts made by the Miners' Federation, the situation has deteriorated to such an extent that miner-pensioners in Queensland are being penalised severely, if one compares their living standard with that of the miners in New South Wales. The net result of the legislation enacted in New South Wales at that time was that the Queensland miner who was on a pension was \$2 a week worse off than his counterpart in New South Wales.

Immediately prior to the increase in the Commonwealth pension on 10 October this year, the rate of pension for a retired miner in Queensland was \$26.50, while his counterpart in New South Wales was receiving \$28.50. The two States work on the same basic formula of miners' pension and contribute the same amount to the funds; yet there is a disparity of \$2 a week between the pension received in Queensland and that received in New South Wales under the Coal and Oil Shale Mine Workers (Pensions) Act.

The sorry story does not end there, because worse was to come following the increase in pension, particularly in cases in which either the husband or the wife was receiving an age pension. Because of the recent increase in pensions the situation has now been reached that the married miner's pension in Queensland, far from being increased to make it commensurate with that of his colleague in New South Wales, has actually been reduced to the extent of \$1. This has been brought about because the 1968 amendment in Queensland froze the married miner's pension at \$26.50 per married couple.

This is the case particularly in relation to a couple about whom I asked the Minister a question. He indicated that this happened in the case of a miner named Robert Madders, of Union Street, Torbanlea, who is a retired miner under 65 years of age and is therefore not qualified for a Commonwealth age pension. His wife, being over 60 years of age, is entitled to the age pension. At the time of, or prior to, the recent increase in the Commonwealth pension, Mrs. Madders was receiving \$13 a week by way of Commonwealth age pension, and this amount was deducted from her husband's miners' pension of \$26.50 a week. In effect, this meant that he was receiving, from the Miners' Pension Fund, \$13.50 a week. With the increase in the Commonwealth pension, though it meant that Mrs. Madders gained an additional \$1 a week, taking her Commonwealth pension to \$14 a week, the benefit being received by Mr. Madders was reduced to \$13 a week.

I queried the Minister on this matter and asked him if, in the case of the Madders, it was true that the pension had been reduced by \$1, and how many other miners were affected similarly by the increase in Commonwealth pension. He revealed in his reply that some 127 miners in receipt of pension had, in fact, suffered the same decrease in their pension from the Miner's Pension Fund.

This, of course, reminded me that during the debate when the amendment was brought before Parliament, the secretary of the Queensland Collieries Employees' Union issued a circular warning miners that this sort of thing might happen. This circular was quoted by the Minister in this Chamber. It contained Mr. Vickers very careful assessment of what the effect of the legislation would be on miners' pensions. It was issued to miners warning them that their pension would be reduced. The Minister got up in this Chamber and made a vicious attack on Mr. Vickers, secretary of the union. He quoted the circular and then said—

"The statement is a malicious untruth. What is more Mr. Vickers knew it was an untruth because he checked this provision of the Bill with the registrar of the tribunal and was given the facts."

From the Minister's own lips the other day, in answer to my question, it is obvious that the fears expressed by Mr. Vickers that the effect of the legislation then before the House would be, in fact, to reduce miners' pensions, were well founded. It most certainly has had that effect in the case of a married miner whose wife is in receipt of an age pension. Because the Commonwealth pension has been increased by \$1, the pension of the miner recipient has been reduced correspondingly by \$1. The tragic fact is that this will go on indefinitely unless the State legislates to correct the anomaly.

I am not going to forecast that the present Tory Government in Canberra will increase the Commonwealth pension every year, but the result is that each time the Commonwealth pension is increased by \$1 or some other amount, a corresponding amount will be deducted from the married miner's pension payment. He will remain on a frozen pension rate until this Government corrects that anomaly. The Minister confirmed the fears expressed by Mr. Vickers, and, in addition, branded him as a "malicious liar". Common decency demands that the Minister should apologise in this Chamber to the secretary of the Miners' Union for having made such a scurrilous attack on him for what was his logical assessment of the effect of the recent amendment to the miners' pensions Act.

I will show the Minister how the situation has deteriorated and is getting even worse. Unless the Minister takes some remedial action, I predict the eruption of industrial trouble among members of the Queensland Colliery Employees' Union. What red-blooded unionist would want to stand by and see the Queensland pension slipping behind pensions that are paid in other States where mine-workers make a similar contribution to the fund?

I wish to place in "Hansard" figures that show the effect of the introduction of the 1968 amending legislation, and I want to show how, owing to the miserly and niggardly attitude of this Government, a retired Queensland miner suffers in comparison with his New South Wales counterpart.

I will take the example of a miner, where neither he nor his wife has qualified for the age pension. Prior to 10 October, 1968, which was the date of application of the Commonwealth pension, the pension of such a Queensland miner stood at \$26.50, and it has remained at that amount since then. In New South Wales, before that date the pension of a similarly placed miner stood at \$28.50, and it has since risen to \$30.50. That places the Queensland miner in the disadvantageous situation of receiving \$4 less than his New South Wales counterpart.

I will now take the example of the miner at Torbanlea, where both he and his wife qualified for the age pension. In Queensland, prior to 10 October, 1968, that miner's pension was \$26.50, but because his wife received an age pension of \$13 his net miner's pension was reduced to \$13.50. Since 10 October his miner's pension stood at \$26.50, but because his wife received an additional \$1 his pension was decreased by \$14, so that in effect it dropped to \$12.50.

Compare this with what was done by the Liberal-Country Party Government in New South Wales, which apparently has a different attitude towards people on fixed incomes from that of this Government. In New South Wales, before 10 October, 1968, the miner's pension was \$28.50. I will deduct the age

pension of \$13. This left the miner's pension at \$15.50, which was \$2 above the pension payable in Queensland.

After 10 October, 1968, the miner's pension rose to \$30.50. If we deduct the age pension of \$14 it will be seen that the miner's pension in New South Wales was \$16.50. The New South Wales Government saw fit to correct the anomaly so that the married miner-pensioner in New South Wales whose wife receives a Commonwealth pension is better off by \$4 than his Queensland counterpart.

I now come to the case where a husband and wife both qualify for the age pension. In Queensland, because of the Government's attitude, the net miner's pension, which might be described as the irreducible minimum—it cannot get much lower—is \$3. In New South Wales, where both parties qualify for the age pension the miner enjoys a pension of \$5, or \$2 more than the Queensland miner receives. In all categories in New South Wales the miner-pensioner is from \$2.50 to \$4 better off than his Queensland counterpart.

However, that does not occur only in New South Wales. It happens in every other State, and I am allowing for the fact that Victoria has only one black-coal mine. Retired miners in Victoria and Tasmania receive benefits similar to those in New South Wales. But this great State of Queensland, where the Treasurer talks about a "march to progress", lags far behind! I said the other day in my Budget speech that for some it may be a march to progress but for others it is a weary trudge. Miners who receive a pension in Queensland are very much a part of the community in respect of which the tenure of office of this Government makes their life a weary trudge. The whole crux of the problem is that the Queensland miners, whose mine pension remains pegged, will find that it remains pegged until the Government does something about it. They are receiving the lowest mining pension in Australia. There have been increases in wages in virtually every section of the community, and there are rising costs and increased taxation. These people, who saw the wisdom of a miners' pension scheme, form one section of the community and, because of the Queensland Government's neglect and lack of interest, they have had their pensions frozen at a lousy \$26.50 a week.

I remind the Committee that recently I asked questions about the removal of some 10,000 tons of coal from Prospecting Lease 10C in Blackwater South. The Minister informed me that 10,000 tons of coal had been removed from that area and sent to Japan as a trial shipment, but not one cent was paid into the pensions fund as a contribution for the mining of this coal. Strong rumour in the mining industry has it that it was not 10,000 tons, but, indeed, more like 70,000 tons of coal which was removed, or will be removed, from this

prospecting lease. The Minister indicated that, under the Act, the operations of this lease constituted a coal mine.

If the owner or operator of the mine could not sell this coal because it was taken from a prospecting lease and if, under the Act, the coal remained the property of the Government, who should have paid contributions to the coal miners' pension fund? Surely the Minister will not be so naive as to say that the coal was a gift to Japan. Somewhere along the line this 10,000 tons of coal must have been sold. In the Minister's words, this coal was taken from what constitutes a mine under the Act, so whoever was the legal owner of the coal was responsible for making contributions to the coal miners' pension fund and for the payment of royalties.

This is a dangerous situation. If the Minister now wants to say that this is not a mine, the miners are working in an area which would not be declared a mine and, if they were injured, maimed, or killed, they could well find they have no legal claim for compensation. While this 10,000 tons of coal has been mined and while no contribution has been made to the coal miners' pension fund by whoever owned this coal, the mine workers' pension has been pegged. Despite the fact that the Minister will claim that the fund is not actuarially sound, the Miners' Union proved conclusively to the tribunal that the Queensland fund is in a better state than is any other fund in the Commonwealth. Yet these other funds are paying increased pensions. The Minister will probably answer my statements by saying that the Queensland fund is not actuarially sound. I repeat that it has been proved to the tribunal that the Queensland fund is far sounder actuarially than is the fund in New South Wales, yet in that State miners receive \$4.50 above the amount paid to retired Queensland miners.

(Time expired.)

Mr. N. T. E. HEWITT (Mackenzie) (3.43 p.m.): I was somewhat amazed to hear the hon. member for Salisbury say that this Government has shown a lack of interest in the welfare of miners.

Mr. Sherrington: You wouldn't know.

Mr. N. T. E. HEWITT: My Labour opponent "copped" it when he stood against me, and the hon. member for Salisbury should be careful that he does not "cop" it this time, because he is heading that way.

The hon. member spoke about wages and pensions. I know full well that the Minister has agreed to meet representatives of the Miners' Union next Tuesday to discuss the matter with them fully. He did not try to make cheap political capital out of it as the hon. member did this afternoon. He is interested in the workers, as this Government is, and as it has been for the past 10 or 11 years. Looking back, we can see some of the shabby things Labour did to the mining

fraternity of this State. Labour has nothing to be proud of in this regard. Look at the conditions under which miners lived at Ogmoo, Bluff, Selene and Blair Athol.

**Mr. Duggan** interjected.

**Mr. N. T. E. HEWITT:** It is all right for the hon. member for Toowoomba West to interject. In all probability he has never been there to see what happened. I have taken the trouble to look around, and I know full well the conditions under which those people lived. But for what this Government has done those men would be unemployed.

Labour members can say what they like. They should look at the totally different conditions at Moura and Blackwater. A large proportion of the mining fraternity is not on side with Opposition members in many of the statements they make from time to time in this Chamber. Miners are genuine people and they realise that they are getting a fair deal and are enjoying good conditions, and, what is more, many of them are earning good wages and are happy with the employment that is provided. That is completely different from the feeling of insecurity that plagued them at Bluff and Blair Athol. No-one knows that better than I, because I represented those areas. We will see how we do at voting time.

**Mr. Sherrington:** What have you done about miners' pensions?

**Mr. N. T. E. HEWITT:** It would not worry me if the hon. member came up to the area and tried to stir up trouble. That has been tried before and that type of person never gets very far with the class of miner who is there today.

Let us look also at railway workers and what is being done for them, and compare it with what was done under Labour Governments. The Leader of the Opposition mentioned the railway line from Gladstone to Moura, so I suppose I am entitled to have something to say about railwaymen. Let us consider the position at Baralaba, which was a mining town. When I became the member for that area, I found that, under a Labour Government, one fellow, named Reg. Tickner, had lived for two years in a tent. So much for the champions of labour that we hear so much about! Let hon. members opposite go and see Reg. Tickner, and he will tell them that never again will he vote Labour. He is the best advocate that I have among those people, because he knows that I am genuinely interested in doing something for them and that I would not allow them to live year after year in a tent. Today prefabricated huts are provided in temporary camps, and conditions are very much better in permanent settlements. What Labour Governments did in this matter was nothing to be proud of. As one who represents a couple of mining towns, I take a pride in being able to say, "At least this Government is providing for these people homes and other amenities that Labour Governments never

thought of." Hon. members opposite are very critical of Utah Development Co. I point out that \$5 a week is all that any miner employed by that company pays in rent for his home, and they are first-class homes of a type that I would be proud to live in.

It was not my intention to deal with mining, but I felt that I should make some things clear when I heard so much being said about it.

**Mr. Houston:** Are you happy with miners' pensions?

**Mr. N. T. E. HEWITT:** The Minister will answer those points, and I may say that I always want a better deal for the worker, no matter who he is. At the same time, no-one could be happy with the conditions that applied in Labour's day. Hon. members opposite couldn't care less about them. Throughout the west of Queensland, conditions were substandard in every way, and the Labour Government's interests there were only political ones. Ministers represented areas and did nothing for them. As long as a member could hold his seat, he did not care about anything else. Money was poured into electorates simply to hold those seats, and to "heck" with the people in other areas.

Having said that, I do not propose to say any more about mining. I spoke for almost an hour on that subject when a private member's motion was before Parliament. However, I felt that I had to answer some of the Opposition's criticism. Hon. members know that I am not always happy with everything that is done and I am one who has been ready to criticise the Government if I have felt that things were not done as they should have been. By the same token, however, I have the same right to criticise the Opposition when they try to make cheap political propaganda out of something. I am genuinely interested in the development of Central Queensland and the good of its people, whether they be miners, farmers, graziers or anyone else. I am genuinely interested in trying to do something for them. I have not a narrow parochial outlook.

The beef roads scheme has been of assistance in many outlying districts. I feel, however, that the Commonwealth has possibly overlooked some roads in nearer areas which have a tremendous potential. I refer particularly to the road from Banana to Westwood, which is more or less a service road for the wonderful brigalow land development scheme.

I ask the Minister to keep that road clearly in mind when pressing for any extension of the beef roads scheme. As I said, it is well worth considering because it serves an area that produces many fat cattle and in which primary producers are becoming more agriculturally minded and are bringing more acres under the plough year by year. In turn, this will lead to even greater cattle production.

I must mention the Banana Shire and say that there is a great deal to be done there. Nevertheless, I am prepared to be fair and say that the last 12 or 18 months have seen many improvements, and I thank the Minister for his co-operation in that regard.

As I have pointed out repeatedly in this Chamber, the Banana Shire is one of the most rapidly developing shires in Queensland. In it are the Moura-Kianga coalfield and a large portion of the brigalow lands development scheme. In addition, many of the areas that have been settled for years are being brought under the plough and are being cultivated to wheat, sorghum and other crops. In my opinion, that rapid development is one of the things that has been lost sight of, and until recently it has not received the recognition it deserves. I hope that the Minister will keep that point in the forefront of his mind, because if one looks at the road construction in areas between Mossman and Brisbane, virtually the only area that is without sealed roads today is in the Banana Shire. Admittedly, a breakthrough is being made, and everybody will be very happy if the work continues.

Apart from the matters that I have mentioned, the Main Roads Department has done a wonderful job in Queensland. The early leadership of my very good friend the late Honourable Ernest Evans played a major part in raising the Main Roads Department to its present position. Mr. Evans was a man of very definite opinions and was never afraid to express them. At the same time, he was big in his outlook, and I believe the present Minister, Mr. Ron. Camm, has carried on the work of the department in a way of which he can justly be proud.

I have travelled Queensland from the West and the South to Cape York Peninsula—in the past eight or 10 years I have travelled over virtually the whole of Queensland—and no-one knows better than I do the wonderful developmental work that the Main Roads Department has carried out. Central Queensland has profited considerably by that development, and that is evident if one looks at the work that has been carried out on the road from Rockhampton to Emerald, back through Springsure, Rolleston, Moura and Biloela to Rockhampton. Eight or nine years ago only about 50 or 60 miles of that road had been bitumen-sealed; today it is bitumen-sealed for all but about 60 miles of its length of 400 miles or more. It gives people going into that very vital part of Queensland an opportunity of looking at some wonderful country and exciting development.

Between Rockhampton and Emerald people travelling this road can see much of the brigalow land. They can go on to the Fairbairn Dam and Maraboon Lake, back through the wonderful downs country round Cullin-la-ringo to Springsure, and then down to Rolleston through Areas I and II of the

brigalow scheme. They can see the coal-fields at Moura, then go on to Calcap Power House and the Callide Dam.

All this is something of a tourist attraction, and I compliment the Main Roads Department on the interest it has shown in making this road as good as it is. In the not-too-distant future, most probably the whole of the road will be bituminised and it will be one of the really enjoyable drives in Queensland. I do not think there is anywhere else in this State that one can travel and, in one day, see such a variety of things going on.

In addition, of course, we need to keep up with the progress in our area because Central Queensland has such a big cattle population. We have the meatworks owned by T. A. Field and those at Lake's Creek and, as I mentioned previously, it is very important that we keep the roads into the Arcadia area in good order as that will give Central Queensland an opportunity to compete with the Roma district and others. It has been a credit to the Minister and his officers and all I can say, in conclusion, is that I have been very happy to have been associated with the late Minister, Mr. Ernest Evans, and with the present Minister, Mr. Ron. Camm. He can rest assured that any time I put anything up I will always try to be constructive and put forward something which I hope will be for the good of Queensland.

**Mr. DONALD** (Ipswich East) (3.57 p.m.): The coal mining industry generally has given excellent service to Queensland and Australia in peace and in war. It has met every demand that has been made on it from time to time and it has never failed to respond in any emergency. On several occasions the economy of Australia has been saved by the mining industry, particularly the coal mining industry.

Turning to the coal miner himself, we have to admit that he is an expert craftsman in the calling for which he has been trained over the years. The experience gained in his occupation, which is admittedly dangerous and very arduous and, at times, very uncomfortable, makes him a very valuable unit in the nation's work force. Take him away from winning coal, through redundancy or any other cause, and his value to the nation's work force diminishes rapidly. Although he is used to working in hot, and often very humid conditions—he is a very hard-working man—he is not used to working in the sun and, strangely enough, he suffers as a consequence. He finds himself reduced from a skilled worker, and at times a specialist, to a non-skilled worker, and consequently finds it difficult to obtain suitable employment or indeed, employment of any kind. It is therefore the duty of the Government to see that gainful employment is found for him and for others placed in the same unfortunate position.



The extent of the drop in the number of people employed in the coal-mining industry in Queensland is revealed in the Annual Report of the Queensland Coal Board. In 1958, 3,142 were employed in underground mines, but in 1968 the number was only 1,728, a reduction of 1,414 or 45 per cent. There has been a slight decrease each year since 1958.

These are the figures—

Year	Decrease
1959 . . . . .	26
1960 . . . . .	42
1961 . . . . .	303
1962 . . . . .	120
1963 . . . . .	175
1964 . . . . .	125
1965 . . . . .	113
1966 . . . . .	233
1967 . . . . .	277

During this period the number of workers employed in open-cut mines rose by 251, from 143 to 394. It is very interesting indeed to note that during those nine years production rose by 2,196,418 tons, an increase of 46 per cent., whereas the work force fell by 45 per cent. Those figures provide an answer to people who malign the miners and the mine workers' union. I do not know of any other section of the community that is able to achieve such high production with such a great reduction in its work force.

In the following figures, when I speak of production at the coal face, I mean the actual tonnage of coal produced by the miner at the coal face and, when I speak of over-all production, I mean the average tonnage of coal produced per day or per year by the whole of the work force of the company, both underground and on the surface including even the employees in the office.

The output per man at the face increased from 776 tons to 2,124 tons, or 175 per cent. The daily average increased by 80 per cent. from 11,185 tons to 20,688 tons. In the West Moreton district, production per man-shift at the face increased from 7.39 tons to 16.45 tons, or 123 per cent., and the over-all production increased by 91 per cent. from 3.15 tons to 6 tons. On the Darling Downs the output at the face increased from 6.10 tons to 8.79 tons, or 40 per cent., and the over-all production increased by 10 per cent. from 2.86 tons to 3.16 tons. At Rockhampton the output at the face increased from 7.73 tons to 16.88 tons, or 119 per cent., and the over-all production increased by 124 per cent. from 2.64 tons to 5.90 tons. At Maryborough the output at the face increased from 4.74 tons to 7.23 tons, or 53 per cent., and the over-all production increased by 42 per cent. from 2.49 tons to 3.54 tons. The production at the Central District open cuts increased from 12.46 tons to 15.21 tons, or 22 per cent. At Bowen the output at the face increased from 9.47 tons

to 55.39 tons or 471 per cent. The over-all production increased from 2.19 tons to 6.86 tons, or 213 per cent. For the whole of the State the production at the face increased from 7.28 tons to 16.57 tons, or 127 per cent., and the over-all production rose by 134 per cent. from 3.39 tons to 7.93 tons.

