

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER 1969**

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

**QUESTIONS**

**DOCTOR'S FEES FOR BREATHALYSER TESTS**

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

(1) What extraordinary skill, warranting a fee of \$20, is required by a doctor to breathalyser test a person under suspicion of being under the influence of liquor?

(2) Is forty to sixty minutes per test, as stated in the Press by Dr. John Lynch, the average time taken?

(3) As an electrical contractor on a double-time service call, including travelling time and mileage, receives \$8, what warrants the payment of \$20 for each breathalyser test?

*Answers:—*

(1) "In addition to understanding how to operate the instrument, a doctor must have sufficient knowledge to be able to

explain to the Court any matters relating to the use of the breathalyser machine. He must be capable of assessing whether the person's condition is due to alcohol alone or to some other medical condition which could be co-existent and which would have symptoms similar to those of being under the influence of alcohol."

(2) "The time taken for the actual tests, plus observation of the patient and the writing of the certificate varies from thirty to forty minutes."

(3) "I don't pretend to any competence in assessing the relative merits of the skills of an electrical contractor and a medical practitioner."

#### LOAN REPAYMENTS BY BOWEN HARBOUR BOARD

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

(1) For what reason is the Bowen Harbour Board in arrears in instalments on recent loans?

(2) What are the Board's future prospects of being able to meet its commitments?

(3) What is the main volume of trade expected to pass through this harbour and is any major increase over previous years anticipated?

*Answers:—*

(1) "The traditional meat products and explosives trades through the harbour have been inadequate to support the Board's financial commitments."

(2) "The Board's arrears in loan instalments have shown some improvement in the financial year 1968-69 and a further improvement is budgeted for the current year."

(3) "Shipments of coal through Bowen harbour during the past 3 years have been 13,363 tons, 19,870 tons and 46,441 tons respectively whilst it is expected that 60,000 tons of coal will be exported during the current year. Whilst firm contracts have not been negotiated for coming years Dacon Collieries express confidence in a continuing and increasing export trade in coal."

#### H.M. THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO AUSTRALIA IN 1970

**Mr. Houston**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Labour and Tourism,—

When were Queensland's submissions for the 1970 Royal Visit made to the Commonwealth Director-General and what cities and/or other places were included in the Queensland itinerary?

*Answer:—*

"These are not matters coming within my purview."

#### SHORTAGE OF COURT REPORTERS

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to Judge Moynahan's statement in *The Courier-Mail* of September 11 concerning the shortage of court reporters and the effect of such shortage on work of the courts?

(2) What are the reasons for such shortages?

(3) What steps are being taken to rectify the position?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Yes."

(2) "Enquiries which were recently made indicate that there has been a substantial increase in the demands of tribunals for the production of transcripts. This requires additional reporters to service them. The increased demand for reporters arises also from the increase in the strengths of higher courts. In addition, since July 1, 1968, two male officers have obtained positions with the Commonwealth Public Service, and three female officers have resigned for personal reasons. One of the female officers has been reappointed temporarily."

(3) "Approval has been given to an increase in the effective staff establishment of the State Reporting Bureau by four reporters. Action has been taken to advertise in the *Government Gazette* and the daily press in Brisbane and southern capitals for reporters and assistant reporters and typists to provide for the additional appointments approved and to replace officers who have recently resigned."

#### INCLUSION IN HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARIES OF "THE AUSTRALIAN DRIVING MANUAL"

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

(1) Is he aware that the book, *The Australian Driving Manual*, was recently published on behalf of the Australian Automobile Association and that it has been credited with making a valuable contribution to driver education?

(2) If so, will he consider supplying this book in sufficient numbers to high school libraries to enable young persons to obtain the benefit of the knowledge contained therein, as part of a campaign to enable them to become more efficient vehicle drivers and to encourage them to assist in reducing the road toll?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Yes."

(2) "Principals and Head Teachers may use their library grant to purchase copies of this book if they so desire. It is considered, however, that the Road Safety

Manuals supplied to schools by the Road Safety Council provide excellent material on this subject."