The Annual Report of the Queensland Coal Board provides very interesting reading and is also very informative. The author of the report has shown commendable modesty in not putting his name to it, but that will not prevent me from extending by sincere congratulations to him for preparing such an excellent report.

Nearly 20 years ago when the Government of the day introduced legislation to establish the Queensland Coal Board a number of influential people both inside and outside the coal-mining industry questioned the wisdom of the Government in setting up the board. Some members of the present Government who have criticised legislation introduced by the Labour Government were among those who opposed the setting up of the Board. The legislation setting up the board saved the Queensland coal-mining industry from a very embarrassing situation. The passage of time has shown that it was a move in the right direction. At the time of the establishment of the board the industry, in spite of the fact that it was not then subject to keen and unfair competition from powerful foreign oil companies, as is the case today, was in a much more disturbed condition than it is today. The threat of dieselisation of our railways was not apparent, and it certainly was not felt. On the other hand, the prospect of a greater demand for coal for the generation of electric power everywhere in this State was apparent, and that demand will increase.

The decision of the Railway Department to replace coal-fired locomotives with diesel locomotives was a devastating blow to the coal-mining industry. In 1951-52 the Railway Department consumed 731,498 tons of coal. With the exception of the year 1953-54, there has been a decrease each year in the amount of coal consumed by the Railway Department. In 1967-68, the coal consumption of the Queensland railways was as low as 110,016 tons, representing since 1951-52 a reduction of 621,482 tons or approximately 85 per cent. Those figures demonstrate beyond question how serious is the loss of railway business to the coal-mining industry. However, to a large degree thanks to the Queensland Coal Board, the coal-mining industry was in a much better condition and was far better organised than before the establishment of the board, and it was able to overcome the loss of the major portion of the business of one of its best customers.

One would be foolish to lose sight of the tremendous assistance given to the coal-mining industry by the electricity power-stations throughout the State, because over at least the last 16 years the electricity

power-stations have increased their consumption of coal each year. Their consumption of coal in 1951-52 totalled 863,485 tons and in 1967-68 it reached 2,055,438 tons, representing an increase of 1,191,953 tons, or 58 per cent. While the gas companies' consumption was down, as was that of meat and bacon works, the consumption by ships' bunkers, harbour boards, power alcohol distillery, glass works, sugar mills, cement works, metalliferous mining, coke works, hospitals, breweries, distilleries and the alumina refinery was up.

Attention is drawn to the method of working our collieries today. At 30 June, 1967, 85.81 per cent. of our mines were completely mechanised. Production at the face was 18.81 tons and over all, 7.22 tons. Of our collieries, 7.02 per cent. were partly mechanised, leaving only 7.17 per cent. of our mines not mechanised to some extent. Briefly, that is the story of the mechanisation of our coal mines.

Production at the partly-mechanised mines was 12.29 tons at the face and 3.48 tons over all. Production at the non-mechanised mines employing over 15 men was 6.63 tons at the face and 3.23 tons over all. In non-mechanised mines employing fewer than 15 men, production at the face was 7.32 tons and, over all, 4.04 tons. Fully-mechanised mines produced 85.81 per cent. of the State's production and partly-mechanised mines 7.02 per cent. Non-mechanised mines produced the remaining 7.17 per cent.

Those figures indicate the progress that has been made in the mechanisation of the coal-mining industry in Queensland. I am sure that hon. members will agree that they are impressive, as is the Coal Board's contribution to the mechanisation of the Queensland coal-mining industry. During the year under review the Coal Board advanced to Queensland colliery proprietors the sum of \$416,335 for the mechanisation of their mines and the installation of ancillary units. The total amount approved to be advanced by the Coal Board since its inception is \$4,688,919. That is not bad for a socialist piece of legislation. It proves again that what Labour foresees and what Labour legislates are for the benefit of the whole of the community and not just one section of it.

The financial assistance rendered to the coal-mining industry does not begin and end with mechanisation. There is the important phase of drilling, which is regarded as good mining practice. A member of the Opposition had something to say about this a short time ago. During the year the Department of Mines drilling programme reached 143,513 feet, being 16,541 feet in excess of last year's drilling. The Coal Board, as previously, contributed to the cost of this drilling. Its contribution on this occasion was \$96,000.

While the Coal Board looks after the interests of those engaged in the coal-mining industry of Queensland, it is also mindful of

the consumers' interests. Every effort is made to see that the quality of coal supplied to consumers is kept as high as possible. Frequent tests are made of the coal, and samples are sent to the Government for analysis to determine ash and moisture content. Frequent visits are made to the collieries and to the consumers' premises to advise on problems associated with coal utilisation and coal preparation.

Realising the value of research, the Coal Board continued its activities on the National Coal Research Advisory Committee. This committee, in the period following its formation, concentrated its activities on maintaining and increasing markets for coal, with some degree of success. It is now turning its attention in addition to securing new markets for coal, to the problems associated with the actual winning and the better beneficiation of the product. Queensland's contribution towards the activities of the National Coal Research Advisory Committee has been \$20,000 a year, and it will make a similar contribution this year.

Reference is made in the Annual Report of the Under Secretary for Mines, Mr. E. K. Healy, to the Minister for Mines, Honourable R. E. Camm, of the resignation of Mr. A. K. Denmead, Chief Government Geologist. Many years ago Mr. Denmead was given the task of examining the old coal mines and workings in the Ipswich-Bundamba district. He called at the union office one morning and asked if I could obtain for him the services of a retired miner who had some knowledge of the workings in the district to accompany and assist him in his examination of the old workings. I was able to do this without any trouble or delay. Mr. C. Brown, a competent coal-miner who had reached retiring age, accepted Mr. Denmead's offer, and proved very helpful to him. They made an excellent job of the task they were asked to do. They worked very well together and became firm friends. I should like to add that the department lost a very valuable officer when Mr. Denmead retired. I found him very competent. I wish him every happiness in his retirement.

Mr. Healy assures us that the Queensland mining industry can be proud that it is now so broadly based that it was possible to increase the value of production despite a temporary set-back suffered by one of the major metals. That was due not only to the Government's ability to govern but also to the ability of the officers in the Department of Mines to do their job as they should.

The drilling branch of the Department of Mines carried out a diamond-drilling programme in conjunction with the Queensland Coal Board in the Ipswich, Moura, Theodore, Blackwater, Banana, Bowen River, Callide, Drake, and Northern Bowen basins. I think hon. members will admit that that is a pretty comprehensive programme over the whole of the State of Queensland, not one confined to any one basin. The footage

drilled varied from 2,788 ft. 11 ins. in the Northern Bowen basin to 58,907 ft. 11 ins. at Ipswich, the over-all total being 143,513 ft. 2 ins., which was 16,540 ft. 9 ins. in excess of the previous year's drilling, or an increase of 13 per cent. Two bore holes were completed and two more were in progress, for a total footage of 3,260 ft. 7 ins. at Redbank.

As a native of Redbank, I feel that I must mention that the first coal mine in Queensland was opened at Redbank, and my grandfather, the late William Simpson, was the first coal-mine manager in Queensland. If anyone doubts that statement, the history of Queensland available in the Parliamentary Library will confirm it.

The diamond-drilling programme carried out by the Queensland Coal Board is of great value and assistance to all in the industry, and to the community generally. Mr. E. McCarthy, chairman of the Coal Board, Mr. A. Crowley and Mr. O. Preuss, members of the board, have been connected with the coal-mining industry for many years. I have had dealings with them over the years and have always found them to be courteous and helpful. I have not known Mr. R. W. Stephenson, the secretary of the board, as long as I have known the other members. However, I have always found him to be an efficient and courteous officer.

I have drawn attention to the serious reduction in the number of employees in the coal-mining industry in Queensland—and it is serious indeed. It has been confined, in the main, to the highly-skilled, "pre-mechanised" miners. (I hope hon. members will understand what I mean by that.) I refer to the ordinary, hard-working miner who worked well and to the satisfaction of his employer before the introduction of mechanisation in any form. It may appear paradoxical for a section of the industry to be appealing now for extra staff, and because of that I shall quote from "The Coal Miner". I might say that it is not a trade union journal but the journal of the Australian Coal Association, which means that it can be described as a colliery employers' journal. An article in the September, 1968, issue is headed "Opportunities waiting" and reads—

"A paper read to last month's annual conference of the Australasian Institute of Mining & Metallurgy, held at Broken Hill, by Professor John Morgan, head of the School of Mining Engineering at the University of New South Wales, revealed that the total number of mining engineers in Australia had risen only from 441 in the year 1961 to 450 in 1966—a period which has witnessed the development of the greatest minerals boom in Australian history.

"Estimating that the current national requirement for mining engineers was 3,000 men, Professor Morgan recommended the establishment of at least six university schools for training and research in mining engineering. The present number of professional mining engineers in the country, he said, was equal to only 1.75 per cent. of the total number of qualified engineers in Australia.

"While the setting-up of more schools is an admirable idea, experience suggests that this action alone will not necessarily produce the students to fill them. It is doubtful whether, at the present time, any of the mining schools has a full quota of undergraduate students and there are consistent shortfalls in applications for mining scholarships made available by the industry and government authorities.

"Solving the problem—and a solution must be found if the impetus of Australian mining development is to be maintained—will require a determined effort by all branches of the industry, backed up by governments, to inform students at high school level of the opportunities and rewards offering.

"High-level films, TV, literature and lectures at school level would all be appropriate techniques to achieve the desired result of an up-grading of the status of mining in the public mind, as a long-term career offering interesting and challenging opportunities."

The mining industry has accepted challenges, with a considerable amount of success.

The article headed "Shortage of Mining Engineers" says—

"Training and research on behalf of the mining industry in Australia had been neglected by most financial and educational institutions, said Professor J. P. Morgan, Professor of Mining Engineering at the University of New South Wales last month.

"Professor Morgan reviewed the future requirements of the mineral industry for mining engineers and other specialists in a paper presented to the 1968 annual conference of the Australasian Institute of Mining & Metallurgy, held in Broken Hill. Australia would need 1,200 newly-graduated mining engineers in the next 10 years, he said.

"Professor Morgan said that 'a tradition of laxity has developed dating back to the early 1930's. The permanency and strength of the industry now is such that "ad hoc" or expedient educational or research remedies will not suffice.

"The mining industry needs, as do other forms of national industrial activity, its rightful measure and quality of academic support. It should receive this support without question and in full."

"Pointing to the shortage of trained men for mining, Professor Morgan said:

"The situation in Australia with respect to the supply of graduates in mining and mineral process engineering is one for concern. . . ."

(Time expired.)

**Mr. LICKISS** (Mt. Coot-tha) (4.21 p.m.): The Minister has given the Committee an account of the activities of the departments under his control, namely, the Department of Mines, the Main Roads Department, and the State Electricity Commission. The vital activities of those departments bear largely on the development of Queensland, and it is to their relationship that I wish to address my remarks in this debate.

Electricity generation and reticulation is essential to industry; main roads form the basic communication network of the State; and, of course, mineral discoveries and the activities of the Department of Mines have contributed greatly to the regional resources that are now ripe for development.

So, in addressing myself to the activities of the Main Roads Department, let me say first how fortunate I believe Queensland is to have a department as outstanding as the Queensland Main Roads Department, and I pay a special tribute to the Commissioner of Main Roads, Mr. Charles Barton, because I believe that, although Queensland has many capable and outstanding officers, none rates higher than does Mr. Barton.

Hon. members know that there is an advanced planning department within the Main Roads Department, and again I turn my attention to the question of planning. It must be obvious to all hon. members that the Main Roads Department would face a very difficult task in planning, and, indeed, would tend to plan in isolation, if it was unable to obtain from other departments all the information it needed. It is necessary for a department such as that to co-ordinate forward planning, and in order to do that, of course, it should have—I stress the words "it should have"—available to it a State planning authority to provide and fill in the essential information. Again, that envisages the need for a State and regional planning authority in Queensland.

In relation to the administration of the Main Roads Department, I believe that the State's highway system should be a thing apart. Indeed, I believe that such a system is the basic communication network of the State. It should be placed on a level more directly under the almost autonomous control of the Main Roads Department, subject, of course, to any State planning influence which may be brought to bear on it. It certainly should be removed from the parochial attitudes of local authority. It is not a local-authority matter; it is a matter for the State, and, as such, should be raised to that level.

There should be more direct control of planning and construction of State highways. To give an example of forward planning, I refer to the Emerald-Springsure road. With the best will in the world, this road was constructed, I believe, with a 12-foot pavement. Subsequent to the road being constructed it was decided to build the Nogoa River dam. Consequently, already this road will, I suggest, because of other planning activity which was going along in parallel, prove inadequate for the requirements. Probably at the time of the construction of the road this parallel planning was unknown to that singular planning authority.

There is a real need for comprehensive planning. What we need in this State is a nerve centre which knows what is going on, which is looking to the future and which can say to a department, "If you are going to put a road there, take into consideration this development or that development. This will be required in any assessment you make of the requirements of the area." We need a nerve centre which can say to this department, "If you put a road there, remember it is right in the path of a wonderful catchment area which will be required for the damming of water," or, "There is already a trial survey through here for a large-scale electricity reticulation. Please take that into consideration also, because where you have this type of reticulation so are you likely to get settlement and industry." It is a question of getting together at State level, and the time for this type of planning is long overdue in this State.

While I am on this subject, I wish to refer to another difficulty that would face the Main Roads Department as it would the Works Department and other departments that are constructing authorities. I refer to the activities of the Co-ordinator-General's Department. I believe that this is a sort of super-department which is not serving the purpose for which it was established. I relate this to the activities of the Main Roads Department, because it is generally known in professional and high administrative circles that the Main Roads Department is the most efficient planning and construction authority in terms of roads and road bridges. Yet we see this other department, which I feel should be a planning department on a State-wide basis picking many of the plum jobs which should normally go to the constructing authority. I believe that this is embarrassing to these departments and not in the best interests of Queensland. I instance the Gardens Point Bridge and Freeway.

I believe that, unless the Co-ordinator-General's Department serves the purpose for which it was created, it should be disbanded. I think its rightful role in this State should be at the level of State planning, both town and regional. It is when a department sets itself up as a sort of super-department and overrides such a constructing authority as the Works Department or the Main Roads Department that I think we are looking for

trouble. I should most certainly like this matter to be critically examined in view of what is likely to happen within the department in the not-too-distant future. I should like the Co-ordinator-General's Department to be correctly orientated; it is not serving Queensland to the best of its ability at the moment. In fact, it is overlapping other departments which are quite capable and, indeed, more capable of effecting the necessary specialist construction work than is that department.

There is one other matter that hinges on the necessity for planning within the various departments. It is known that the Commonwealth Aid Roads Act, which began to apply on 1 July, 1964, and ceased to apply on 1 July, 1968, will be coming up for renewal and renegotiation. The only way in which Queensland can forcibly convince the Commonwealth of its vital need of aid for roads is by placing well-documented plans before the Commonwealth. Here again it is essential to know where we are going and how we are planning, and to convince the Commonwealth authorities that our planning warrants their consideration and assistance. I hope that when these matters are negotiated Queensland will have a well-presented and forceful case to put forward.

On a more local matter, I refer to certain roads in the Mt. Coot-tha electorate, particularly to the stretch of Moggill Road where it commences to be a main road at Chapel Hill and ceases to be a main road at the famous—or shall I say infamous—Moggill Ferry. Of course, if a motorist can cross the river he can take a short cut to Ipswich. I should like the Minister to give some consideration to the continuation of Moggill Road and to negotiate with the Brisbane City Council and Ipswich City Council, who together, I believe, are responsible for the Moggill Ferry (although it appears to be mainly the responsibility of the Brisbane City Council), for a more efficient crossing of the river at Moggill.

From time to time, in rather humorous and cynical terms, I have described the meanderings of the Moggill Ferry. We are lucky if it runs at all; once we start on our trip we are lucky to reach the other bank. The next time will not be the first that the ferry has gone on a sojourn either up or down the river, depending on the tide; and on a couple of occasions it has been known to sink. Surely the time has come when we should be afforded a bridge crossing at Moggill. The stretch of road from Chapel Hill to Marshall Lane is very badly designed and traverses a very old concrete bridge.

Whilst I realise that it is the responsibility of the Brisbane City Council to maintain footpaths alongside main roads—and I hope that the Brisbane City Council, too, realises this—I point out that no footpath is provided on that bridge. It is a very narrow bridge, and if one saw the chips out of the cement walls one would realise that there have been some very near misses

on the bridge and that in fact on some occasions they were not misses at all. Fortunately the bridge was nearly washed away in the last big floods; it was unfortunate that it was not washed away. It is quite obvious that the curves of the road on the approaches to the bridge need to be redesigned. This road is in an unsatisfactory state and calls for some urgent attention.

I now wish to raise a matter that I dealt with in a question to the Minister. It refers to the responsibility for footpaths alongside main roads and over bridges that are on main roads. From the statements made by the Lord Mayor relative to Waltons Bridge some time ago, one would have thought that the Brisbane City Council would be aware of its responsibilities. The Minister for Main Roads quite plainly stated that it was a direct council responsibility. It is significant that this week we have had the repetition of the Lord Mayor's statement relative to a bridge on that road not one mile away. Apparently the council told the local alderman that footpaths were the responsibility of the Main Roads Department, but the Minister corrected that statement when he answered my question. I should hope that the Press would clear up this matter for the residents of Brisbane and make public the fact that within the Greater Brisbane area it is the Brisbane City Council's responsibility to construct and maintain the footpaths on gazetted main roads. I should not like to be forced to go through that procedure again. There has been some attempt to provide a decent footpath along Moggill Road, in the Kenmore area. This also is in that category and is the responsibility of the Brisbane City Council.

I should like to see the Main Roads Department play a greater role in relation to main roads within the Greater Brisbane area in terms of actual work done. I realise that it finances the work, but I should like it to deal physically with the construction and any contracts that are let. If ever I have witnessed a shocking exhibition it has been in the construction of the concrete jungle at the junction of Brookfield Road and Moggill Road, apart from the fact that it took months to effect. I defy any hon. member to go out there for the first time and find his way with any surety through the jungle of concrete islands. There are two "One Way" signs at the approaches, but a gust of wind knocks them to the ground and there are no other signs. The interesting point is that if signs are erected because of the number of islands there will be so many signs that people will not be able to read them as they meander through the islands. I do not profess to be an engineer, although I have had some experience in these matters, but I should be very surprised if a more sensible and simple intersection could not have been designed. All the other intersections that I have seen leave this one for dead. The Main Roads Department should interest itself in work on gazetted main roads within the Greater Brisbane area.

It was very pleasing to note that the goal of the State Electricity Commission is that ultimately it should be responsible for power generation and that regional electricity boards should take over the reticulation and retailing of power. If we are to develop this State on any sort of regional basis, I hope that when this move is finally implemented the Southern Electric Authority takes over the reticulation and retailing of power within the Brisbane area. Before that system is implemented, I make a plea to the Government to have some reserve administrative power to arrange for the encouragement of new industries. It will be too late if we have to say, "This is out of our hands. It is the responsibility of the particular regional electricity board to arrange suitable tariffs." In a city or area ripe for development, as Brisbane is, the Government of the day should have authority to negotiate special power tariffs so as to attract basic industries or essential industries to this State. The present concept is that the Commission will ultimately be responsible for most, if not all, of the generation of electricity. This is sound thinking.

It will be recalled that I raised the matter of the proposed Central Queensland power-station that is under consideration. There again, I might ask as a layman, where is this power-station to be located? Have the necessary economic investigations and feasibility studies been undertaken? I might also ask whether it will be situated on a coalfield or whether, because of the difficulty in obtaining water, it may be more appropriate to place it near a water supply, with transport available, and possibly near where the load will be used. This is all vital in forward planning. Not only is it vital to the location of the power-station and to deciding what size the power-station should be, but it is also vital to those people who have to plan around it.