SUPERANNUATION CONTRIBUTIONS BY  
PUBLIC SERVANTS CALLED UP FOR  
NATIONAL SERVICE

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

(1) Are Government officers, re-entering their former employment after having completed National Service, being charged interest on arrears of superannuation contributions if these are not paid in full?

(2) How many Government employees have been called up for National Service?

(3) What is the (a) total amount of arrears owed by these employees on re-entry to the service and (b) minimum and maximum amounts of arrears owed by individuals?

(4) How many have paid the amounts (a) in full on re-entry and (b) by deduction from their salary?

(5) What is the amount of interest charged in respect of arrears liquidated by deductions from salary?

(6) Is any endeavour made by the Superannuation Board to notify officers called up for National Service of any increase in contributions required because of increased salary classifications?

*Answers:—*

(1) "In terms of the *Public Service Superannuation Act 1958-1968*, and the *Defence (Re-establishment) Act of 1965* of the Commonwealth, interest is charged on the amount of outstanding contributions still owing one month after the expiration of the period of National Service Training."

(2) "Up to and including the National Service intake of July 7, 1969, 594 Government employees have been called up for National Service."

(3) "(a) Since the first intake of National Service Trainees in June 1965, the total amount of outstanding contributions of officers who have resumed duty to August 11, 1969, was \$9,941.35. (b) The minimum and maximum amounts of arrears owed by individual officers were 33 cents and \$186.44 respectively."

(4) "(a) 78. (b) 60."

(5) "Interest is calculated on the basis of anticipated repayment over a determined period and on this basis the approximate total amount at present of all officers would be \$250. However, this figure could vary considerably if officers subsequently elect to vary the rate of repayment by shortening or lengthening the time of repayment or increasing or decreasing the amount of instalments."

(6) "I refer the Honourable Member to replies given on March 20, 1968, to Questions asked by the Honourable Member for Mackenzie and to replies given on August 28, 1968, to Questions asked by him. Salary records are maintained by Departments who would make any adjustments arising from increased salary classifications. When an officer is called up for National Service Training the Department concerned is required to inform him of the arrangements he may make to pay his contributions to the Public Service Superannuation Fund during the period of National Service Training. Officers are advised that it is to their advantage to make allotments in excess of the required contributions as such excess will be used to offset any increased contributions which might be required because of increased rate of salary."

REGULATION OF THE KILLING OF  
KANGAROOS

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

Relative to the oft-expressed concern regarding the conservation of kangaroos in combination with a 'roo meat industry—

(1) Are kangaroos in sufficient numbers in most recognised marsupial areas in Queensland to sustain a regulated harvest and retain a constant population?

(2) With a view to conserving such a constant population, how can he encourage restraint on the taking of 'roos below 28 lbs. dressed weight?

(3) Is he considering measures to license shooters, both professional and experienced part-time, to preclude irresponsible elements that maim marsupials, shoot domestic animals and damage property?

(4) Will he give priority to established kangaroo abattoirs employing local labour, over temporary chiller boxes whose owners have only a passing interest in a particular area?

(5) Has Queensland consulted with New South Wales authorities with a view to ensuring equivalent controls in both States?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Yes. The position is being kept under continuous observation. Some concern is presently being felt that following restrictions imposed on harvesting in New South Wales, a greater number of shooters is operating in Queensland. This has led to my recent decision to restrict the issue of further permits for chiller-box sites."

(2) "Legislative measures to prohibit the taking of small kangaroos would not be wholly practicable even with a team of inspectors. However, the industry itself generally observes a 28 lb. limit. Statistical returns obtained from a boning room

handling some thousands of kangaroos per week show an average weight for a week in March, 1969, as 35.72 lb. and for a week in July, 1969, as 37.19 lb. The taking of small kangaroos is not considered to be a cause for concern at present and as no new permits for chiller-box sites are now being issued, it should not be a cause of future concern."

(3) "Yes."

(4) "Yes, as a general principle."

(5) "Yes. Agreement has been reached that a common royalty rate should apply in both States and that legislation should be complementary. Steps to this end are in hand."

#### MAINTENANCE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL GROUNDS, TOWNSVILLE

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

In view of the large area of some primary school grounds in Townsville and the burden placed on parents and citizens' associations to keep these grounds in a tidy and usable condition, has any firm decision been made that the Department will assume all or part of the responsibility for this work and, if so, to what extent and under what conditions?