Again the final decision on this should vest at the level of a State planning authority. It is only by doing this that we can be assured that, if we encourage the establishment of a power-station of adequate size, economically and feasibly located, everyone else will know that this is to be the location and be in a position to plan for it and around it.

I should like to devote some of my time to the Department of Mines. I believe that this department is playing a vital role in Queensland's development. The activities of mining in this State are placing Queensland in a position where it should be able to argue strongly for greater incentives from the Commonwealth Government in any future development. It is all very well for members of the Opposition to be critical of the terms of negotiation and of the encouragement given by this Government to develop a regional resource. But it must always be remembered that in this country Governments have always had to provide much of the infrastructure necessary to encourage development. Not to encourage it and not to provide some

of the necessities of these developmental organisations is merely to push them to another State.

I congratulate the Minister and his departmental officers on a job well done. I feel sure that they will continue to assist in the development of this State.

**Mr. HANSON** (Port Curtis) (4.43 p.m.): The Estimates of the Department of Mines are of great significance because throughout the world in recent years great emphasis has been placed on, and impetus given to, the mining industry. According to the Minister, the mineral production of this State last year was valued at \$159,137,071. That is a significant figure. While, as State income, it does not by any stretch of the imagination touch the value of our primary production, nevertheless there has been an upward trend for a number of years. This goes back to the days before the advent of the present Government. According to the reports presented to Parliament and the Financial Statements of Treasurers, there has been a continual upward trend in the value of mineral production. To emphasise my point that there was a rise under Labour administrations, it is pertinent to mention that in the year ended 31 December, 1955, under Labour, Queensland's mineral production increased in value from £26,928,000 to £31,302,000, or approximately \$62,000,000, which is quite a large sum. When it is considered that there have been inflationary tendencies in the economy, those figures become significant indeed, even when compared with present production of minerals and taking into account the vast changes that there have been in the world demand for various metals.

In mentioning those figures, I want to point out to the Committee that whilst the Mines Department obtains substantial revenue from various mining activities, it also collects, under the appropriate regulations, considerable amounts in royalties which are payable at rates varying from 2 per cent. to a maximum of 5 per cent. of the value of the minerals extracted. Such royalties are calculated on a formula basis and assessed at a rate per ton. In some years the amount obtained in royalties is not as high as it is in other years, but there is nevertheless a considerable sum flowing to the State in royalty payments on minerals other than coal and oil.

As these royalty payments reach significant amounts, I believe that it is the responsibility of the State to see that highly skilled people are employed to ensure that exploration and development in the mining industry is carried out in the most efficient manner, and in the best interests of the State. The growth in the mineral industry has been world wide, and to this activity should be attracted people who are highly trained in it. I noted some time ago a publication dealing with scholarships, cadetships and career opportunities in the metal and mining industries. Published in June, 1968, it was compiled by the Australian Institute of

Mining and Metallurgy, and it contained the names of organisations and companies which offered scholarships and cadetships for the undertaking of courses in mining, metallurgy, geology, and allied subjects. Over 90 organisations were named in that publication, and figuring prominently among them were the Mines Departments of Western Australia and New South Wales, the Government of Tasmania, the Public Service of South Australia, and the State Electricity Commission of Victoria. Almost every mining company of any consequence was mentioned.

Whilst I realise that in this State certain assistance is given to those who wish to work in the coal-mining industry and attempts are made to help those in the Mines Department who show some promise, I was astounded to see no mention in this publication of the Queensland Government or the Queensland Mines Department. Although Government members on occasions eulogise the administration and activities of the mineral industry, apparently they do not recognise the role that they have to play in it. I refer to the Government's role of trying to encourage more people to enter the fields of mineral activity that I have mentioned and of endeavouring to ensure that young Queenslanders are able to take their place beside young people from other States.

I remember hearing years ago the expression—I suppose many other hon. members heard it, too—"Don't go down the mine, Daddy". With the very lucrative positions that are available today on virtually every large mineral field, not only in Australia but throughout the world, and the wonderful amenities, emoluments and allowances that are available to people who are highly trained specialists in mineral production, we do not hear that cry. Instead of saying, "Don't go down the mine, Daddy," one would now say, "When you go down the mine, Daddy, see that you stay there", because the rewards are so great.

**Mr. Carey:** You struck a gold mine when the Country-Liberal Government looked after the development of Gladstone.

**Mr. HANSON:** At a later stage of my speech I may be able to throw some light on the misconception of some hon. members opposite, particularly the hon. member for Albert, whose voices are raised so loudly on that subject but who, apparently, do very little research and display very little political knowledge.

The Financial Statement delivered in 1956—it was the last Financial Statement presented by a Labour administration—gives the lie to the claim of the hon. member for Albert, who, incidentally, should know better than to make it, because he has a certain amount of ability in other directions. That Budget was brought down on 20 September, 1956, by the Premier of the day, on behalf of the Treasurer. I remind the Committee

that that was about 15 months before the Country-Liberal Government came to office in this State and a considerable number of years before the hon. member for Albert was heard of politically. Dealing with mining, the Financial Statement said—

"The holders of Authorities to Prospect in the Cape York Peninsula are so impressed with the bauxite possibilities of the area that examination and research work are being intensified. There is an excellent outlook for the establishment of a new and important industry in this isolated part of Queensland and it is pleasing to record that the Government is playing a major part in assisting in this work."

How different that is from the claims that we hear from members of the Country-Liberal Government that they were the founders of the Weipa bauxite field.

In the five years that I have been in this Chamber, virtually every hon. member opposite who has spoken on this subject has said, "But for the Weipa bauxite, the hon. member for Port Curtis would be without the \$4 that he has now and would have only the 4c that he had before the Country-Liberal Government came to office." The passage to which I have just referred casts that assertion back in the teeth of Government members.

The Financial Statement in 1956 went on to say—

"The proving of the huge Mary Kathleen uranium deposit near Cloncurry has been an outstanding event of the year, and plans are now in progress to develop this area by joint overseas and Australian interests."

That might quieten the hon. member for Albert and many of his confreres who make false claims about former Labour administrations.

The Minister's portfolio also covers the development of electricity, and the Financial Statement in 1956 had this to say relative to subsidies paid for electrical development—

"Subsidies paid by the Government for electrical development during the year 1955-56 amounted to £1.4 million, making a total of £5 million since 1946."

In other words, \$10,000,000 was paid in subsidies between 1946 and 1956. Subsidy in the field of electricity development does not exist in this State today. As a matter of fact, when the ordinary man on the land tries to get electric power onto his property he faces many difficulties. He might first consult his member of Parliament and eventually there will probably be a file about 6 feet thick. As a matter of fact, there are all types of conditions; there is some sort of a rural assistance scheme and goodness knows what else. I think the department itself is confused. This has all been brought about because the administration lacks the conscience and desire to help these well-deserving people.

In the 1956 Financial Statement there was also talk of the Tully Falls hydro-electric project, which was then expected to commence supplying power early in 1957. As hon. members well know, the present administration was only about five minutes in office when its members were galloping to all these projects and putting their names on plaques. This has become a very common undertaking by present Cabinet Ministers.

As to the assistance given to Mt. Isa, after consultation with Mount Isa Mines Ltd. a statement is made in the 1956 Financial Statement that, because of satisfactory development of various projects, early action would be taken by the State to completely dieselise the railway line and to do other things to which the present administration lays claim. However, enough about that.

I want now to deal with a statement that was attributed to the Minister whose Estimates are before the Committee relative to the royalties on minerals other than coal and oil. He mentioned it in his Address-in-Reply speech not long ago, and, of course, it was quite impossible at the time, because of some very pertinent interjections he was making on other matters, to give an effective reply to his claim. He claimed that in the days of the Labour administration no royalty whatever was collected on minerals other than coal and oil, whereas this Government had collected \$4,000,000. He made great play of that. But he did not give the true story. The principle of royalty on these minerals was instituted under a Labour administration. It was instituted by proclamation on 1 January, 1956, 18 months before this Government came to office. The actual date of signing was 14 June, 1956, by command of the Queen, signed by E. J. Walsh, who was Acting Premier at that time.

The Minister's claims are typical of many that are made by Ministers in this Chamber. How unworthy of them, and how misleading! I hope that if the Minister returns to the "stump" in the Isis electorate he will at least tell the truth, and I hope that he will have more than the two or three people who listened to him in the whole of the six speeches delivered last Saturday morning. I think I have completely and effectively exposed some of the false information that is occasionally given in this Chamber.

From time to time statements are made about the position pertaining to the coal industry. We are told that the Labour administration did nothing to encourage the export of coal. On the contrary, considerable efforts were undertaken within this State to promote coal exports. It must be remembered that the coal that is being exported from this State today is hard coking coal, much prized throughout the world because it is in short supply. Are we exporting steaming coal? No! Are we exporting any soft coking coal? Not one

ton! We might have done so a few years ago. Are we exporting any semi-anthracite coal when it looks as though there will be a market for it? Certainly not!

When the Labour Party was in control of the Treasury benches we were faced with the position in this country that over the whole of Australia there was a shortfall in our own requirements of some 3,000,000 tons. When the Callide coal mine was trying to get on its feet many years ago and struggling very hard, and the Labour Party and various authorities were trying to set up an export industry, the Labour Government of the day gave £250,000 to build a conveyor belt in Gladstone and there was not even an order for one ton of coal in sight. The Labour Government took a "punt" and a gamble, and today the coal-mining industry owes a lot to Gladstone's ability to provide an efficient loading gantry.

The construction of the railway line to Callide was undertaken by the then Government and a large sum of money was expended on the construction of the road. At that time the Federal counterparts of hon. members opposite were encouraging the import of South African and Indian coal and were paying a subsidy of nearly £10 a ton in an endeavour to strangle the Callide mine. Furthermore, the Federal counterparts of the present Government went to Japan in an endeavour to "rubbish" and strangle Moura in the early stages of its development. Make no error about these things. We of the Labour Party stand second to none in the wonderful performance that we put up in the promotion of Queensland's coal-export trade.

I want to pay a tribute to some of the high-ranking officers in the Mines Department, including Mr. Healy, Mr. Roach and Mr. Morley, who are very capable men. I wish them all well, for I know that one or more of them will be retiring shortly. They are all very efficient men. If one were to go to the lobby of the Chamber now one would think that there was a major oil strike because the Minister has so many advisers there.

I hate to be parochial in politics, but in the few moments that I have left I should like to refer to the Boyne Valley Road, about which I have written to the Minister and asked him questions in this Chamber. That road services four small towns and four small schools whose pupils will not be able to obtain the benefit of secondary education without the construction of a good road. I feel for those children very much. They are in an isolated pocket and are cut off from better educational facilities because a bus service cannot be provided over the road, which is in a very shocking state of repair. The hon. member for Mackenzie has seen it and sympathises with me. Our electorates converge at the top of the mountain near Monto, and we are trying to prepare a joint case to see if some assistance can be provided to the people in the area who are



desirous of remaining in the small industries there. They work in the timber mills and the forestry industry, and in other types of bush work.

I believe that people who are well off leave the area, with the result that instead of the area being closely settled it is fast being left to a few graziers. This is wrong. We must see that we have the greatest possible number of people deriving benefit from agricultural production, and we should try to promote the great pastoral industry that could develop in the Boyne Valley. The area has considerable potential, and I believe that if the people could be provided with the amenity of a good road the area would go ahead instead of dying, as it is now. Little townships have ceased to exist and some schools have closed down. People have left the area because their children have not been able to receive secondary education. There is no adequate road system to service their needs.

If the road was improved and became an all-weather road there is a great possibility that the number of cattle killed in the area could increase to provide more work at the meatworks in Rockhampton. Cattle that are bred in the Monto area should be killed at the Rockhampton meatworks instead of being taken further south along the bitumen highway. The people who breed the cattle should be able to participate in the transport, killing and eventual export of their products.

I implore the Minister to look into this matter. I am sure that his very worthy Commissioner of Main Roads will note my remarks, and I trust that he will give this application the attention it so richly deserves.

**Mr. HINZE** (South Coast) (5.6 p.m.): I rise to add my commendations to those of other hon. members on the extremely successful presentation of his Estimates by the Minister for Mines, Main Roads and Electricity. It must be an exhilarating experience, in 1968, to be charged with the responsibility of administering this portfolio in Queensland. I am extremely proud of the chief officers in these departments, in the persons of the Under Secretary for Mines, Mr. Healy, the Commissioner of Main Roads, Mr. Barton, and the Commissioner for Electricity Supply, Mr. Neil Smith. I welcome the great assistance that they render, in conjunction with their departmental officers, in helping the Minister in his very important portfolio.

While I listened to the speeches of hon. members opposite I gained the impression that they were extremely jealous of the Government's great success story in the last 12 years, particularly in the mining field. If we travel to any corner of Queensland we can point to places where the Government is exploiting the mineral wealth of the State.

We continue to hear the complaint that royalty charges are too low. Hon. members opposite do not appreciate, understand or comprehend that the Government must take all factors into consideration. When we undertake negotiations with overseas companies on the exploitation of our mineral wealth and come to an arrangement with them to purchase our minerals, we make a good deal if we pick up some funds for our railway system. Hon. members opposite are raising the same old bogey. Speaker after speaker on the Opposition side has criticised the Government's mineral development policy. I do not wish to say too much about this matter today, as I am sure that the Minister will answer them quite capably.

I am very proud that one of the major industries adjoining my electorate is the sand-mining industry carried on by Associated Minerals Consolidated Ltd. In his speech the Minister said that this new plant—possibly the biggest in the world—was opened at Stradbroke Island, in the electorate of the hon. member for Albert. We were very proud to be at the opening ceremony, and we are also proud to know that this wonderful industry is playing such an important part on the Gold Coast by employing so many of our young people.

The major industries in the area are the sand-mining industry, with an investment of about \$8,000,000 by A.M.A., the tourist industry, the dairying industry and the building industry. Hon. members will appreciate that, in employing 500 people, A.M.A. is playing a very important part.

My own area is one of the fortunate areas of Queensland in that virtually all of it is served by electricity. There are only one or two small pockets in the Canungra area without electricity. We have only one problem: we think the cost of power is too high. That is obvious throughout the State. The Treasurer referred to this matter and emphasised how necessary it is to reduce the cost of power in this State, which is trying to build up its secondary industry resources.

It is most important that we endeavour to reduce power costs. My own quarterly electricity account ranges from \$300 to \$400. I use electricity mainly for irrigation purposes. That is what my electric power costs, and my only complaint about it is its cost. I know that the Government is concerned and is endeavouring to find ways and means of lowering electricity costs.

I want to use most of the time available to me discussing the Main Roads Department because, as can be appreciated, this is the department in which I am most interested. I congratulate the department on the road to the Gold Coast. Everybody in Brisbane, including the hon. member for South Brisbane, takes the advantage of driving along this wonderful four-lane highway to the Gold Coast. This is what we want. We want as many visitors as possible from

interstate, overseas, and particularly from Brisbane and other parts of Queensland, to come to our area.

The department is now landscaping to improve the beautification of our road system. The section just completed, at Ormeau, is a great credit to the department. I do not know where there is a better road surface or landscaping anywhere in Australia or, for that matter, in the world.

**Mr. Bennett:** That was started by Jack Duggan when he was Minister for Transport.

**Mr. HINZE:** The hon. member must be joking. The hon. member for Toowoomba West is in the Chamber. The hon. member for South Brisbane should ask him.

**Mr. Duggan:** Do you know that the Gaven Way was proclaimed in my time?

**Mr. HINZE:** If that is so, I do not want to take any credit from the hon. member.

I commend the department for the landscaping along the Gold Coast road. Everybody in the State derives benefit from this road. The only reason we have this four-lane highway is that so many people use it. Traffic density convinced the department that we were entitled to it.

There are still some problem sections on this road. I ask the Minister to call tenders as quickly as possible for the construction of the Coomera bridge. The present bridge creates a bottle-neck. I know that the department has called tenders for the approaches to the bridge. There is also a major job to be done in the Pimpama area. Contracts have been let, or are about to be let, for that work, which will eliminate the bottle-neck in that section of the road. Now that the second Tallebudgera Creek bridge is almost completed, I hope that tenders are called for the construction of a new Coomera bridge to eliminate what is possibly the last of the real bottle-necks on the Gold Coast road between Brisbane and the coast.

Hon. members might think that because we have a four-lane highway to the South Coast there are no problems. If they drive to the Gold Coast next Sunday morning they will find that it takes half an hour to travel about 4 or 5 miles in the section near the Coomera bridge. The same will apply when they travel home in the afternoon. They will find that it takes them an hour to travel 5 miles. I know that the department is cognisant of this difficulty and is doing everything possible to overcome it. I support my colleague the hon. member for Albert in this regard, because I know that this matter is dear to his heart also and that he, too, will say that it is necessary to call tenders for the construction of the new Coomera bridge as soon as possible.

It is necessary for the department to conclude plans with the Albert Shire Council, the Beaudesert Shire Council and the Gold

Coast City Council to have the Coomera Gorge road completed. I have been talking about this road for many years. It would provide a short-cut from Warwick to the coast. When I was chairman of the Albert Shire Council, we undertook the major work necessary to get a road through the gorge. That has been completed, and all that is necessary now is finance to seal the road and construct a short section of about 2 miles from Clagiraba Road to the commencement of the gorge road. The Canungra jungle training camp is in this area and there is heavy military traffic on the road, so it might be a good idea to approach the Commonwealth Government to see if special funds are available to assist the Main Roads Department and the local authorities concerned to provide a sealed surface on the gorge road. This would open up the Canungra Valley, which is 20 miles from the Gold Coast. It is something that we have been talking about for a long time, and I think we are entitled to funds for it.

It is also necessary to have the road to Springbrook sealed. Tourists travel through Mudgeeraba and, when they reach the gravel road, they think that that is the end of the bitumen and turn round and go back to the Gold Coast. By doing so, they miss seeing our national parks, the Purlingbrook Falls and some of the most beautiful sights that it is possible to see in the Gold Coast hinterland. A tourist from another State does not continue driving when he reaches the end of a bitumen road. I ask the Minister and the Main Roads Department to allocate funds for the sealing of the final two or three miles of the road to Springbrook, particularly because of its importance to the tourist industry.

**Mr. Bennett:** Are you asking for a road to the lion park as well?

**Mr. HINZE:** That will be near Beenleigh, and there is already a four-lane highway to that area. Obviously the hon. member for South Brisbane has not "swotted up" on the lion park, because he does not even know where it is to be located.

I believe that it is necessary for the Main Roads Department and the local authorities concerned to undertake regional planning, and in this context I refer to the proposed road to bypass the Gold Coast. I have spoken so often on the problems connected with the 20-mile section of highway that passes through the centre of Surfers Paradise that I do not think it is necessary to refer to them again. It is most important to get on with the job and bypass the Gold Coast as quickly as possible.

**Mr. Davies:** Get on to the roads in the Isis electorate and do something up there.

**Mr. HINZE:** There is no need to do anything about the roads in the Isis electorate. We will win that by-election with the greatest of ease. In fact, it is virtually over

already, and all that Lester has to do is come here and be sworn in. We are not greatly concerned about the Isis by-election, because we have done such a wonderful job in the past. There is no need for us to go into Isis and build roads there to convince the people of that.

I can see the necessity for regional planning. It will be appreciated that the local authorities embraced by the South Coast and Albert electorates are concerned with an area which, except for Canberra and Darwin, is developing faster than any other area in Australia. It is therefore necessary to plan ahead and for town planners to be brought into consultation with the engineers of the Main Roads Department. I understand that tentative discussions have taken place on the proposed freeway, and that is the right way to meet such a problem.

Although the engineers of the Main Roads Department are extremely capable officers, thought has to be given to the building of a city and making the freeway fit into it. Therefore, the engineers and town planners must be brought into consultation when the route of the freeway to bypass the Gold Coast is being considered. This is very necessary, and I ask the Minister to give consideration to making funds available as quickly as possible to plot the route and have it fenced, so that people can say, "There is the freeway route". Everybody should know where it is.

If the action that I have suggested is not taken, the route will be changed from year to year, and that is no good. People who own land in the area want to know where they stand. They should be told, "This is the actual route. The land has been resumed and fenced, and we are going to build the bypass as soon as funds permit." I reiterate: it is very important that that be done.

I turn now to delays in resumptions. One real problem that has been brought to my attention concerns the process of resuming land for road construction purposes. I know that a Bill was introduced last year to amend the Act and endeavour to simplify the procedure, but I ask hon. members to consider the case of an old couple who have saved all their lives to buy a piece of land and build a house on it and, having done that, are then served with a notice of intention to resume for road construction purposes. Being simple people, they do not understand the phraseology of the notice they receive and they become worried. And they continue to worry till the resumption has been completed. I believe that it should be possible to simplify the procedure relating to resumptions and eliminate delays. People who are to have their properties resumed for road construction purposes should be informed in the very simplest terms what their position is. They should not have to go to people such as the hon. member for South Brisbane, who is a barrister.

**Mr. Ramsden:** He would only confuse them further.

**Mr. HINZE:** All right—to the hon. member for Windsor, another barrister, if the hon. member for Merthyr prefers that. It should be made clear to people such as pensioners—they are the ones to whom I am referring—in simple and concise language that their properties are being taken from them, and they should be occasioned the least possible worry and delay. I know that officers of the department try to do that now; but, as hon. members are aware, what is known as "buck passing" takes place. From the Main Roads Department, people have to go to the Department of Lands, and then finally, perhaps, to the Registrar of Titles. Three Government departments deal with one person's property before finality is reached on a resumption for road purposes.

A number of my constituents have referred this matter to me, and I suggest to the Minister that the procedure should be simplified. If that can be done, it will remove a great deal of worry from the minds of the people concerned.

I congratulate the Main Roads Department on its decision to introduce a system of computerised traffic lights on one-way sections of the highway through Surfers Paradise. Many problems have arisen there, and business houses are very concerned about the one-way traffic. It obviously is too late to do anything about that, and the Main Roads Department intends using a computerised system of traffic lights to obviate the delays that now occur. I hope that will go a long way towards eliminating the traffic problems in Surfers Paradise.

I turn now to the question of the marking of roads with single and double lines. In some instances there is a dotted line on the left-hand side where a motorist is allowed to pass, and I think that is slightly confusing. Most of the accidents that occur on the highways are caused by people crossing double lines, and I think that only two types of line should be used—double, and single. There is a uniform traffic code throughout Australia, but, in spite of that, people take risks and still cross double lines on the roads. This is how most deaths occur on our highways today.

This matter could be discussed when a uniform traffic code for Australia is being considered. Perhaps thought could be given to having just the two types of lines, a single line and a double line, and eliminating all dotted lines. As a matter of fact, in my opinion, anyone who crosses a dotted line should lose his licence. Apart from "grog", this is one of the greatest causes of fatal accidents.

Finally, I do not like the way radar traps are set up. I know it is one way of stopping people from speeding, but to my way of thinking it is not the right

way to operate this equipment. I do not like the idea of police officers hiding behind trees and shrubs or down banks so that they can catch people and charge them with doing something wrong. If people are doing something wrong, the police should be out where they can be seen. The purpose is to stop people speeding on the roads, not to raise revenue, and I think the sight of a uniform is the most effective way of doing it. I hate to turn a corner and see police officers hiding behind a bank or a tree. I am sure the police do not like it, either, and I do not think it is right for a Government to ask any of its employees to undertake this sort of action for the purpose of cutting down speeding on the roads.

I indicate my support to the Minister and compliment him for presenting such excellent Estimates. I commend him particularly for the wonderful mining boom in this State. I am not at all impressed by the arguments used by the Opposition when they refer to royalties being so low. The Government has done a wonderful job in exploiting the mineral wealth of the State, and I think the Minister and the officers of the department he administers are to be highly commended.

**Mr. P. WOOD** (Toowoomba East) (5.27 p.m.): I want to draw the attention of the Minister to the difficulties facing mines and miners on the Darling Downs, where mining is a rapidly declining industry. This is largely inevitable and the trend will continue because in the past the main consumers of production from the Downs mines have been the Railway Department and the Toowoomba Gas Co. Railway orders for coal have been reduced drastically following dieselisation, and the need for coal will soon disappear altogether. The introduction of natural gas will deprive the mines of a previously valuable consumer.

The report of the Queensland Coal Board indicates the decline in production of coal on the Darling Downs. In 1949 production in the Darling Downs district was 134,918 tons. By 1958 it had declined to 107,739 tons, and in the last year mentioned in the report, 1967, production was down to 54,511 tons and is continuing to decline at a very rapid rate. Consumption by the Railway Department in the whole area has shown a similar decline.

All this is inevitable with railway modernisation and the utilisation of natural gas. In many respects it is necessary in an age of improving technology. Nevertheless, a decline of such proportions in the mining industry in one district brings with it a great many difficulties for those employed in the industry.

**Mr. Carey:** I do not think you know your case very well. You are better dealing with schools.

**Mr. P. WOOD:** I hope the hon. member will listen carefully. He might then be a little better informed than he obviously is at the moment.

In 1957 the number of miners employed on the Darling Downs was 198. Mining on the Darling Downs is not a large industry when compared with mining in other areas of the State. In 1967 the number of miners employed on the Downs had fallen to 67; this year it has fallen to 40. I am very concerned about the welfare of people who are affected by the decline of the industry.

Mining on the Darling Downs is concentrated around Oakey, Acland and Tannymorel, near Killarney. The mine at Tannymorel has closed, and one mine at Acland has closed and one remains open. Many years ago other mines in the Acland district were closed.

**Mr. Carey:** That is in the Warwick electorate, not yours.

**Mr. P. WOOD:** The hon. member should get his geography a little more accurate. Acland is in the electorate of Aubigny.

The population in these townships is rapidly declining. The railway line to Killarney and Tannymorel, which do lie in the electorate of Warwick, have been closed, and the line to Acland has also gone. Even the hotel at Acland was destroyed by fire. In these circumstances, miners in these declining areas are left with homes which they cannot sell. Some of the homes may not be in a good state of repair and may not have much capital value, irrespective of the value they have to their owners. From my own observations I can say that some of the homes are in good condition. However, the miners are obliged to leave the district to obtain employment, or alternatively have to continue to live in the district and travel long distances to get employment. Whatever course they choose, they face considerable inconvenience and loss. No miner can afford to lose whatever capital he has invested in his home, so I ask the Minister to investigate a means of assisting miners who suffer because of the decline in their industry and their consequent redundancy.

I remind the Minister of the very sympathetic consideration that was given to miners at Mt. Mulligan when that mine was closed. They were given the opportunity of having their homes removed to Collinsville and re-erected at no cost to themselves. Today Mt. Mulligan does not exist, except on some maps. The mines at Mt. Mulligan and Collinsville were State-owned mines, and the State moved the miners from one mine to the other. The mines on the Downs are privately owned, and many of the miners who are leaving the industry are not going to other mining districts. The hon. member for Ipswich East indicated that the number of miners employed in the industry has declined over the years. Not many opportunities are presented to miners in a number of areas.

I do not believe that private ownership of mines on the Downs prevents the Minister from initiating action similar to that which I have mentioned. If it does, and if he will not give miners on the Downs that consideration, I should like him to consider giving them some form of compensation. They will suffer a loss as a result of changes and circumstances in the industry over which they have no control. They deserve to be given the opportunity of adjusting to new employment and of re-establishing themselves in new districts. I have said that they face a very uncertain future.

**Mr. Carey:** What about the shop assistant who loses his job when his employer goes broke?

**Mr. P. WOOD:** Anybody who is faced with redundancy should be given sympathetic consideration, but the employment opportunities for shop assistants are not declining. I am sure that if the hon. member looks at the figures he will find that employment in shops is increasing. The position is quite the opposite in the industry to which I am referring.

**Mr. Smith:** The hon. member for Albert asked you about those who are employed in a business that goes broke.

**Mr. P. WOOD:** I am sure that they can find employment elsewhere.

I have said that the miners on the Downs face a most uncertain future. Within a short time they will have but a few small consumers. For some time it was advocated on the Darling Downs, and elsewhere, that a power-house should be built on the coal fields. On the Downs, as everywhere else, we certainly need electric power, but unfortunately the coal is not so readily accessible—economic production is vitally important—and it is not entirely suitable for power-house purposes.

Nevertheless, there can still be a future for the coal-mining industry on the Darling Downs. It will lie in the manufacture of by-products and chemicals from coal. From conversations with the Chief Geologist of the Department of Mines, I understand that the coal on the Downs could be suitable for such use. I should be most interested to hear from the Minister what investigations have been made by the officers of his department into the use of Darling Downs coal in this way. I ask the Minister to continue the investigations as far as possible. I regret that I could not find any reference to this work in the Annual Report of the Department of Mines. Perhaps it was there and I missed it, although I looked rather carefully for it. I should like to hear a great deal more about it.

Hon. members opposite have attempted to justify the low royalties paid on coal exports on the basis that nuclear power will replace coal as a source of fuel. They have said that if we do not sell our coal at the

present low rates we will be left with a lot of coal for which we cannot find any use or markets.

**Mr. Miller:** Who said that?

**Mr. P. WOOD:** The hon. member for Mulgrave was one hon. member opposite who made such a claim. If the hon. member checks his speech he will find that he said exactly that. If he did not say it in his speech, he certainly said it by way of interjection. I clearly remember that remark.

Hon. members opposite forget the many valuable by-products to be gained from coal, and its uses in chemical manufacture. These uses will expand rather than decline. If the officers of the Department of Mines can prove the value of Downs coal in chemical manufacture and various by-products, the industry could be encouraged to exploit the coal deposits. In this way, it will be of inestimable value to the mines and the miners, and, of wider significance, to the district and the State.

**Mr. PILBEAM** (Rockhampton South) (5.38 p.m.): When listening to the Minister present his Estimates I was very cognisant of the tremendous task that has been placed on his shoulders in giving into his charge three major departments. Moreover, they are three departments in which there is burgeoning development; three departments in which the challenges become heavier every day. There are challenges to provide more money; to provide new techniques; to provide more modern methods; in the case of highways, to recognise the heavier traffic flowing along them; in the case of electricity, to recognise the ever-increasing demand for the extension of electrical power; and in the case of mineral development, there is no need for me to stress the tremendous challenges that confront the Minister and his department.

I read with interest the statement of the Commissioner for Electricity Supply in yesterday's "Telegraph" that electricity expenditure in the past year totalled almost \$55,500,000, an increase of \$2,273,000 over the previous year's figure, and that next year it is expected to rise by \$11,000,000. He went on to say that this increase in capital needs was due to a rapid increase in the demand for electricity in this State. I do not think there is any need for me to stress that point. I suggest that it might be very wise to have one electricity authority in Queensland, which may help to cure some of the ills that I shall be referring to later.

I congratulate the Minister, the Commissioner of Main Roads, and the engineers employed in that department on answering the challenges that are being issued thick and fast. We all realise that they are aware of the extra use that is being made of our highways. They have faced up to the problem of highways that not many years ago were thought to be adequate but are now completely inadequate. They have had to

meet tremendously increased financial demands to provide the highest grade of bitumen sealing. In Rockhampton, on every occasion on which the much more expensive pre-mixed surfacing can be used in preference to the old spray method of bitumen sealing, the department has plumped unhesitatingly for the higher-class pavement. As a result, we have a seal that is guaranteed for 20 to 30 years instead of one that lasted for only 5 to 10 years.

I am glad that the Minister is in the Chamber at the moment because I want to point out again how impossible it is for the department to provide the complete system of highways necessary in this State out of its present finances. I will repeat this on every possible occasion, because eventually we must build highways out of loan money. We cannot build them out of revenue alone. If we are to get the highways to meet present demands and project our development 20 years into the future, we must spend 20 years' allocation in one year, and the only way to do that is to use loan moneys.

There is one road to which I must refer in particular. It is definitely the backbone of Central Queensland, and was the subject of one of my first speeches in this House. I refer to the Capricorn Highway, which joins Rockhampton, Gladstone and other coastal towns with the Mid West and the Far West. This road enables us to draw to our Central Queensland ports all the produce of the Far West, produce to which we are entitled. Until this road is completed we will never have a proper Central Queensland economy or, in full measure, decentralised development of this State. It is true that Central Queensland is advancing and that we are drawing extensively on produce from as far west as Emerald. But between Emerald, Barcaldine, Longreach and Winton, there is a definite break and we are divorced from those areas until this vital highway is completed.

I shall not be unfair in talking about this highway, because I recognise that a great deal of work has been done on it. But it is most important that we hasten to add to what has already been done. I think the whole State would benefit from it.

It was not until July, 1963, that there was any hope at all of seeing the Capricorn Highway constructed, because up till then it was not even gazetted as a main road. In July, 1963, for the first time the whole of the Capricorn Highway was gazetted, to give a continuous highway for the whole 424 miles from Rockhampton to Longreach. There is a total of 358 miles between Rockhampton and Barcaldine, which actually forms the Capricorn Highway, and a further 66 miles between Barcaldine and Longreach, which forms what is known as the Landsborough Highway.

Prior to this gazettal, 116 miles of road between Bogantungan and Barcaldine was the responsibility of shires and was not even gazetted as a main road. The little shire of Jericho spent the whole of its Commonwealth aid grant year after year in maintaining what should have been a State highway. We were told by the previous administration (I shall not be political enough to name it) that the only way to get this road gazetted as a main road was to "de-main" an equivalent length of main road in the same area. How could the small Jericho Shire Council "de-main" enough main road to allow the gazettal of this section? It did not have that length of main road in the whole shire. It was not till this Government came to office that the whole road was gazetted not as a main road but as a highway, and that gave hope that eventually the complete road to Longreach would be bitumen sealed.

If you will allow me, Mr. Hooper, I shall now give some particulars of the progress that has been made on that road. The annual reports of the Department of Main Roads, which I have studied, show that during the five-year period from 1963 to 1968 total expenditure on the road has been approximately \$3,750,000, or an average of \$750,000 a year. It might well be said, "That is pretty good"—but it is not good enough. I could perhaps be accused of parochialism in saying that, but I am not being entirely parochial. This road, if sealed, would make a substantial contribution to the national economy by aiding the decentralised development of the State.

During those five years bitumen surfacing has been completed on the road from Rockhampton to Emerald, and 19 miles beyond. In 39 years under Labour Governments, the bitumen extended not quite as far as Westwood. That means that there was not 30 miles of bitumen on the highway. There is now 185 miles of continuous bitumen road west from Rockhampton. We have seen the construction of six new bridges between Emerald and Bogantungan, and the construction of 3 miles of bitumen-surfaced floodways and approaches across the Belyando River east of Alpha. There has also been the construction of a further 25 miles of bitumen surfacing between Alpha and Barcaldine. Bitumen surfacing has also been completed between Barcaldine and Longreach. This included 50 miles of new road. At present, 287 miles of a total length of 424 miles is bitumen surfaced. For that, I say "Thank you" to the Minister and the Main Roads Department.

Further work has been planned by the department within the limited funds available. I know that funds are limited, and the programme for the next five years has had to be based on approximately the same amount as was spent in the last five years. My first request, therefore, is that every effort be made to increase annual expenditure on this work. I should like to see it stepped up to twice the

present amount. I know that money does not grow on trees, but I must make these representations because this is an important highway.

It is planned to widen some narrow sections of the road between Rockhampton and Emerald. Anyone who drives along that road will see that in places it is only 15 feet wide. Many windscreens are broken on the narrow sections, some of which also are extremely dangerous when it rains and cars have to go off the bitumen strip onto soft, boggy shoulders. The Main Roads Department is doing a very wise thing in widening the narrow sections of the road instead of pushing on with the construction of other sections.

The department plans to complete drainage works to the foot of the Drummond Range, west of Bogantungan, and also to build two railway over-bridges. It plans to construct a bridge over Native Companion Creek and five miles of re-located gravel road to connect it to Alpha, to complete the bitumen surfacing of a further 40 miles which will provide a bitumen road for 75 miles between Alpha and Barcaldine, and to reconstruct a six-mile section of narrow bitumen west of Barcaldine.

To sum up, this programme of future works has been based on obtaining the greatest benefit to the motorist in the shortest time. The department plans to do the comparatively inexpensive sections first—the flat sections and the sections that go over the black-soil areas—and to concentrate on heavy new construction only to the foot of the Drummond Range section. It will carry out only minor work on the 10-mile Drummond Range section, which will be very costly.

At this point I make a further plea to the Minister. If full use is to be made of the road, people must be able to negotiate the Drummond Range section of it. It is no good completing the bitumen road up to the foot of the range and extending the bitumen road from the far side of the range to western townships if the range section is not completed. It is the worst section of the road and the subject of most of the representations that are made by people and shires to the west of the range. I thank the department for all the work that has been planned; but if the Minister could possibly provide a separate allocation to enable the Drummond Range section of the road to be completed, I would throw my case down now and be quite satisfied. People living out in the West who have small farms on the coast cannot take their produce over the Drummond Range section of the highway. Because they cannot negotiate the grades on the range, they have to go round through Clermont.

**Mr. Low:** Do you think a loan should be raised for that purpose?

**Mr. PILBEAM:** I do not care how it is done, but I should like to see it done. I should like to see raised a loan that

is large enough to enable the department to complete every highway in Queensland; it could be paid off later.

The department plans also to extend the bitumen east from Barcaldine to Jericho, thence towards Alpha. I have no quarrel with that, because those two communities depend on Barcaldine in many ways. In fact, I thank the department for making that move.

I must make brief reference now to a few recent occurrences in Rockhampton. I have been taken to task for supporting a member of the Rockhampton City Council, Alderman Fraser, in action that he took recently in his capacity as a member of the Capricornia Regional Electricity Board. Alderman Fraser was censured because he took a confidential document to a meeting of the Rockhampton City Council, which he represents on the board, where it was dealt with on a confidential basis. That document related to the appointment of a manager, applications for which position were called in the early part of this year. About 45 applications were received, and a special committee was appointed to consider them. Every month after that, the council said to Alderman Fraser, "You are our representative on the board. Who has been appointed manager?" He simply said, "A subcommittee has been appointed to consider the 45 applications. It is to report back in June." We asked after the June meeting and there was no appointment. We asked after the July meeting and there was no appointment. After the August meeting there was still no appointment, and in September a confidential document was handed to Alderman Fraser in which he was told that the subcommittee had recommended that nobody be appointed from the 45, that an application had been sought from somebody who had not applied, and that the subcommittee was recommending that he be appointed.

In effect, the council's representatives were treated as rubber stamps. They were not given any say at all in the appointment of the manager. This is what I took exception to, and this is the thing on which I support my aldermen to the hilt. There would be something wrong with me if I did not support Alderman Fraser. There is not a more honest man in the world than this gentleman. He was disturbed not only by this but also by other loose administrative methods carried on by the board, and he saw fit to see me and we discussed it at the council. We are being censured for this.

I read a statement made by the chairman of the board to the effect that the board is being economically administered. I am not prepared to accept this from somebody who lives 150 miles from Rockhampton. The people of Rockhampton, the business houses and the big industries in Central Queensland have made certain observations to me, and

even the honest employees of the board—and there are many—have remonstrated to me about certain things that are going on within the regional electricity board.

My submission is that a strong administrator be appointed. I do not hold a brief for anybody in particular, but I want somebody who is strong enough to tighten up the board's affairs. I do not see any use in an organisation if it is not operating completely economically. Some of the things that are being said about the board are certainly profoundly upsetting to me at the present time. I doubt whether Alderman Fraser will go back onto the C.R.E.B. after he has been censured for what, in my book, is being completely honest. As I say, I certainly support him. We will be having a meeting of the Rockhampton City Council and deciding what we will do about it. I have made a submission to the Minister, and asked him to see that an administrator is appointed who is strong enough to tighten up the affairs of the board.

**Mr. Tucker:** Where do the other members of the board come from?

**Mr. PILBEAM:** That is the trouble. I think it is very difficult to have economic administration of a board where the members come from so many different places and where so many local authorities are represented. If one local authority takes certain action, two or three of the others will gang up and take counter action.

**Mr. Thackeray:** There is more or less the same representation on the harbour board.

**Mr. PILBEAM:** That is a similar organisation, but we never seem to have the same trouble in the harbour board as we have in the electricity board. I have heard many accusations against the electricity board and I do not intend to repeat any of these accusations, because I realise that I am speaking under privilege. I do not intend to engage in a heresy hunt. I do not want to see action taken against anybody on the board. I just want to see the administration tightened up so that there is no possibility of a recurrence of some of the things that have been going on for some time. I think that is fair enough.