*Answer:—*

"It is anticipated that Janitor/Groundsmen will be appointed to class I and class II State primary schools as from January 27, 1970. One of the duties of such appointee will be the maintenance of the school grounds."

#### POLICE-CITIZENS YOUTH WELFARE ASSOCIATION'S ART UNION

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

What action is contemplated consequent on my remarks concerning an art union conducted by the Police Boys' Welfare Association and his perusal of the documents in connection with the case, made available by me at his request?

*Answer:—*

"The papers relating to the matter of the second prize in the Queensland Police-Citizens' Youth Welfare Association's Art Union drawn on December 23, 1968, including those produced by the Honourable Member for Townsville South as well as the official files, have been examined. As stated by the Honourable Member, the tickets sold in this particular Art Union, as regards the second prize, read—'Aladdin's Record'—3-year-old brown filly (unraced) by 'My Aladdin' ex 'Court Record', fully insured and 'Trailco' horse-float, type 9030S fully registered—Value

\$2,600. The first prize in the Art Union was a 1968 Fairmont Cruiser-matic Sedan, ready for the road and Chesney 15 ft. Pacemaker Caravan with extras, fully registered, value \$5,275, and the third prize was a 1968 Cortina 440 sedan with 1300 motor, ready for the road, value \$2,168. There was also a ticket seller's prize. The filly which was part of the second prize had been donated to the Association promoting the Art Union, and was valued at, and insured for \$2,000. The retail price to the public of the horse-float was then \$800 and there appears to be no question that the horse-float was not then of the value of \$600. The filly, 'Aladdin's Record', on August 12, 1968, prior to the issuing of the permit for the conducting of the Art Union, was examined by a veterinary surgeon, Mr. R. R. Pascoe, M.V.Sc., M.R.C.V.S., at 'Cotswold Hills' Toowoomba, where the filly was then located. This examination was for the purposes of insurance of the filly by the Queensland Police-Citizens' Youth Welfare Association. Insurance is required on these occasions to the full value of the animal by the Art Union Office. The filly was found at this examination and reported by the veterinary surgeon to be in good condition, with its teeth normally developed and its vision, gait, respiration and lungs, heart, pulse and temperature normal. As regards the condition of the filly, it appears that on April 18, 1969, at the instance of the winner of the second prize, Mr. W. J. Hunt of Garbutt, the filly was examined by veterinary surgeon, Mr. W. R. Mills, B.V.Sc., who also found the filly in good health and condition but who also added the following remarks—'Abnormal wear of the leading edges of the incisor teeth and displacement of the off upper lateral temporary incisor tooth indicates a chronic wind-sucker. This is confirmed by stud-master C. Waugh. This filly is quiet and handled to lead. A muscular depression on the off side neck is of no practical significance.' On April 19, 1969, the filly had been again examined by veterinary surgeon R. R. Pascoe, M.V.Sc., M.R.C.V.S.,—on this occasion at Rushlands Stud on behalf of the Australian Estates Ltd., acting for Mr. Hunt. Mr. Pascoe, when forwarding his certificate on May 1, 1969, following this last examination, stated—'This filly is definitely a wind-sucker. I previously examined this filly at Cotswold Hills Stud, Toowoomba, late in 1968, for insurance purposes only, not for soundness. At the time of examination, the filly was held by the stud-groom, and at no time showed any indication of wind-sucking. Wind-sucking is not a condition which effects insurance examination—only soundness examination.' Inquiries reveal that as regards this condition, it is not a disease but may be defined as a vice. A vice may be defined as a reflection of the animal's basic personality, acquired or inherited. It may indicate nervousness, viciousness, fear, curiosity or excessive energy. The seriousness of a vice depends