I have been taxed by the chairman of the board. It is a pretty hard old world for a reformer. If he tries to straighten anything up he gets his head kicked. I have been criticised for my administration of the City of Rockhampton. I have been told that I have not the interests of Central Queensland at heart, that I should applaud all that the board is doing whether it does it economically or uneconomically. I do applaud the work that is being carried on in this field. My submission is nothing more than that it should be done economically.

I saw an A.B.C. television programme not many months ago—the hon. member for Rockhampton North saw it too—in which a

comparison was made of householders' electricity accounts in every local authority area in Queensland, and Rockhampton was shown as being by far the most costly place for the householder.

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

**Mr. PILBEAM:** I said that I had seen a television programme on the A.B.C. in which Rockhampton's electricity charges were said to be the highest in the State. In addition, I see that the Capricornia Regional Electricity Board will be faced with a deficiency of \$1,000,000, and this means unavoidable further increases in electricity tariffs; I hear the board referred to as "Eventide Home", for obvious reasons; and I hear the opinion expressed in my city that the economy of the board should be tightened; therefore, I cannot accept any censure of Alderman Fraser for making an honest endeavour to bring this about. I must go on record as supporting him fully.

Finally, on the brighter side, I wish to thank the Minister for his statement on the need of a \$100,000,000 power-station in Central Queensland. As I said in the Budget debate, it does not matter where this power-station is situated in Central Queensland so long as it provides abundant power to every part of the State. My earnest wish is that all regional electricity authorities will work in a manner that will ensure the provision of cheap power to attract industry to this State.

I congratulate the Minister on his earnest and dedicated service to the State, on his success in grappling with the three major portfolios that he holds, and I say again that he faces a monstrous task and is to be congratulated on his efforts.

**Hon. R. E. CAMM** (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines, Main Roads and Electricity) (7.17 p.m.): At this juncture I think that I should take the opportunity of replying to one or two claims that have been made during this debate. It is not my intention to reply in full to all hon. members who have spoken, but one or two accusations have been made on royalty payments and miners' pensions, and I think that they warrant some comment.

I will deal first with those of the Leader of the Opposition because he was the first to criticise this Government's policy on royalties received from the production of minerals and coal in this State. I thought that this matter had been dealt with fully during the Address-in-Reply debate when I replied at length to many of the critics. However, the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Port Curtis have chosen once again to question our policy. I do not accuse the hon. member for Port Curtis of telling deliberate lies—I do not think that he would be capable of doing that—but I do say that he is guilty of distorting things that I said during the Address-in-Reply debate. I will deal with that later on.

I also want to reply to the hon. member for Salisbury relative to his claims on miners' pensions.



The Leader of the Opposition was critical of the fact that the royalty from Mount Isa Mines Ltd. had been reduced. That fact was set out rather fully in the report of the Under Secretary for Mines, in which he indicated that the tonnage of blister copper produced at Mt. Isa had fallen from 75,870 tons in 1965-66 to 52,090 in 1966-67. That was due principally to the fact that the mine was operating in unproductive areas, to cope with the development that was undertaken after the sinking of the K57 shaft. As a matter of fact, so short was it of ore at one stage that it opened an open-cut mine at Kuridala to augment supplies of copper ore. The gross sales of the company fell from about \$87,748,000 in 1965-66 to \$74,944,354 in 1966-67. Production dropped in value by some \$12,000,000-odd. The hon. gentleman must be aware that royalty payments from Mount Isa Mines are based on the profit that the company makes in a year. The same conditions apply to royalty payments by the Mt. Morgan Company and many others in Queensland. The books of account and the profits are examined very thoroughly by officers of the Department of Mines. In 1965-66 the profit of Mount Isa Mines Ltd. was over \$24,000,000 but in 1966-67 the company's profit was down to some \$11,000,000, a drop of about \$12,700,000. As a result there was an appreciable reduction in the amount of royalty. In 1955-56 the company paid only \$750,000 in tax. Following the good year in 1965-66, the tax paid in 1966-67 was \$5,789,000—an additional \$5,000,000. Once again that reduced the net profit on which the royalty payment was assessed. I thought I should clean up that matter for the Leader of the Opposition as he seems to be a little confused in working out royalty payments due to the Government. It is a pity that he was not here some 10 or 11 years ago to work out the royalty responsibilities of the various companies when the A.L.P. was in power.

**Mr. Davies:** He is attending an important function.

**Mr. CAMM:** I am not talking about now. I am talking about 1956.

The Leader of the Opposition also claimed that I said that oil prospecting was expanding. I did not say any such thing. If he heard me correctly—and I read from the script here—I said that oil prospecting and petroleum exploration had slackened because of the increased interest in other areas of Australia. I said that royalty payments from Moonie had dropped because production from the Union Oil Development Corporation fields at Moonie, Alton, Bennett and Conloi in 1967 was only 2,781,000 barrels compared with 3,387,000 barrels in 1966. That reflects some depletion of the reserves in the area. The royalty levied on the oil is a percentage of the value of the oil mined. We must realise that from the moment an oil field comes into production there must be a gradual depletion of reserves from the initial

flush state. The oil in these fields is contained in narrow, irregular bands. To stimulate production, and ensure maximum recovery from these fields, the operators have conducted intensive investigations. They have drilled inner-field wells and installed pumps. They even recharge the wells with water injections and with the gas that flows from the wells. All this work has been done under the supervision of engineers and technicians from the Department of Mines who have a responsibility to ensure that our oil fields are mined—I could say exploited—and developed in such a way that the total reserves are ultimately obtained. It would be quite simple to open up these oil wells at their full flow, but we would run the risk of losing a lot of oil in later years. Consequently a reduction of flow has been imposed in the Moonie field.

The hon. member for Port Curtis waxed eloquent and built up quite a case on false premises. He said that I accused the A.L.P. Government of not collecting any royalty. I gave the A.L.P. Government credit for introducing these royalty provisions, so how can Opposition members blame the Government for carrying on Labour's ideas and, in fact, increasing the royalty responsibilities of these companies?

My exact words were—

"Not one penny was ever collected by the A.L.P. prior to 1956 for any minerals mined and exported from this State."

I went on to criticise Opposition members for their hypocrisy in accusing this Government of giving away our natural resources.

**Mr. Inch:** Don't you think that with the increased production and increased profits of Mount Isa Mines Ltd. your royalties should have increased, in view of the fact that prior to that time the Labour Government had made available to Mount Isa Mines Ltd. £600,000 to develop the mine—

**Mr. CAMM:** I think that the hon. member should develop a speech along those lines. I do not mind being asked a simple question but, if the hon. member is going to embark on a speech, I cannot spare the time to listen to him. He has 25 minutes in which to speak later.

A percentage of profit increases as the profit increases. If Labour thought that 5 per cent. of the profit was warranted when the profit was only \$200,000, surely 5 per cent. of the profit when it is \$20,000,000 means an increase in the total amount received by the Government. It is the percentage of the profit that is the all-important factor.

For the edification of the hon. member for Port Curtis, I quoted some figures in the Address-in-Reply debate. The hon. member for Salisbury said that I was quoting wrong figures. I said—and it is in "Hansard"—that I had added up the figures in the Annual Report of the Under Secretary for Mines, and had arrived at that figure. He

advised me that he had obtained his figures from the totals shown in that annual report. I investigated the matter and found that the totals in the annual report were incorrect. They had been added up incorrectly. As hon. members realise, that correction has now been made in the annual report.

For the benefit of the hon. member for Port Curtis, I pointed out that in 1956 the Labour Government collected \$149,000 in royalties. That is the only royalty that Government ever collected on the mining of minerals in this State, despite the fact it was in power for 30-odd years. Since then royalty collections have increased progressively, and at the present time the total royalties collected on minerals in this State amount to \$6,729,487, and on oil, \$2,219,818, and those are in addition to the royalty collected on coal. It is admitted, and I conceded this in my earlier remarks, that the A.L.P. Government did collect royalty on coal. It was also responsible for reducing the royalty to some ridiculously low figure. If that figure still obtained, some large mining companies would be paying one penny a ton on coal exported in excess of 2,000,000 tons a year. That has been rectified by this Government and now there is a flat rate of 5c a ton royalty on all coal mined in this State.

Royalty receipts in some of the other States could be higher. But the cost of hauling coal in those other States is far cheaper than it is in Queensland because many of our coal-fields are a considerable distance from the ports through which the coal is shipped.

**Mr. Inch:** You will admit that at that time some of the mining companies were in the doldrums?

**Mr. CAMM:** For sure, things were in the doldrums. The socialistic policies adopted by hon. members opposite would put any State in the doldrums. No encouragement was given to companies to invest here, and there was no atmosphere that would encourage even Australian investors to look to Queensland. The State was certainly in the doldrums, as I have been saying ever since I have been here. There was no depression immediately after the war when a Labour Government was importing coal from other States.

The hon. member for Port Curtis was a little critical, although I think in a rather constructive way, when he mentioned the lack of encouragement given by the Government in its provision of scholarships, cadetships and other incentives for young people to obtain higher education. As his authority he quoted a book that he had read in which he saw advertisements from other States. It could have been an oversight on the part of the Mines Department that the Queensland Government did not advertise in that journal. I inform the hon. member that currently 10 scholarship-holders are studying for degrees at the University of Queensland.

The Government offers quite a number of scholarships through the Mines Department, and many large mining companies in Queensland do likewise. Of those 10 scholarship-holders, three expect to graduate this year, two as Bachelors of Science, with honours, and one with a Bachelor of Science pass degree. In addition, six sub-professional staff—cadets, technical assistants, and assistant geologists—receive some leave without pay to undertake university studies, and two cadets are undertaking certificate courses at the Queensland Institute of Technology. Provision has been made in the 1968-69 Estimates for the granting of six additional scholarships for university study, and five additional scholarships for study at the Queensland Institute of Technology.

It should be pointed out that although four scholarships were offered at the beginning of 1968, only three could be granted. There is such a demand for bright students in this State that it is not always possible to obtain young people to take up scholarships. At present there are 18 vacancies for geologists in the Mines Department. These have recently been advertised, and two overseas appointments have been made and others are pending.

Difficulty is being experienced in recruiting and holding staff in the face of offers of more attractive salaries by private industry. There have been some very bright men in the Mines Department who have received lucrative offers from mining companies that have come to Australia. I do not blame these officers for accepting positions which return a great deal more than Governments can afford to pay. Such men are not lost to the mining industry of the State because they are engaged in exploration and developmental work in mining and, by association with experts from overseas, they obtain additional technical knowledge and become very valuable men for the State, even though they are not actually working for the Government. It is always pleasing to us to realise that men who have been trained by the Mines Department and the University of Queensland are readily acceptable to overseas mining companies. That is an indication of the standard of education and training received in the Mines Department and the university.

**Mr. Davies:** Are men in the other States in the same demand?

**Mr. CAMM:** There is an increasing demand for technical men all over the world. If the hon. member for Maryborough would only read the Press and take a little notice of what goes on he would know that without having to ask me.

**Mr. Davies:** Aren't they paid more in the other States?

**Mr. CAMM:** I would not say that.

I should like to reply to some extent to the hon. member for Salisbury. I did not intend to talk about miners' pensions during

this debate. Unfortunately, the hon. member for Salisbury saw fit to raise the matter in the Chamber and I feel compelled to reply to some of the accusations that he made.

It is my intention to meet next Tuesday afternoon representatives of the Miners' Union and other people interested in miners' pensions and to discuss with them some recommendations that they claim will improve the miners' pensions scheme. I assure hon. members that I shall be very interested in hearing what they have to say. However, it ill-behoves any hon. member to come into this Chamber and endeavour to incite industrial trouble on the basis of some shortcomings that seem to him to be apparent.

**Mr. Tucker:** Well, he is an elected representative of the people. It is perfectly correct for him to do that.

**Mr. CAMM:** It is perfectly correct for him to do it.

**Mr. Tucker:** Then, why castigate him?

**Mr. CAMM:** I am not castigating him. If I began to castigate him, the hon. member for Townsville North would get a different impression altogether. I am just criticising him mildly.

I should like all mine workers and unionists in other industries to know some of the facts about the fund, which is provided solely for pensions for retired and incapacitated mine workers and their dependants. As I have stressed on many occasions the fund does not apply only to men working at the coal face; it applies generally to men who are employed in the coal-mining industry.

The miners' pensions fund is administered by a tribunal composed of a representative of each of the contributing parties. The mine workers nominate a member, the mine owners nominate another member, and the Government appoints the chairman of the tribunal. Those people are responsible for the administration of the Coal and Oil Shale Mine Workers (Pensions) Act.

The Government, which appoints the registrar, has the responsibility of seeing that the tribunal administers the fund on an actuarially sound basis, and the Government Actuary examines the fund and then sends word through the registrar of the pensions tribunal to me, as Minister in charge of the department, if the fund is becoming actuarially unsound. By virtue of the provisions of the Act under which the tribunal operates, I have to take that report to Cabinet and eventually rectify the position and bring the fund back into actuarial soundness. The Government really acts in a supervisory capacity, the actual operation of the pensions tribunal being entrusted to representatives of the owners and miners.

**Mr. Hodges:** Can't they do it themselves?

**Mr. CAMM:** They cannot do it themselves. I have said on many occasions, "If you don't think we are doing the right thing, you and the owners come up with some proposal by means of which payments to miners can be increased and their conditions improved." I shall be very interested to find out what suggestions are forthcoming from their representatives next Tuesday.

The present rate of contribution by mine workers is \$1.20 a week. That is subsidised 450 per cent. by an owners' contribution of \$5.40 a week for every employee who is entitled to join the pensions fund.

**Mr. Hodges:** Are only miners entitled to join the fund?

**Mr. CAMM:** No; everyone who is in the employ of a coal-mine owner.

**Mr. Hodges:** Clerks and everybody else?

**Mr. CAMM:** Yes; even the man who drives the lorry from the coal storage bins to the port or the railway, or wherever it might be going.

The Government's contribution was increased recently from \$30,000 to \$150,000 per annum. What employees in any other industry receive such preferential treatment? In this instance the employee pays in a certain amount, the employer pays in four and a-half times as much, and the Government supplements the fund by \$150,000.

However, after 23 years of operation the fund's actuarial deficiency had increased to \$3,034,560, having initially provided pensions without any contribution whatsoever, or with only a token payment, for many years. The table that I have here illustrates the contributions made and the benefits received by a section. This section comprises approximately 25 per cent. of all recipients of the pension, and they are the more affluent pensioners whose means or assets debar them from receipt of a Commonwealth age, invalid or widow's pension. They have too many assets to qualify for a social service pension. Some of them have retired on reaching the age of 60, others have retired through incapacity and some are the widows of miners. Payments to them are on a reduced scale. No-one is quibbling about this; we think it is all right. But of the total number of pensioners, 334 are affluent people who are in receipt of the miner's pension. Their total contribution to this fund—and some of them are mine owners who are entitled to enjoy the benefits of this fund—was \$69,905. That is all they ever put into this fund. They have already drawn \$3,020,917, yet the hon. member for Salisbury says that they should have their pensions increased in accordance with the Commonwealth social service pensions.

**Mr. Sherrington:** Did you call Vickers a liar when he said they would not get an increase? You have not answered that yet.

**Mr. CAMM:** I will answer everything the hon. member said. When they came and saw me, both the owners and the miners stipulated that they could not stand any increase in their contributions. I think the miners are paying a lot of money today—\$1.20—and many of the small mines would be put out of business if the contribution was increased as they still have to pay 4½ times the contribution of the miners. If there is a fixed contribution to any fund and if a scheme is to be worked out to keep the fund actuarially sound, surely there must be some upper limit on the amount of money paid to the recipients.

How could we have a fund with contributions fixed and benefits tied to some other instrumentality that can increase benefits at the whim of whatever Government is in power?

We did fix the maximum rate of the pension and I make no apology for this. This is still paid to the affluent recipients. A person who qualifies for the age pension, or course, receives the higher amount. He does not have to stay on the miner's pension. Hon. members may think that these married pensioners have been over-generously treated on the basis of their contribution to the fund. As I mentioned earlier, they contributed \$60,000-odd and they have drawn over \$3,000,000. They are still continuing to draw from this fund although, of course, their contributions ceased many years ago.

Hon. members opposite decry the pegging of the miner's pension rate at \$26.50 a week and demand that increases be paid to this section. This according to them—I repeat their own words—is invidious discrimination against the Queensland miner pensioners which must not be permitted to continue.

Fifty-five per cent. of the miner pensioners and dependants are now receiving maximum Commonwealth pensions and those in this section will continue to receive increases just as they did prior to the amending legislation. Anyone who was entitled to a social service pension will automatically get the increases as they are allowed.

Fifteen per cent. of the pensioners are retired at age 60 and are not yet qualified by age for a social service pension. The rate is \$15.25 per week for a single man and \$26.50 per week for a married man. Those in this category could suffer some hardship if we pegged their pensions, because until they reach the age of 65 years they cannot get the social service pension even if their assets were such that they could qualify for it. The amending legislation introduced by the Government does not compulsorily retire a mine worker who is in good health and may have a young wife and children. We say to him that he can continue to work and receive his award payments, and in addition receive \$10 a week from the pension fund until he retires, if he elected to retire at any age between 60 and 65 years. In effect we gave him

the right and privilege to continue working in the mine. If he did not want to do that he could work somewhere else. If he elected to retire he would be paid the full miner's pension at the rate of \$15.25 for a single man and \$26.50 for a married man. In addition, he may accept full-time employment elsewhere. This was a wonderful concession granted to that category of mine pensioner, but again it was referred to as invidious discrimination against the Queensland mine pensioner. The balance of the pensioners, approximately 5 per cent., receive Commonwealth age pensions, but their wives are too young to qualify for this pension. These pensioners will not receive less than the maximum miner's pension rate from both sources. Again, earnings elsewhere are not restricted in any way, whereas previously a restriction was placed on the amount of money that they could earn outside the mining industry while they were receiving a pension. Owing to the state of the fund, and being bound by the necessity to place the fund on a sound basis, the Government was forced to amend the Act as it was unreasonable to compel any mine worker to contribute to an actuarially unsound fund that could not guarantee a pension on his retirement.

I do not know how hon. members opposite would feel, but I would not feel comfortable if today I were to ask young miners who have many years of employment ahead in the coal-mining industry to contribute \$1.20 towards a fund that would be bankrupt by the time they were entitled to enjoy its benefits. Hon. members might say that they would continue to take this money from them and let someone look after the fund when it ultimately became bankrupt. That is what will eventually happen.

The Queensland legislation was designed to provide over all the greatest degree of equity to approximately 1,450 pensioners and 2,250 contributing mine workers and the colliery owners.

It is understood that in New South Wales negotiations are still proceeding with a view to reaching agreement on necessary amendments to ensure solvency, adequacy, actuarial soundness and future stability of that fund. I will indeed be interested to learn how higher benefits can be paid to the Queensland pensioners without increasing the contributions of mine workers and colliery owners. It will be recalled that representatives of the miners' unions and colliery owners met me on a number of occasions in an effort to overcome this problem of rising contributions required by the Act. The State Actuary said that the contributions must be increased to make the fund actuarially sound. It was the contention of those representatives that such increases would result in retrenchments at many of the smaller mines on the West Moreton field. Queensland agreed to defer the increases in contributions, and this action was later ratified at the insistence of the Auditor-General. Cabinet can agree to let these contributions come in, provided it

accepts the responsibility of bringing this fund to an actuarially sound basis later on. Surely it must be realised by hon. members opposite that the Queensland Government is trying to protect the interests of present and future pensioners, and that is evidenced by the Government's increased contribution of \$150,000 a year, which, in the year ended 30 June, 1968, exceeded the total of all contributions paid by mine workers. That does not apply in any other State of the Commonwealth.

In view of the actuarial state of the fund and the Government's efforts to give equity to all, any attempt by any member in this Chamber to incite employees to indulge in industrial action certainly appears to me—and I say this in all sincerity—to be a malicious act.