largely on its effect and on the steps necessary for its suppression. In the case of 'wind-sucking' its effects are principally seen in the unstabled paddocked horse, and such animals fail to thrive. Where a horse is stabled and well attended, fed and groomed, 'wind-sucking' is merely an annoying habit and does not affect the animal's condition. There have been quite a few instances of top performing horses with this vice, one such horse being the quite well-known Queensland galloper, 'Harmonise'. As far as the prevention of this condition, many horses can be stopped merely by placing a broad leather strap snugly around the throat. More persistent cases may require the use of a device called a 'cribbing strap' and lastly, it is possible by means of one or other of two operations to correct this condition successfully. However, so far as the Queensland Police-Citizens' Youth Welfare Association is concerned, this filly at the time of the conducting of the Art Union, was unknown by the Association to be a wind-sucker. Moreover, the Manager of the Association has been since assured that the filly was not a 'wind-sucker' prior to its transfer from Cotswold Hills Stud to Rushlands Stud—several weeks after the drawing of the Art Union. I now refer to the inquiries made as to the value of the filly 'Aladdin's Record' as at the time of the conducting of the Art Union. 'Aladdin's Record', it appears, on pedigree, had excellent potential as being a good race mare and, when retired to the stud, as becoming a good brood mare, being a full sister of 'Allemande', winner of eight races. 'Aladdin's Record's' dam is an imported mare 'Turkala', a winner in England and the dam of winners; also through the sire 'My Alladin' who was one of the best performed horses to come to Queensland. Amongst his wins in England was the Epsom Blue Ribbon Stakes worth \$14,000. He is already the sire of winners from five furlongs to a mile and a-half including the outstanding staying prospect, 'Paiya'. 'My Alladin' has since been sold to New Zealand. While a valuation of the progeny by 'My Alladin' has not been obtained, 'My Alladin' stood at Cotswold Hills Stud for a service fee of \$650 and was well received by brood mare owners—his progeny selling to \$3,000. 'Aladdin's Record' was foaled on 10th August, 1965 at Cotswold Hills Stud and her valuation of \$2,000 in view of her breeding, potential and soundness, as placed upon her by the donor and accepted by the Queensland Police-Citizens' Youth Welfare Association, appears, from inquiries, to have been a reasonable one. The Insurers were willing to insure the filly for that figure. The filly, it appears, is progressing well in training and time may well confirm her value of \$2,000 at the time of the conducting of the Art Union. The sales referred to by the Honourable Member occurred after the conducting of the Art Union. The Queensland Police-Citizens' Youth Welfare Association, members of

which include responsible public officials and leading businessmen, denies that any misrepresentation, wilful or innocent, has been made in this matter and that at all times it acted in good faith in the matter. This Association also intends in the near future to promote a further Mammoth Art Union but, in view of the complaint which has been made, it does not intend to include any animal as a prize in that Art Union."

#### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY FOR CHILLAGOE

**Mr. Wallis-Smith**, pursuant to notice, asked  
The Minister for Local Government,—

In view of the growing importance of the tourist attractions at Chillagoe and the mining and grazing activity in the district, will he consider the extension of the electric power supply to Chillagoe?

*Answer:—*

"I am advised that the Cairns Regional Electricity Board at its meeting on August 29, approved of the extension of electricity to Chillagoe Township subject to a satisfactory level of acceptance of the Board's conditions of supply by prospective consumers in the area."

#### NORMANTON—GEORGETOWN BEEF ROAD

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

In view of increased heavy traffic on the Normanton—Georgetown road, which causes rapid deterioration of the road surface and consequently heavy expenditure for reconditioning, will he consider the early sealing of this section, in addition to the section at present under construction, by having other sections commenced westwards and eastwards from Croydon?

*Answer:—*

"This road is included in the Seven Year Programme for which the Commonwealth is providing grants under the Commonwealth Beef Roads Acts, and the programme of Commonwealth Beef Road funds, together with normal Main Roads funds, provides for a total expenditure of \$3,800,000. The Honourable Member should be aware that the section west from Georgetown towards Somerset Creek is already under construction and work is well advanced. A tender will be accepted within a few days for a bridge over Little River and plans for the next section of 28 miles west from Somerset Creek are nearly completed. Work is also planned on the Croydon-Normanton section."

PIG SECTION, KAIRI EXPERIMENTAL FARM

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

(1) Has he received a request from the Northern Pig Producers' Association for the retention and improvement of the pig section at the Kairi experimental farm?