Before lending their support to any such action, unionists employed in other industries should certainly give plenty of thought to the so-called invidious retirement conditions that apply in the coal-mining industry and compare them with what they receive under their own superannuation schemes.

I said at the outset that it had not been my intention to enter into any discussion in this Chamber about the miners' pension scheme, because that will be done when I meet the union representatives—as I have agreed to—on Tuesday afternoon.

I wonder if there is some malicious intent—I emphasise that phrase—on somebody's part, because at this stage in the negotiations to sell coal overseas there are representatives from the United States of America, from Canada, from Poland, and from New South Wales, as well as Queensland's representatives. What sort of an influence will this talk have on the representatives of the steel mills in the country to which we are hoping to export coal? What will they think if the people who are controlling the workers in the industry say, "We will withdraw all our workers from the coal mines that are exporting coal from this State."? What sort of an attitude is that for these people who have control of the workers in such an important industry?

**Mr. BENNETT** (South Brisbane) (7.53 p.m.): It would seem that the Minister has intervened in the debate at this stage only to launch an attack on the workers in the coal-mining industry. I regret that the Minister has taken advantage of the opportunity to use the time in this debate when he took up such a long time in introducing his Estimates. I remind the Committee that he took two hours to do so, which seems to be an inordinate length of time. Although he introduced his Estimates only this morning, he has intervened to launch this vicious and vindictive attack on union representatives and employees in the coal-mining industry of Queensland.

I cannot understand why the Minister should engage in such conduct. After all, the coal-mining industry was one of the pioneering industries and the workers in it were those who formed the backbone of Queensland. They worked under rather handicapped conditions and with dangerous facilities, and many of them either lost their lives or were maimed. In earlier times they did not have just compensation or adequate safety provisions, nor were the rights of their widows and families properly safeguarded.

Fortunately, the situation today is somewhat different. Legislation, regulations and awards to some extent protect their interests. The real reason for the existence of those awards and that protective legislation is that the coal-mining industry and the Miners' Union have been active and vocal for the protection of the rights and welfare of the workers. It is strange to see a Minister, in modern times, attacking the efforts of those union leaders who are prepared to do their best in the interests of their members.

I do not wish to engage in politics when dealing with union representation, particularly of coal-mining unions. We are dealing with them as industrial unionists and workers. I say unequivocally that the union has every right to take strong and vigorous protective measures to ensure that the interests of its members are safeguarded and that their welfare is protected.

**Mr. Chinchin:** No business, no work.

**Mr. BENNETT:** Don't let us adopt that attitude to the worker all the time, like so many Tory members on the Government side of the Chamber. No union members, no coal! Let us be quite frank about that. There is not one hon. member sitting on the other side of the Chamber, including the Minister, who would deign to work in a coal mine.

**Mr. Camm:** Don't be ridiculous.

**Mr. BENNETT:** The Minister would not.

**Mr. Camm:** Don't be ridiculous. You have never worked in your life.

**Mr. BENNETT:** Yet the Minister is prepared to sit there and abuse the workers who go down mines and have to work under these conditions.

**Mr. Camm:** When did you ever do a hard day's work?

**Mr. BENNETT:** I did not reach my position by using the skills of workers, employing them on sub-award conditions, by fleecing them and using their labour, sweat, and toil to acquire wealth. Whatever I have, I earned by my own personal hard endeavours, just like the coal-miners. I had to work long hours to educate myself, and I still do. So I do not like that suggestion from the Minister. The Minister treats me as he does the coal-miners, with an attitude of derision. He thinks that anyone who does not own a cane farm, has no vast assets, or cannot

afford to employ labour is somebody to be despised. He forgets that in this country the vast majority of the people work for the benefit of the country and do not fill their pockets by investing their money or by employing the labour of others. I can assure the Minister that I have done my hard day's work, physically and mentally, to equip myself for my position. I do not have to fleece anybody else to make any profits that I might make.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Carey): Order! I hope that the hon. member for South Brisbane will get back to the Estimates under discussion.

**Mr. BENNETT:** I was provoked by the interjection of the Minister.

The Minister, who is usually placid, really amazed me tonight with his vigorous attack on the workers. I thought that that was usually done by members of the Liberal Party, particularly the back-bench members of it—the "ginger group". Normally Country Party members adopt a bigger-minded attitude.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! The hon. member is still evading the issue and is not discussing the Estimates.

**Mr. BENNETT:** The Minister devoted one hour of his time tonight in attacking workers in the coal-mining industry, and I thought the workers were supposed to have a voice in Parliament too. He said that the methods and techniques used were malicious and insidious. No-one can query the integrity of my politics. I feel that it is unfair to attack the miners in this way, because large profits are being made in the coal-mining industry. As a matter of fact, the miners were responsible for placing many other industries in the State on a firm footing, and I do not think that they should be castigated because, as they had to do in the pioneering days, they protect their rights and interests. Although the Government has a duty to attract, when necessary and proper, overseas investment, it also has an obligation to see that the working conditions and rights of the sons of Queensland are protected, and that they are not fleeced in the process of hewing coal from the ground.

I conclude these preliminary remarks by saying that I will always be one to defend the right of unions to protect the interests of their membership. If they do not do that, very few others will do it for them.

I want to speak first of all on a matter that the Government, and the Minister for Mines in particular, seems to be side-stepping, namely, the control and distribution of energy resources in this State. Symposia have been held on the future utilisation of Queensland's fuel resources, and, if the Government does pay any heed to the submissions made by the experts who addressed those gatherings, it shows no indication of putting their suggestions into effect or even giving them serious consideration.

In his two long speeches today the Minister has given no clear indication of the Government's policy on the future use of Queensland's fuel resources, and the stage has been reached at which this problem is a very pertinent one and one which will affect the future of the State considerably. No doubt the coal-mining industry and the unions are becoming even more energetic and active because they can see the problems involved in the harnessing of our natural resources, which at present seems to be proceeding quite haphazardly.

A recommendation was made by a Canadian who is regarded as an expert in this field, and the Minister should publicly state his opinion when overseas experts make observations and recommendations on the future of any industry in this State. Dr. C. R. Hetherington, a Canadian fuel expert, made a report in 1964, but, so far as I know, the Minister has not dealt in this Chamber with any of his recommendations. One of his recommendations was the establishment of a petroleum conservation and gas utilities board. So far as I can see, the Minister has side-stepped that recommendation. It may be that he has some worthwhile arguments why such a board should not be formed. If he has, why does he not place them before us?

In order to placate those interested in the harnessing and proper utilisation of the energy resources of this State, the Government came to light with what it called the Queensland Energy Resources Council. The experts claim that this gesture—and, as I understand it, it was a token, placatory gesture—is hardly conducive to vigorous action, nor does it reflect the views of the community or industry generally.

The stage has been reached when coal will not be used in this city in such large quantities as it has been in the past. I refer anyone who questions the authenticity of that statement to the fact that the use of trams will be abandoned in Brisbane by Christmas-time. Trams are motivated, of course, by electricity produced with coal from Ipswich, and it could be said that they have helped largely to maintain coal-miners in employment on that field. With the abandonment of trams, there will be less demand for electricity.

**Mr. Chinchen:** Are you having a shot at the Lord Mayor again?

**Mr. BENNETT:** No, I am not. I am having a shot at the Minister for Mines, because the removal of trams was consented to by the Government and had the approval of the Premier of the day, Sir Frank Nicklin, as I understand the position. According to what the Premier said, he and the Lord Mayor agreed on that proposal. What I think about it probably does not matter; but the leaders in the two spheres, the Premier of this State and the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, were in agreement on it. As far as I can see, members of the present Cabinet also are in agreement with the Lord Mayor on that proposal.

At this stage, when obviously it is too late to change the scheme, consideration will have to be given to what will happen industrially to those who are involved. The coal-miners in Ipswich are one of the classes of workers involved, and I use them as an example when I say that perhaps the recommendation of Dr. Hetherington should have been given more serious consideration than it was by the Minister. Dr. Hetherington said that an authority should be created to harness the fuel resources of this State in order that some of them will not be wasted and that certain bands of workers can still be gainfully employed. I gave an example to show that, in Ipswich alone, the decision to replace trams and trolley buses with ordinary fuel buses could put out of work many men who work in the coal mines.

The fuel that will be utilised by public transport in Brisbane as from Christmas will be imported from overseas. Therefore, the workers who are engaged in the production of energy in Queensland should be geared to some other avenue of employment, or perhaps the coal from Ipswich should be used for other purposes. The Minister should be seeking other means of disposing of it. That is why it seems to me that the recommendation for the creating of a board should be expedited.

There is no record of the Queensland Energy Resources Council's having made any profound recommendation to the Government for the future of the fuel industry in this State. I could be in error in making that statement. If I am, the Minister should inform Parliament of the precise recommendations that came from the council. In common with other hon. members, I have a high regard for public servants generally in Queensland; I also have a high regard for the public servants in this department. However, I have never been prepared to concede or accord to any board that determines policy as between taxpayer, public and Government the sole right and authority to dictate policy in any field, particularly in the industrial field.

I feel that this so-called council, created by the Government as a placating idea, should have within its ranks not only the public servants who now serve on it but also representatives of the general community—representatives of the consumers and representatives of the coal-mining and fuel industries. It would then advance ideas and make recommendations that would come from a more balanced and experienced cross-section of the community, including the public servants who serve on it.

It is my belief that the present constituents of the council seem to serve, as they must, the policy of the Government and in my submission, they are not free to make recommendations on broad lines for the most desirable method of fuel conservation in this State. In relation to fuel control, production of energy and harvesting of energy, I think we have reached a stage where there should

be some controlling body that can make firm recommendations to the Minister, particularly at a time when there seems to be a strong move to build a further large power-house in Central Queensland. Seeing that that suggestion has been made, the already existing establishments should be safeguarded from extinction. I feel that, in this regard, the Government is not paying any real attention to the future programming of work.

Now, to deal with the mundane question of roads—and I do not normally like dealing with mundane questions—I am not particularly happy about two of the proposed main road works in my own electorate. I refer first of all to the intention to widen Merivale Street and make it a main arterial thoroughfare. I am not opposed to making it a main arterial thoroughfare, but I am certainly dissatisfied with the treatment that my constituents received relative to acquisitions in that area. I could name one particular individual, but that is unnecessary. He has already approached a former Premier—he was then the Premier of the day—and other influential members of the Cabinet in an endeavour to settle on an acquisition amount for the transfer of his land to the Government. But the Government says it does not want the land yet and, as an individual, he has to pay the price of progress for the whole of the city in this particular development. It is a large, valuable piece of vacant land in Merivale Street, South Brisbane.

I should like to preface my remarks by saying that after land has been acquired, as it was in Main Street, Kangaroo Point—I have had the duty and responsibility of making representations to officials of the Main Roads Department on behalf of my constituents in that area for a suitable settlement—negotiations have always been most efficiently and courteously carried out, and in a satisfactory manner. My observations in this regard are not designed as an attack in any way on the officers of the Main Roads Department because, in relation to Merivale Street, at the moment they have no say; it is Government policy.

We have not reached the stage where we are entitled to approach officials of the Main Roads Department in order to negotiate a satisfactory settlement as compensation for land to be acquired. But the Government clearly has adopted the Wilbur Smith Report which, in effect, has frozen all the relevant land not only in Merivale Street but in other parts of Brisbane as well.

The man of whom I speak—he is not a young fellow—in anticipation of selling his home and land in that area because the rating became too heavy for private purposes, had removed his home and caused the land to become vacant. Therefore, he cannot lease it or rent it for the erection of home units or flats; it is simply vacant land on which he has to pay rates amounting to

\$10 every day. He wants the Government to take over the land as it has declared its policy of acquiring it at some time as part of the Wilbur Smith Plan. It is a large and valuable piece of land in Merivale Street. Shortly before the Government announced that it would acquire his land as part of the Wilbur Smith Plan he had negotiated its sale at a considerable sum, but when the prospective purchaser, who was in the commercial or industrial world, read about the proposed Wilbur Smith Plan he was able to withdraw from the sale as he had not signed a contract.

The landowner has been paying rates of \$10 a day for quite a few years, and he cannot use the land or lease it; it is simply vacant. The Government will not take it. He is in a very invidious position. He cannot negotiate with the officers of the Main Roads Department on a price because the land has not yet been acquired but, valuable as it is, he could not sell it to anybody. In spite of the fact that it is ideally situated for commerce and industry he has to hold on to it and continue to pay his rates. By the time the Main Roads Department acquires the land he will have paid out in rates a sum almost equal to the amount that the department will be prepared to pay him by way of compensation.

In all fairness, when a plan of that nature is publicly declared and announced, warning all prospective purchasers that the land is frozen, the owner should not have to retain ownership over a period of years for the benefit of some Government Department. If the Government had any commercial integrity, when land of that nature cannot be used, in all fairness and conscience the Government should take it and pay him just and adequate compensation and relieve him of the burdensome obligation of having to pay rates on the land. Most of the land in the inner-city area that the Government does intend to acquire eventually in stage I, stage II or stage III of the Wilbur Smith Plan is valuable land, but the owners find it impossible to sell it. Admittedly, if they had some construction on the land they could lease it for temporary use, at a discounted value, but owners of vacant land can do nothing. The only thing they can do is continue to pay rates.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. McKECHNIE** (Carnarvon) (8.18 p.m.): I was amazed to hear the hon. member for South Brisbane say that he did not pay award wages to his employees when establishing himself in business.

**Mr. Sherrington:** You're a liar.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Carey): Order! I ask the hon. member for Salisbury to withdraw that remark.

**Mr. Sherrington:** I am quite happy to withdraw it, Mr. Carey, but you cannot stop me from thinking it.

**Mr. BENNETT:** I rise to a point of order. What the hon. member said is completely untrue. I did not say that. As a matter of fact, after I reached the position in which I could employ secretarial staff I always paid considerably more than the award wages. The remark is insulting and untrue, and I ask that it be withdrawn.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member for Carnarvon has heard the request of the hon. member for South Brisbane.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I can understand that it is insulting, and I withdraw it. In explanation and in fairness to the hon. member for South Brisbane, I should say that I understood him to say that he did not pay award wages when starting off in business. I think his implication was that he did not employ labour. I think that is what he meant.

**Mr. Bennett:** Why don't you get your facts straight?

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I have my facts straight. I wrote down what the hon. member said. It is the inference that counts. I think that he was a little mixed up in what he was trying to explain.

It is a compliment to the Minister that his portfolio should cover three important, major developments. The 25 minutes available to me is but a short time to discuss the Departments of Mines, Main Roads and Electricity. All three of them are vital to me, as they are to many other hon. members.

While the prosperity created by mining is unseen in many parts of Queensland, nevertheless it is boosting the whole economy of the State by the inflow of overseas money. The State is benefiting even in places where mining does not take place, in the same way as we reap benefit from the beef roads in areas where they do not exist. The construction of the beef roads in the northern and western areas of the State with money provided by the Commonwealth has indirectly assisted the south-east coastal areas and the southern inland areas of the State. The money thus saved by the State has been transferred to benefit those areas, so we have an over-all benefit from mining and beef roads throughout Queensland.

The Texas High Party of the Federal Bureau of Mineral Resources, in co-operation with the State Department of Mines, has carried out very extensive work in my area, as have similar parties in many other areas of the State. Information is becoming available that will expedite the marked development of the past few years. We can look forward to increasing discoveries, thanks to the work of these Federal and State authorities. Some private firms carrying out investigations with a view to development will also provide valuable information. Carpentaria Exploration Co. operates in different parts of Queensland, and I look forward



to reading the reports of the private concerns and the Federal Bureau of Mineral Resources and the results of the exploratory drilling carried out by the Department of Mines in my own area of the South-eastern Highlands, between Stanthorpe and Texas, in the search for copper and other minerals. In the plainlands to the west, around Yelarbon and Goondiwindi, we have hopes of finding further phosphate rock. Admittedly present discoveries in southern inland Queensland have represented only minor traces, but we hope that drilling in these areas will reveal worth-while finds.

The wonderful development of roads throughout the State is reflected wherever we go. We can now travel quite long distances in half the time taken a few years ago. In my area, the whole of the road from Warwick to Stanthorpe, coming from the Warwick electorate into my electorate, which five years ago was a very dangerous, narrow road, used by heavy interstate transports—a winding road, with bad shoulders—has been reconstructed or realigned all the way. As the hon. member for Toowoomba East has said, it is an excellent road. I appreciate the improvement in this road, as do most people in the State.

Further south, on the New England Highway a very dangerous spot at the Glen Aplin crossing has been eliminated. Those are examples of how the New England Highway has been improved. That is our main outlet to the southern States.

A good deal of work has been done between Inglewood and Goondiwindi in the past few years in widening and making safer our main connection between Brisbane and Adelaide, the Cunningham Highway. It is encouraging an added flow of transport between Adelaide and Brisbane. Trucks can come across the flat plainlands without any undue climbing because there are very few hills between Adelaide and Brisbane on that inland route.

The work on some of our main roads has not been as spectacular as the work on our highways, but we are improving and widening our main roads, sometimes with new alignments, throughout the State. The Main Roads Department administers 24,652 miles of roads of all categories, and in every section some development has taken place. Admittedly they are not all bitumen, but they are being improved in different ways.

I refer particularly to the Stanthorpe-Texas road. Certain sections of it have been improved out of sight, although there is still quite a lot of work to be done.

The Leichhardt Development Road, which runs north in the inland area of the State, up till recently did not have much work done on it. Now it is being developed from both the northern and southern ends. There has been development at the northern end, around Charters Towers, and in my area we

have bitumen pushing north from Goondiwindi along that very important inland north-south road.

Our roads have been developed so well in the near-inland areas that some airlines have been squeezed out of business. In my area, the Brisbane-Stanthorpe road is so good that the airline has gone out of business because road transport has been made faster and safer than previously.

Further west, even at Goondiwindi, there has been some effect. The airline company there still operates successfully, but it has lost some business because the 243 miles of road is bitumen and is mainly a wide road. In a few places it needs widening but over all it is a big improvement on what it was and more is to follow.

**Mr. Tucker:** We can read all this in the Annual Report of the Commissioner of Main Roads. Get on to something interesting.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** It is unfortunate that the hon. member for Townsville North does not like to hear of progress and development. It evidently upsets his bile and he feels he must interject. I assure him that the people of Queensland are very pleased not only to hear of the development but also to be able to use excellent roads and to travel throughout the State on them. I am not complacent about this. I know that there is room for much more development. I am sorry that the progress that has been made upsets the hon. member.

There is a need for some of our shire roads that are important connecting links to be declared secondary roads so that the local councils, in co-operation with the Main Roads Department, can apply their petrol money on a 50/50 basis to develop them. I have one particular road in mind, namely from Limevale to Greenup. It would be to the benefit of the area if that road was declared a secondary road so that the Inglewood Shire Council could avail itself of the matching grants.

The time has come when we should face up to larger contracts on some of our main roads work. Now that we have broken the back of some of the worst sections, we should concentrate on completing different roads by placing bigger jobs, either on contract or day labour, so that they can be done on a more economic basis. I do not think that anybody would disagree with me when I say that it is cheaper, per mile, to do a 15-mile section of road than a 5-mile section. Consequently our thinking could well be turned more in this general direction. Again referring to my own area. I think that the Texas-Inglewood road could be completed on this basis.

There are many difficult places on roads which present problems only to people from other areas. There may be a good surface, warning signs, and clearly marked speed limits, and the road is safe if a driver heeds that information. But people from interstate, particularly transport drivers who have

possibly travelled long distances and have been lulled into a false sense of security, often strike trouble at such places. A good example of such a situation is Devil's Elbow on the New England Highway. Although the road surface there is good and driving is safe if the signs are heeded, an interstate transport driver falls into the trap about once a fortnight. I know Devil's Elbow is now in the planning stage, but if such road conditions can be attended to as soon as possible, the better it will be. Although it is possible to become so familiar with a road that one takes it, as it were, too cheaply, I feel that the main danger is caused by people who have been travelling distances rather too long for their own good and the safety of others on the road. The fact that they are not familiar with the road, and come upon such places in an unguarded moment, is the real cause of some accidents.

I also feel that the priority of some of our main roads work could be upgraded. I have in mind the main road from Wondalli towards Millmerran. A stretch of 4.2 miles would take in the worst link over some black-soil country and carry the road over Bethacurriba Creek, where traffic can be held up.