(2) What plans have been made for the future of this section?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Yes—the Secretary of the Far North Queensland Commercial Pig Producers' Association, Mr. S. G. Boundy, has sought an assurance that the piggery at the Kairi Research Station will be kept open and improved to modern standards."

(2) "Staffing and reconstruction of facilities for the Kairi piggery are proving difficult problems but Mr. Boundy has been advised that before making a final decision on the future of the Kairi piggery I am prepared to consider any suggestions which the industry may care to submit on matters calling for research, particularly those which would have specific application in North Queensland or which for some particular reason cannot be satisfactorily handled at some other Station. To date no submission has been received from the Association."

FILM PROJECTOR SCREENS IN STATE SCHOOLS

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

(1) Are screens provided with film projectors issued to State schools? If not, will he consider providing them?

(2) Is he aware that within two days of a projector arriving at a school, a salesman representing a firm selling screens presents himself canvassing orders?

(3) Is there any arrangement between the Education Department and any private firm in this regard? If not, how does information of projector deliveries become available to salesmen?

*Answers:—*

(1) "A special screen is supplied with each film projector."

(2) "No."

(3) "No. I do not know how the information becomes available."

USE OF COLOURING IN BUTTER

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

(1) Is it proposed to take any action to ban the use of colouring matter in butter produced in Queensland?

(2) Has any inquiry been made into the use of colouring matter and is it considered to have any deleterious effects?

*Answers:—*

(1) "The Food and Drug Regulations prohibit the addition of any foreign substance except salt to butter. This means that no artificial colouring can be added to butter."

(2) "The Food and Drug Regulations also set out the colours and their amounts that may be added to food in general. These are those recommended by the Food Additives Committee of the National Health and Medical Research Council and considered by that Council to be safe."

ELECTROENCEPHALOGRAPH MACHINE FOR TOWNSVILLE GENERAL HOSPITAL

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

Will he have inquiries made into the necessity for the installation of electroencephalogram equipment and the provision of qualified staff for its operation at the Townsville General Hospital, with a view to obviating the necessity for patients to travel to Brisbane to have tests performed and also to be readily available in times of emergency?

*Answer:—*

"Yes. When the supply of an Electroencephalogram machine for Townsville Hospital was considered previously, the matter was referred to medical specialists who are conversant with the use of this equipment. The concensus of opinion was that several difficulties would have to be overcome before approval was given for the supply of the machine. Practice in the use of an Electroencephalogram is not part of the ordinary course in Medicine and the specialist using the machine should have reasonable neurological competence. In addition the officers actually operating the machine need special training. Following this report these matters are receiving further consideration."

COMBINING OF OFF-COURSE AND ON-COURSE TAKINGS BY T.A.B.

**Mr. Bennett**, pursuant to notice, asked The Treasurer,—

(1) What is the method of combining the off-course and on-course pools in connection with race takings on the T.A.B.?

(2) Why is there a difference in the procedure in Queensland when there is racing on Saturdays and when there are provincial mid-week race days?

(3) Is there any reason for combining the off-course and on-course pools for racing in other States on Saturdays and divorcing the pools from the provincial clubs for mid-week racing?

(4) Are clubs at Bundamba, Southport and other large provincial race-tracks at a disadvantage because the off-course takings in respect of interstate betting are not put through the provincial totalisators?

(5) On provincial mid-week race days when there is an off-course dividend for Sydney, an on-course dividend at Bundamba and an off-course dividend in Queensland, are they the same?

(6) When Queensland people are investing money through the T.A.B. on southern races, is there any reason why mid-week racing clubs should not get some advantage from the investment?

(7) Is there any necessity for on-course and off-course dividends in Queensland?

(8) Why was the system changed approximately two years ago when machines were installed at Bundamba racecourse to handle southern betting and after the machines had been in use for only three or four weeks?

(9) What has the club at Bundamba racecourse lost in totalisator commission as a result of this change in procedure?

(10) As a result of the change, does any other authority lose money except the club concerned and the Government itself?

(11) Does the T.A.B. lose anything by allowing provincial clubs to handle southern betting on commission through their own totalisators?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Individual horse totals invested off-course are advised to the on-course totalisator."