I wish to spend most of my remaining time dealing with electricity. The report of the Commissioner for Electricity Supply shows that there has been an increase of 11 per cent. in the consumption of electricity throughout Queensland in the year just ended. The Commissioner also says that 96 per cent. of all residences in Queensland have electricity reticulated to them, leaving 4 per cent. of homes still without power. I think it is important to set out to provide electricity to those who still require it. I feel that I have more than my fair share of the remaining 4 per cent. in my area. That is inevitable because of the wide open spaces in it. The important thing is to see how those without electricity can be helped.

I should like to express my appreciation to the Minister and to Mr. Neil Smith for their assistance in ensuring that electricity will be reticulated in the Gore-Cement Mills area. The North West County Council of New South Wales is the electric authority for this area, and it undertook the reticulation of the Inglewood Shire in a scheme that required a capital contribution of \$1,500. The Gore area was excluded, and eventually included at the rate of \$2,600 for each property. I felt that that was most unfair. After approaching both the Minister and Mr. Neil Smith, with people from that area, I was very pleased to receive information recently that the people there would be treated financially in the same manner as were the other residents of the shire in that reticulation zone.

I also wish to refer to another matter which, although it is of a Federal nature, is of basic concern to Queensland. It is the taxation angle of the reticulation of electricity

along the southern border region of Queensland, for which the North West County Council holds the franchise. Under the scheme in operation, excluding the towns of Goondiwindi, Texas, Inglewood and Yelarbon, electricity is supplied to the various properties, villages or houses, and the State Government provides a subsidy of \$800 for each connection. It provides also about \$100,000 of loan money per annum to the North West County Council for its extensions in Queensland and assists with the cost of some of the trunk and spur lines that service the area.

A scheme is now being implemented under which a small holding or householder may have electricity reticulated for a capital contribution of as little as \$700. Hon. members from other parts of Queensland may not be familiar with the term "capital contribution", because this scheme is different from schemes operating elsewhere in Queensland. It is a capital contribution in every sense of the word. The money does not come back to the person who provides it, as do the moneys provided under some of the loan schemes implemented by other authorities. If the Valuer-General's valuation of the land is about \$20,000, the capital contribution is \$2,400. I make it clear to hon. members that these are not official figures; they are my own deductions. If the Valuer-General's valuation is between \$20,000 and \$50,000 the capital contribution is \$3,000, and if it exceeds \$50,000 the capital contribution is \$3,600. Guarantees relative to the amount of electricity used are separate from the capital contribution.

I am not complaining about that, because it is the only way in which electricity can be brought to these areas and the people of the area have agreed to the scheme. Admittedly, it is expensive. I am sure that most people would not like to think of paying out \$3,000 or \$3,600, which is gone for all time, to have electricity brought to their homes. As I said, I am not complaining about the scheme; but where it is hard is that the money paid out for that purpose is taxable. I do not think it is fair that taxpayers in Queensland should pay tax on a capital contribution towards the establishment of an electricity scheme within a specified area when in years to come the land may be balloted for, subdivided into villages, or cut up into small areas under freehold tenure. The grid system will be established on capital provided by these people, and I believe that, at the very least, the State Government should seek from the Commonwealth a total remission of taxation on the amount that they contribute.

A letter from the Federal Treasurer says—

"The Commissioner of Taxation, whose advice was sought on this matter, has pointed out that, under the general deduction provision of the income tax law, a deduction is allowable for all expenditure incurred by a taxpayer in gaining or producing assessable income or necessarily

incurred in carrying on a business for that purpose, to the extent to which it is not expenditure of a capital, private or domestic nature. The Commissioner advises that, as the costs of constructing electricity and telephone lines fall within the category of expenditure of a capital nature, it follows that a deduction is not allowable for such costs under the general provision of the law."

Hon. members will notice that telephone lines are mentioned. A few years ago the Federal Treasurer saw fit to exclude telephone lines, and it is now possible to construct a telephone line and not pay tax on the capital outlay. In view of that, I believe that it is only fair that the provision should be extended to cover the provision of electric power. As I said earlier, these are pilot schemes and are a basis for further subdivision and settlement, and I do not think that people should be called upon to make a capital contribution to such schemes and also pay taxation on it.

I have three electric authorities in my electorate, and I hope that more money can be found to enable further schemes to be implemented in certain areas of the Granite Belt. In reply to my letters to the Minister and the Commission, it has been pointed out to me time and time again that no help can be given to these people without taking it from somebody else, somewhere. This I do not wish to do, but I think we should find ways and means to make more money available for small schemes to reticulate electricity, such as Ballandean to Wyberba.

Similarly, in the Pikedale region of the Southern Electric Authority, west of Stanthorpe, there is a group in relation to whom I am awaiting word from the Minister. I trust that he will be able to find suitable ways of financing such a reticulation under somewhat different conditions from those existing elsewhere in the S.E.A. area.

I express every confidence that the Minister will find ways and means to assist both the Granite Belt areas of small reticulation and the outer areas of the Granite Belt, into the grazing areas west of Stanthorpe, such as in the Pikedale area, and arrive at a suitable solution for these people.

In conclusion, while seeking more assistance, I should like at the same time to express to the Minister and to the three departments under his control my appreciation of the development and work that has been carried out by them. I am confident that in the years to come we will see ever greater development occurring within these three departments, to the benefit of Queensland.

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH** (Tablelands) (8.42 p.m.): The annual reports of the Commissioner of Main Roads, the Under Secretary for Mines and the State Electricity Commission are very comprehensive, but, like many of these documents, they seem to continue on in the same trend year by year. I intend

first of all to deal with the report of the Commissioner of Main Roads and to ask the Minister to bring about a few improvements in the future in maps such as the one I am holding up. I am only showing hon. members the top half of it but they will notice that all the roads, whether they be State highways, developmental roads, main roads, secondary roads or local authority boundaries, are shown only by lines. There are no names on the highways, and I doubt if any member of this Chamber knows exactly where any particular highway commences and ends. If my suggestion is accepted, I am sure that in a very short time everyone will become conversant with the names of the various highways, will be able to refer to them by their correct names and will know where they begin and terminate. They will also know whether they are State highways, developmental roads or "what have you".

Recently I drew to the Minister's attention the fact that I had travelled on a road that had just been completed and I found that its width varied from 10, to 12, to 14 feet. I did not simply drive over the road; I got out and measured it. The Minister's reply was to the effect that roads are always of a certain dimension, and that in future these roads would always be 12 feet wide. I can assure him that many sections of the road to which I am referring are not 12 feet wide. I do not make a mistake of 2 feet. I deliberately measured these varying widths because, in approaching an oncoming vehicle, it will be found that the dual wheels on each side of a cattle train or a semi-trailer are on the edge of the bitumen and wearing both edges at the same time.

No driver will deliberately drive with one set of wheels on the gravel and the other on the bitumen just to save the edge of the bitumen strip. It is only natural to think that he will keep to the middle of the road. Naturally he has to move over when passing another vehicle. However, I am talking about the constant wear to the bitumen edges. I mentioned this matter in my question to the Minister, and I repeat that this wear occurs. He said that the width of the road is governed by the amount of traffic that travels over it.

How many times have hon. members listened to talk about the narrow strip of bitumen that was laid by the Labour Government? We decided to give as much bitumen as we could throughout Queensland. Admittedly the bitumen strips were narrow, but they covered long distances and in those days they carried a lesser amount of traffic than they have to carry these days. At the present moment portions of the last section of this road, which is part of the beef-road network, are 10 feet in width.

I should like to bring to the notice of the Minister the matter of employing local labour in Main Roads camps. A much better understanding between his department and local people would be created if local people were

employed. I mention particularly Mt. Garnet. Some of the local people own trucks and water-trucks, but they could not obtain a job on that section of the road because the department employed men who lived in areas far removed from Mt. Garnet. That policy leads to a certain amount of discontent among local people. They thought that they would obtain jobs with the department when the road was being constructed close to their area. It would be to the benefit of the department to employ people who live in the area and do not have to travel 120 to 150 miles at the end of the week. If local people were employed they would have to travel only about 20 miles, with far less interference. (I am getting a fair amount of interference, on my right, Mr. Dean.)

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Dean): Order!

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** The Georgetown-Normanton road has been mentioned in the next section of the beef-road network that is to be sealed. I ask the Minister to consider surfacing the road through Croydon as the initial stage of that plan. Croydon has only a very small strip of bitumen and is isolated, with 98 miles on one side and 95 miles on the other side to the next town. Consequently, most vehicles rush through Croydon, creating a continuous dust haze and problem. I ask the Minister to commence the next stage of the plan by providing a bitumen road through Croydon so that early relief can be provided to its inhabitants. That improvement would also be enjoyed by people who shop in Croydon for meat and groceries, and by hotel guests.

The next road that I refer to is one that had me worried when I was first elected as a member of the House. I refer to the road that was referred to as the Dimbulah-Normanton road. On the map I see that it not only goes to Normanton but also to a place to which I gave a good deal of notoriety—Karumba. This is a very important road, because the road from Karumba is impassable for as long as five or six months of the year. It is no use having a thriving industry in a town if the only method of approaching it is by sea. Karumba is situated at the bottom of the Gulf of Carpentaria and is a long way from the markets. Refrigerated wagons from there ply as far south as Sydney, and it is fitting that they should be served with an all-weather road from Karumba to Normanton. It will not be an all-weather road until it is raised above its present level and sealed. It is a flat area, almost at sea level, so hon. members should have some idea of how far it will have to be raised before the 40-odd miles can be deemed to be an all-weather road.

The road from Dimbulah to Normanton runs in a north-westerly direction to Dunbar Station. Early in 1964 I asked the Minister if he would consider surveying the road and clearing it so that all money spent on it would be used on the permanent line

of the road. The Minister told me in reply that no funds were available to do this work. This is an important road, but, looking at the other map in the report showing the type of construction of the road, I see that there is only one small section designated as a single carriageway. Most of it is designated as a single carriageway, unformed. The road winds in and out amongst the trees, and whenever a deep rut or some other obstruction presents itself the driver winds his way through some more trees and starts another road. Later on, when a grader from one of the shires comes along, the driver grades whichever track is being used. All the money that is being spent is being used on different tracks. Surely it is easy to understand that if we were to undertake the initial cost of surveying the road lines, every penny spent later would be spent on the surveyed line. We would then have something worth while, and it would become a trafficable road much sooner.

This road serves many cattle stations, and the owners are prepared to service a telephone link on a surveyed road. They maintain that if the road is cleared there will not be so much danger of timber falling, and they are quite prepared to service the telephone line. It would be a wonderful boon for these outback people in so many ways. It would help them get medical attention and aid their businesses in ordering goods and getting cattle transported. The telephone is a much more reliable means of communication than the writing of letters or, in some instances, the use of radios.

The Mitchell River Aboriginal Community is also served by this road. I do not need to tell hon. members how interested I am in this area. I am interested because there are 600 people there, because it belongs to the Government and because so many promises have been made for so long. But nothing has happened. Nothing is happening to provide a means of communication for what I might call the most outstanding example of a self-supporting cattle station in the State. The people who are there will work, if they know that they are working for the community, although I will not say anything about the wages they receive. But how can they get the cattle out by this road? It is 360 miles to Chillagoe and if they drive them 10 miles a day it takes 36 days. How much weight would they lose by that antiquated method?

Government members are all talking about beef roads and beef trains, but it is impossible to bring cattle out of this area for more than three or four months of the year. That is why I ask the Minister to give urgent consideration to the plans and ideas I have submitted. I think there is a great deal of merit in them. If the road goes to Dunbar, it is only 70 miles farther to Mitchell River. I am not asking the Minister to provide a road to the Mitchell River area. If it went to Dunbar they could

drive the cattle 70 miles, but it is a different proposition to drive them 360 miles. This is the reason that the road from Dimbulah to Normanton, which puzzled me earlier, has now become so important to me. It is important to the Government, too, because it has such large commitments in that area. Once this is done a start should be made on the creek crossings, because it is the creek crossings that hold people up. One good storm and a creek crossing can be out, and it takes a good deal of time for a grader or other earth-moving equipment to travel 200 miles to repair it.

A beef road is only as good a road as its weakest link. Regardless of whether it is a bitumen road, a gravel road, or an unformed track, a boggy patch will form and people will be stopped there. Only recently the wife of the manager of Dunbar station had to seek medical attention for her ear. She was not allowed to fly. She went to Chillagoe by train and from there by truck. She got 30 miles the other side of Wrotham Park, and there she stopped. The truck coming from Dunbar station to meet her was not quite as lucky. It did not get there. There they were, hopelessly bogged. This illustrates what can happen and what these people have to put up with. That is not a fabrication or a story; it happened this year. This is why I am asking that consideration be given to surveying this road and having permanent work carried out on the correct lines.

The next road I intend to deal with is the Weipa road. There are many ways to get into and out of Weipa. Land communication could serve many people in this area. One of the places that could be served is the Edward River Aboriginal Settlement. No road is shown on the department's map from Weipa to Edward River. I mentioned this to the late Honourable E. E. Evans when he was Minister for Main Roads. He rang me one night and asked me what the road to Edward River was like, because the Government had to transport material to Edward River. I told him there was no road, but he would not believe me. He later realised that I was telling the truth, because when tenders were called the Government wanted somebody who was prepared to build the road before transporting the material. This is the way it is at the present time. This is another responsibility that the Government must face. These two settlements have 260 people and 600 people respectively, and all I am asking for is a road to get into them. My requests have fallen on deaf ears up to the present.

Coming nearer to home, I mention the Palmerston Highway. It is one of the most beautiful drives in North Queensland. Anybody who wants to see North Queensland's scenic beauty should go from Cairns to Kuranda, then to Millaa Millaa, and down the Palmerston Highway. In that way they would travel over this lovely scenic road

and see beautiful scenery, jungle country, open country, scrub country, forest country and the lowlands with the cane-fields and pineapple plantations. It is a very important road in that way. It is also important because the railway line to Millaa Millaa and Mt. Garnet has been pulled up and road transport is playing an important role. About four or five years ago there was a plan to progressively widen and straighten this road, but it was not carried out. I can remember the material being shifted from where it was stockpiled.

I do not know the department's present plans. I see in the report that 1 of a mile will be done somewhere to eliminate erosion. But something should be done along the lines of the improvement to the Gillies Highway. What a wonderful change was made on the Gillies Highway. I give full credit for this. It is now a double road, there are no gates, and it can now be traversed day or night in perfect safety.

I might also mention the number of trucks that now use the Palmerston Highway. I refer to tankers from the Malanda and Millaa Millaa milk factories. They are very heavy vehicles and are kept in first-class condition, but they contribute to the danger that is always present on the road. If hon. members could only see the near misses that there are on this road, I am sure they would realise that what I am saying is very important. If Innisfail is to be the railhead for the back country on the Tableland, the first thing to do is to remove the dangerous curves on the Palmerston Highway.

Some time ago I asked the Minister a question concerning "Give Way" signs. He did not give this matter very much thought. He said that experience overseas had shown that the presence of too many warning signs can result in a general lowering of effectiveness, therefore care is taken to ensure that such signs are erected only in situations where they are warranted. It is not necessary to go overseas; if the Minister will just come with me for a drive to Ravenshoe, I shall show him a road with a narrow, one-lane bridge at the bottom of a hill, without a "Give Way" sign.

**Mr. Row:** The same thing might happen to him as happened to you if he drove with you.

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** I shall tell the Minister how I suffered my injury in a moment; I am coming to that. I did not stay in bed, though; I kept on deck. I know a chap who stayed in bed and could not get to the bridge. Horatius opened the bridge for him. Never mind; we all meet our Waterloo in one way or another.

The Weir Creek bridge is a death trap. I remember asking in a question how many single-lane bridges there are in Queensland, which I think was a very pertinent question. I think that many fatal accidents are caused by single-lane bridges. I ask the Minister to send one of his officers to look at the

bridge over Weir Creek in the Ravenshoe district. He will then find out that what I am saying is correct. We are told that most accidents are caused by failure to give way, yet here is one place that is very dangerous where there is no "Give Way" sign.

Road markings are being removed and not replaced. The Minister said that this was being done, but those who remove them get so far ahead of those who are doing the marking that for weeks at a time there are no markings at all. I suffered my injury because there were two trucks parked on the road at night without any breakdown signs in position. Signs such as those can mean life or death to persons using the roads. Signs play a very important part in road safety, and I ask the Minister not to disregard them because of overseas experience. Do not compare roads in Ravenshoe or Mr. Garnet with those overseas. Different circumstances altogether apply.

I shall now leave the subject of roads and pass to mines.

I draw the Minister's attention to the two dredges and the treatment works at Irvinebank, which give employment to a large number of people in the production of tin. Without the dredges, there would be little of Mt. Garnet and Ravenshoe left, and, without the treatment works at Irvinebank, I doubt whether half-a-dozen houses there would be occupied.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. CAREY (Albert)** (9.5 p.m.): In the limited time at my disposal, I shall concentrate mainly on main roads. I believe that this great State, which extends from Cape York to Coolangatta and far into the West, has been so well served by the Government through the Main Roads Department that the story of the department's contribution to the development of various areas of the State by the construction of new roads is worth recording in "Hansard" in 1968.

First, I congratulate the Minister for Mines, Main Roads and Electricity, the Honourable Ron Camm, the Commissioner of Main Roads, Mr. Charles Barton, the Deputy Commissioner, departmental officers and engineers, as well as the workmen on the roads. They have all played their part in making Queensland roads better for motorists to drive on and assisting the development of the State.

No doubt each of us will say to the Minister, "You have done a good job, but you have not done enough." We all want a little more. I know I want much more for my area than the Minister and the department can give me. I want every cent I can get for the Albert electorate.

The department is doing an excellent job, and I want to be very fair as I develop my argument for more money to be spent in the Albert electorate. The report of the Commissioner shows that a great deal of money has

been spent in the two shires that are included in my electorate. In the 12 months ended 30 June, 1968, the Main Roads Department spent \$1,630,792 in the Albert Shire and \$853,284 in the Gold Coast City Council area. The total amount spent in the two areas was \$2,484,076. Jealousy is one of the curses of man, and I am certain other hon. members will say, "Why is so much spent in this area?"

**Mr. Pilbeam:** Good representation.

**Mr. CAREY:** It may be good representation, as the hon. member for Rockhampton South says; I hope it is.

**Mr. Hughes:** It is spent where it is needed.

**Mr. CAREY:** It is spent there because the public demands that it be spent there. No other area in Queensland comes within cooe of the amount of money that the Main Roads Department has spent in the Albert Shire and Gold Coast City Council area. There are 130 shires in Queensland—131 if one takes Thursday Island into consideration—and in Brisbane—I am very glad that the hon. member for Wavell is not here; he would be sure to attack me on this—the amount spent last year was \$1,486,474, which is only about half what was spent in the Albert Shire and Gold Coast City Council area. It should not be forgotten, either, that of the total amount spent on main roads in Brisbane, \$118,835 was spent on the Pacific Highway. That shows the importance of the highway from Brisbane to the border, and the people of this State are demanding that money should be spent on it. Every hon. member is aware that the Gold Coast is the greatest attraction for people in this city and for people in distant areas of the State. It is the playground of the Pacific; everyone wants to go there.

**Mr. Sherrington:** The North Coast would leave it for dead.

**Mr. CAREY:** I heard the hon. member for Salisbury say, "The North Coast would leave it for dead". I should just like to say, with great respect to my colleague the hon. member for Cooroola, David Low, that the North Coast is dead. Come and have a look at life on the Gold Coast.

**Mr. Sherrington:** What do you think about a casino on the Gold Coast?

**Mr. CAREY:** I see that the Labour Party's convention supports it wholeheartedly, but I want to make it very clear that the electors in my area would not condone a casino in the electorate of Albert.

I want to also commend the department for its forward planning. For many years it has been the policy of the Main Roads Department to plan ahead. In fact, some of the planning is done 20 years ahead, but we know the department has a five-year plan and endeavours to keep strictly to it. This is very good. It is forward planning,

which is essential in a growing State, particularly one growing so prosperous and so effectively and efficiently as Queensland is.

In one of my previous speeches in this Chamber, recorded in "Hansard", I said we would no sooner be finished the four-lane highway to the Gold Coast than it would be necessary to build a six-lane highway. It was very good to read in the annual report that planning has been completed for a six-lane highway from Slack's Creek to Beenleigh. This is evidently essential, because it is based on traffic counts and forward planning. The departmental officers do not just favour one area over another; they endeavour to favour the whole of the State. But they are compelled, because of the number of cars that travel on this road, to see that those cars have sufficient roadway on which to travel. The sooner the four-lane highway is completed, the better we will like it. I am very pleased that the design has now been completed. As a matter of fact, any day now a start will be made on the four-lane section from Pimpama to Coomera.

My colleague the hon. member for South Coast mentioned the Coomera bridge, which is in my area, but the whole of the road serves the areas of the hon. member for Logan and the hon. member for South Coast and my area, so anything that starts in Brisbane and brings traffic to the Gold Coast is important to three of us, who are Country Party representatives in this Chamber. At any time now I know that the first sod will be turned. There is some clearing going on now in the Pimpama-Coomera section, which will remove a very bad bottle-neck. As to the new bridge over the Coomera River, only recently the Minister informed me by letter that a contract worth more than \$20,000 had been let to Mr. P. Peachey, of Ormeau, for the building of embankments to enable the new above-flood-level Coomera bridge to be constructed.

I know that the department has also planned an inland bypass freeway. This is very important, because the demand by tourists and other road-users is such that it is most essential that they have a free flow to the Gold Coast and home again. This inland route will naturally be of great assistance to heavy vehicles coming from and going to southern States.

**Mr. Melloy:** What about the beach route?

**Mr. CAREY:** I am coming to that. The hon. member is so impatient. That was not a thought of his. I submitted it to this Chamber some four or five years ago. Apparently I impressed the hon. member for once in my life, and he is very hard to impress.

**Mr. Tucker:** How is it that David Low gets something named after him and you get nothing?

**Mr. CAREY:** I do not want to enumerate what David Low gets. He is doing very well for the number of people he has in his electorate. As a matter of fact, for many years people have recognised the wonderful service that the hon. member for Cooroora has given to the North Coast, because they return him at every election.

I know that it will be some time before the department can provide an inland route to the border, so I would rather see an alternative coast road provided with a bridge at Paradise Point. I am sure that many hon. members know the area very well. If the hon. member for Sandgate was here he would be able to back me up on this submission. We want a bridge from Paradise Point to Hope Island, and a road right along through Redland Bay to connect with the beautiful area that the hon. member for Logan represents. This would provide a bayside scenic road on which people could drive leisurely and pull up at the many tourist resorts en route. I say to the Minister and his officers that he should now plan a bridge across Coombabah Creek to Paradise Point. I do not want my electorate to get into the mess that Brisbane is in now. I heard the hon. member for South Brisbane complain bitterly about one of his constituents not being able to be recompensed for land that will be resumed in the near future. I want the department to resume a sufficient area of land now, while the land is so cheap, to build a four-lane highway from Coombabah across to Hope Island, up to Redland Bay, and eventually to the city.

**Mr. Harris:** You will end up linking with Wynnum.

**Mr. CAREY:** The way you spoke the other day, Mr. Harris, I am certain you—

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Smith): Order! The hon. member will please address the Chair.

**Mr. CAREY:** Thank you for getting me back on the track, Mr. Smith. I get so interested in what the hon. member for Wynnum has to say. He spent a long time the other day talking about the mud flats at the Manly boat harbour. A person can walk round the harbour; it is no good for harbouring boats.

While the land along this suggested route is very cheap it should be resumed, even if it is to be held for two, three, four or five years. Let us make sure that we get the land now that we require for the construction of this road.

I was very pleased to read in the report of the Commissioner of Main Roads that the money received this year from registration of vehicles has increased by about \$2,000,000. The intake has been \$20,664,404.

**Mr. Sherrington:** Sock the motorist.

**Mr. CAREY:** From the motorist. The hon. member for Salisbury, like his colleague, is getting a bit impatient.

Registrations have gone up by 32,784. It is quite evident to me that Opposition members have not really read the report and have got up and "pushed a barrow" that they did not know anything about.

I am a very firm believer in the idea that if the motorist gets better roads he is willing to pay for them. The motorists in my electorate certainly are, and I think those in other parts of the State are, too, because they can drive from Cairns to Coolangatta on a bitumen road except for some short sections that have to be replaced. When I was elected to Parliament in 1960 a motorist could travel only about a quarter of the distance on a bitumen road. As I say, if the motorist is provided with good roads he saves the amount that he pays in higher registration fees by having to incur fewer running repairs, by obtaining longer life for his tyres and by enjoying lower petrol consumption and lower general costs that go towards keeping a car on a road while it is being belted around by rough stones on unsealed roads, and I have not yet heard a motorist complain about the registration fees he has to pay if he has good roads to drive on.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**Mr. CAREY:** I suggest to hon. members opposite that if they were to preach the good gospel, as we do, people would understand that it is the right thing to do. The more money that flows to the Main Roads Department the better will be the roads throughout the State.

Now, I suggest to the Minister that surely his very effective and capable engineers can find some way to overcome the problem of broken windscreens. I give full credit to the engineers, the departmental officers and the workmen who keep the road shoulders in very good condition. I know that they must use graders on the shoulders and, of course in doing so, they stir up stones which are just big enough to go through windscreens when thrown up. Our roads are not brushed after the shoulders are graded. This problem is too big for me to tackle as a layman, but I believe that if the engineers set their minds to it they could find some way to overcome this problem.

I come now to a few hardy annuals that I have presented ever since coming into Parliament. I again ask the Minister to fully appreciate the importance of the electorate of Albert and the Gold Coast in general. I fully recognise that his department has done a wonderful job on the road from Oxenford to the top of Tamborine Mountain, which was known as the "do it yourself" road. It is now marvellous, but on the other end of Tamborine there is a winding, dangerous, unsafe track on which buses going from the top of the

mountain to Canungra have to negotiate corners that are so sharp that to round them it is necessary to reverse back and make two attempts. The road at Ravenshoe is nothing compared with his one.

**Mr. Tucker:** Aren't you going to say that the Labour Government built it?

**Mr. CAREY:** It was built under the Labour regime. It is known as the "goat track", because it was built in the years when goats used it quite frequently.

It is very important to the Tamborine people to have this road properly constructed as soon as possible. The only police station that the people on the mountain have access to, other than those at Southport and Beenleigh, is the one at Canungra. All official documents that they must attend to are taken to the police station or the post office at Canungra.

I ask the Minister as I have asked him many times before, to try to expedite this job. In fairness, I must say that the department told me that a survey has been made and that they are now trying to determine the most suitable place for the road, but that end of the mountain is very steep. I have every confidence that the job will be done.

**Mr. Melloy:** When funds are available.

**Mr. CAREY:** No. I think it is one of the five-year plans. I am looking forward to its being completed in 1970. If the department is proceeding with the road design, there is no way in the world that it will not get on with the job.

I ask the Minister to forge ahead with the gorge road from Canungra to Nerang, through to Southport. It is used by people at Tamborine and Canungra, and by the Canungra Army personnel. I think that if the Minister really set his shoulder to the wheel and visited the Department of the Army in Canberra he would receive a very large contribution to help him to establish this as a first-class bitumen road. (Opposition laughter.)

I do not see that it is a laughing matter. The soldiers use Southport and the Gold Coast as an R. and R. area. They have to drive trucks down this gorge road or go over Beechmont, which is not convenient. I am confident that if the correct approach was made by the Minister, the Army might contribute to this work.

I should like to see the Warwick-Boonah-Pcaudesert-Canungra Road bituminised. I know that a good deal of earthwork has been done. I know that there is about 7 miles of bitumen from Beaudesert into the Boonah Shire, but there is still quite a bit to be done. This will become a tourist road, another scenic road, and will take the heavy traffic off the Toowoomba Road. I know that the hon. member for Toowoomba West would like to see some of the tourist traffic to the coast go along the inland route.



**Mr. Duggan:** Is there a good view from this scenic road that you are talking about?

**Mr. CAREY:** I am surprised that the hon. member for Toowoomba West should ask such a question as that. He is a very intelligent man and knows what the word "scenic" means.

Speaking of speed limits, I point out that coming from Southport, past the Loganholme service station there is a 60-mile-an-hour limit. It is a four-lane highway, with two lanes each way. Then suddenly, about the approaches to the service station, the speed limit drops to 45 miles an hour. That is fairly reasonable and I have not much complaint about it, although I really do not understand why it is 45 miles an hour there. It is 60 miles an hour back along the road. The worst feature of it is that just over the hill past the Loganholme garage, and down the hill, there is a 35-mile-an-hour limit. That stretch of road is right out of any built-up area. There is one farmhouse to pass, admittedly. There may be some cattle going across the roadway, but, by and large, there is no traffic. I have never met any cattle on that road, yet there is a reduction to 35 miles an hour right over the two-lane bridge.

**Mr. Murray:** You are supposed to travel at 35 miles an hour, but the fact is that nobody does.

**Mr. CAREY:** I have been caught only once. I will not be caught again, because I cannot possibly afford to pay the fines.

I recently wrote to the Minister about another matter which I now want to deal with. In the 4 or 5 miles of road around Beenleigh there are four underpasses. It is a marvellously well-constructed road. An overhead bridge for children to get to school is being provided. I commend the department for all these improvements. But at Pimpama the same sort of thing could develop at any time. A farmer will not be able to get his cattle across the road once the new expressway is built. The Minister, in his wisdom, and being a very good primary producer who knows the problems that confront primary industry, will no doubt see that the department spends sufficient money to provide one underpass at Pimpama so that the cattle and stock belonging to these farmers can be shifted without having to be loaded onto trucks, which is far too costly.

Finally, I want to say a little about mines. This afternoon, the hon. member for Port Curtis said he was very disturbed to hear the Minister say that the Labour Government had undertaken nothing to assist the coal industry. I back the Minister in this matter and say that the Labour Government was an undertaker and wanted to keep the coal buried right down in the ground.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. E. G. W. WOOD** (Logan) (9.30 p.m.): I rise in the first place, to congratulate the Minister and the staffs of the Mines Department, the Main Roads Department, and the State Electricity Commission. The Minister is to be congratulated on the way in which he administers these departments which are so very important to the development of the State.

Within the next 10 years Australia must double its exports. It took 16 years to do that previously, and its ability to do it again will depend to a large extent on the mining industry. I listened to the hon. member for Toowoomba East when he dealt with nuclear power and its effect on the coal-mining industry, and I listened to another member last week referring to 100 years' use of coal. It has already been shown that in the Bowen area there are probably 10,000 million tons of coal, and certainly enough coal to cover exports for 500 to 600 years at a rate of 16,000,000 tons a year.

Nuclear power, as it is being developed at present in Britain, will certainly have some effect on the demand for coal. I know, of course, that coal will have its uses in the chemical industry, and I understand that coking coal will be used for a long, long time in the manufacture of steel. I therefore say that very much depends on the coal-mining industry, and the whole Cabinet is to be congratulated on its efforts to develop it.

On the subject of main roads, I should say that those of us who have had experience on local authorities can speak with authority, and we know that one of the worst possible menaces is the amateur financier, and even worse is the amateur engineer. I therefore have great sympathy with the Minister in his efforts to distribute funds among all the local authorities which constantly press for additional finance.

I disagree with the hon. member for Rockhampton South that loan funds should be used for the construction of main roads. We who serve on local authorities know very well how hard it is to obtain an equitable distribution of loan funds, and I would say that any attempt to divert some of that money to main roads work would have a very serious effect on local-authority finances. It should be clearly understood that a great deal of the State's loan funds are used on road and drainage work by local authorities, to which the State contributes handsomely by a 20 per cent. subsidy. Furthermore, the Commonwealth also makes a contribution. With matching grants, some \$5,000,000 is allocated to the various shires from Commonwealth aid funds. Local authorities would be very hard pressed to carry on without assistance from that fund.

Local authority contracts with the Main Roads Department have come in for some criticism in this Chamber. I, for one, say that local authorities co-operate more readily with the Main Roads Department than they do with any other Government department.

They depend a great deal on the revenue they receive from contracts that they carry out for the Main Roads Department. The department's plant operates very efficiently, and in most cases the work is completed for less than the estimated cost. It certainly seems that the department prefers to have the work done by local authorities.

I must take the Minister to task to some extent because I believe that local authorities could get a bigger share of the contributions towards the maintenance of roads. The Minister pointed out very clearly that, worked out on a mileage basis, the department receives 28 per cent. and local authorities receive 38 per cent. On those figures, of course, local authorities are getting a very good deal. However, I really have in mind the heavy traffic on the roads in the Redland Shire as a result of the sand-mining on Stradbroke Island. The Minister has said that he will review the position with that in mind; I hope he does. The coral sands are brought across the bay and heavy loads are being carried on the roads in the Redland Shire, and that is imposing a heavy financial burden on the council.

Local authorities are finding that interest and redemption payments on loans and percentage payments to the Main Roads Department for the various types of roads mentioned by the Minister in his introductory remarks are becoming rather a burden. About 40 or 50 per cent. of their total revenue is being used to meet interest and redemption charges, and I believe that the 30 per cent. of actual maintenance costs that councils are expected to meet for secondary main roads is somewhat high when compared with the figure for ordinary main roads.

I heard you speaking about various works that had been carried out in your electorate, Mr. Carey, and I congratulate and give you full marks on the effort you have made to provide access to the South Coast. Most of the development up to the present time has been in the Logan area. Of course, a start has to be made somewhere and the work then has to be carried through. As you know, Mr. Carey, the six-lane highway is in the Logan, as is the big bridge of which I have details here. I shall not go into further detail at this stage, but it was heartening to hear you say that you have the Minister's assurance that this four-lane and six-lane highway will be extended to the playground of Australia.

That brings me back to my own electorate.

**Mr. Hughes:** Do you support the concept of a new road through the islands, as suggested by the hon. member for Albert?

**Mr. E. G. W. WOOD:** No, I do not agree that a road should be built along the coast through the low lands at Woongoolba. The cane lands are too low.

**Mr. Hughes:** It would be a wonderful tourist attraction.

**Mr. E. G. W. WOOD:** Yes, but it is an engineering impossibility. The cane lands are too low to warrant such a road being built there.

It should be borne in mind that the Logan and Albert Rivers are two very important arteries in the agricultural areas. Dams are going to be built on those rivers. Salt water is coming too far up the Logan River into the agricultural country, and at some future date barrages must be constructed. The flooding of any road in that area would present a very serious problem. Hon. members would know how low-lying Woongoolba is, but once we get into God's own country, the Redlands, the position alters considerably.

I listen with very keen interest to the various debates on the proposed Wilbur Smith investigation and I know that my three shires, Beaudesert, Albert and the Redland Shire, are very keen to play their part in planning for the year 2000. Without any doubt the discontinued rail service to the Redlands will be replaced with an electric railway by that date. I do not think for one moment that it will go through Wynnum. I envisage that it will follow the direct route down through Capalaba. That belongs in the future and will have to be planned.

I thank the Co-ordinator-General for making Ricketts Road available to the Redland Shire because that will affect the whole road system which ultimately must be considered by the Main Roads Department in my electorate and those of the hon. member for Belmont and the hon. member for Wynnum.

By that road Thornlands to the Kangaroo Point bridge is a distance of 9 miles, and it will go into the eastern freeway at Tingalpa. We are, therefore, vitally interested in the original Wilbur Smith concept for transport in Brisbane. We are making sure that all future needs are co-ordinated.

In the area of Beaudesert, along the interstate railway, efforts are being made to develop industrial land. It has there thousands of acres of very well drained land that would be ideal for industry. It is on the interstate highway and ultimately will be developed along the lines of the Acacia Ridge complex. From that district, too, provision will have to be made for transport into the metropolis.

I was not concerned greatly by the information that the amount of money made available to the Brisbane area was smaller than that provided for outside beef lands and areas contiguous to them, because the capital itself depends on the whole of the State. Unless complete arterial roads are built—even from the very remote parts of the State—to the capital in order to attract the maximum amount of commerce to it, then the capital will die. I am sure that the Wilbur Smith planning will provide for

a great series of satellite towns, each of some 60,000 people, around Brisbane. There will be small cities surrounding this capital and I must agree that by then the concept of planning will have to be reconsidered.

We should consider this matter of regional planning under many headings, one of which is road transport. This planning is now embodying the whole Moreton region for review, and I agree that a central planning body should be set up to control all public utilities. We have broken the ice in the matter of a water supply, and we have a committee on which the local authority is strongly represented and will ultimately become part of the regional planning committee. The Co-ordinator-General has been a vital force in this State, and I do not propose to stand aside and see his powers lessened in any way. I am particularly pleased to see that a man such as Sir James Holt has been guiding the destiny of this State. He is well known to local authorities. It is time that a body like a co-ordinating planning committee was established to control all planning and all industrial development.

**Mr. Hughes:** You would support the call for town and regional planning?

**Mr. E. G. W. WOOD:** Yes, I would. I do not look upon it as does the hon. member for Kurilpa, but I do support it. I cannot see that the Greater Brisbane area should be split up. I do not believe that anyone can unscramble an egg. If the generation that follows me were to be given a cold chisel and a hammer to knock down the City Hall they would do so in a shorter time than it would take to split up the Greater Brisbane area. The establishment of satellite cities must come. On its periphery Greater Brisbane is developing at 5 per cent. compound, which is about three times the rate of development of Greater Brisbane. In the Redland Shire one house is being erected each day, and in the Albert Shire two houses are erected each day. Within a few years both those areas will accommodate 65,000 people, so the need for regional planning is very great to overcome the difficulties that are associated with that kind of development.

Another matter that affects the development of main roads is the supply of road-building materials. The local authorities have the power to resume certain areas for quarries. Let me deal with Stradbroke Island. On the island no material can be economically quarried except coral and rhyolite, which has to be crushed on the island. Brisbane will soon be faced with difficulties in obtaining sufficient quantities of road-building material. A planning authority to deal with problems of road-making, water transport and the provision of electricity must eventually be set up.

I, above everyone else, having regard to the area I represent, must thank the Minister in charge of main roads for the efforts made in my electorate. I have said previously that, under all headings, at least \$15,000,000 has been spent in the Logan area. Dealing only with main roads, the Mt. Lindesay Highway is being constructed, and another section has to be completed. Hon. members have already heard about the South Coast roads and the millions of dollars spent on them. The road bypassing Waterford is to have more work done on it. I want to look after the Scrubby Creek section particularly. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent on the roads on Stradbroke Island under the provisions of section 19. The Redland Shire Council could not have developed Stradbroke Island without assistance from the Department of Main Roads under section 19, and we will be forever grateful. The Minister played his part in recommending the opening up of the Woodridge area to the Acacia Ridge industrial complex with the \$50,000 matching grant handed over under section 19 to ensure that the Albert Shire, in conjunction with the Brisbane City Council, constructs this road to allow Acacia Ridge to draw on the work pool of Woodridge. I will not detail the other developments costing hundreds of thousands of dollars in the Redland Shire.

I still await development in the area represented by the hon. member for Belmont, not that I am worried about him, as I am really looking after my area. I want the main access road to the Redlands, from Capalaba to Belmont, completed as soon as possible. That road is not safe, as nowhere on it can vehicles pass in safety, although up to 6,000 vehicles a day use the road. It is true that much of it is in the Brisbane area, but to be fair about it many of the roads scattered around Brisbane are roads that the Department of Main Roads could develop in Brisbane. I hope that consideration will be given to developing the roads on the outskirts of Brisbane. I am not in any way selfish about it because I know that we on the periphery depend on Brisbane for much of our employment. A colossal number of people will be coming from the outer Brisbane shires to employment in the city. I will give very assistance to the Brisbane City Council to develop these arterial roads.

That concludes all I have to say.

**Opposition Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. E. G. W. WOOD:** I am sorry if my speech sounded a little dead. Bitter indulgence in personalities is a sure sign of a lost debate. After that cheering from the Opposition, I think I am entitled to say that if members of the Opposition want to debate death and disaster, they should deal with the A.L.P., because nothing is "deader" or more disastrous than that.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 9.54 p.m.