(2 and 3) "The size of the on-course pools on Saturdays is sufficiently large to be a worthwhile contribution in a combined pool. This is not so with interstate betting on provincial mid-week race days."

(4) "Bundamba is the only provincial meeting which at present conducts a totalisator on southern events. It is a matter of conjecture whether transmission of T.A.B. investments to this totalisator would increase on-course investments and hence the amount of commission paid to the club on that increased on-course investment. I remind the Honourable Member that no commission is paid to the club when the T.A.B. pool is transmitted on-course."

(5) "No."

(6) "Provincial race clubs do get an advantage from the investment."

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

(8) "The system was not changed some two years ago—it was changed on March 1, 1965. The machines were installed in October, 1966."

(9) "See Answer to (4)."

(10) "There is no loss to any authority, club or the Government."

(11) "No. See Answer to (2 and 3)."

**Mr. BENNETT** (South Brisbane): Mr. Speaker, rather mysteriously a very important question of a public nature that I gave notice of on Thursday has disappeared from the Business Paper. It was one of great magnitude and concern.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The question has not disappeared from the Business Paper; it was never on it.

**Mr. BENNETT:** I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that I gave notice of it.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member was advised on Thursday that his question was disallowed. I do not know why he chooses to raise this matter at this hour. If he wishes to know the reason, he will find it on pages 352 and 353 of May's Parliamentary Practice, under the heading, "Examples of Inadmissible Questions".

**Mr. BENNETT:** With respect, Mr. Speaker, I think that action of this nature is certainly contempt of Parliament. It stinks!

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. Aikens:** You are not standing over a Judge now.

**Mr. BENNETT:** I would not have to.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member also knows full well that the disallowance of a question cannot be made the subject of a debate. I ask him to please remain seated.

**Mr. BENNETT:** Mr. Speaker, under Rule 110—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. BENNETT:** Can't I even make a request?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. BENNETT:** We might as well conduct Parliament by correspondence.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. BENNETT:** We might as well write letters to somebody.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member is debating the disallowance of a question.

**Mr. BENNETT:** I am not debating anything, but under Rule 110 I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. BENNETT:** Are we going to be gagged or not?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. BENNETT:** You are not game to tell us the truth.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member is trying to debate the disallowance of a question.

**Mr. BENNETT:** I do not want to debate it at all.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** If the hon. member continues to interrupt the proceedings of the House, I will have to deal with him under Rule 123A.

#### COMPULSORY THIRD-PARTY INSURANCE COVER

**Mr. R. E. Moore,** pursuant to notice, asked The Treasurer,—

(1) As third-party insurance is obligatory on all motorists in Queensland, what statutory requirements exist to compel insurance companies to accept such insurance?

(2) If none exist, does the State Government Insurance Office accept insurances which private companies have declined?

(3) If not, will he investigate the possibility of establishing a special fund to meet compulsory third-party insurance and have the premium included in the registration fee in such cases?

*Answers:—*

(1) "There is no statutory law in this direction. The motorist has a freedom of choice of insurer and the insurer considers he should have freedom of choice of client."

(2 and 3) "It is common practice for the State Government Insurance Office to accept compulsory third-party insurance which other insurers have declined. I do not consider any insurer should be compelled to provide cover, at the prescribed rates, if, for instance, a person has a record of persistent convictions or driving incidents, nor should a special fund be established for the purpose. Whilst the State Government Insurance Office continues to command a representative share of the available market, the Honourable Member can be assured it will continue to provide cover for all but exceptional cases."

#### USE OF WATER FROM FITZROY RIVER BARRAGE

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

(1) Has an approach been made by either the Fitzroy Shire Council or the Rockhampton City Council for the convening of a meeting of the likely users of water from the Fitzroy Barrage, for the purpose of formulating the most suitable arrangements for supplying water as cheaply as possible to all users including the residents of Gracemere? If not, would he be prepared to preside at such a meeting if requested by one of the Councils?

(2) Will he give consideration to setting up a Fitzroy River Barrage Consumers' Committee for the purpose of investigating and advising on the use of the Fitzroy Barrage water, over and above the requirements of the Rockhampton City Council? If so, will he consider inviting representatives from the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, the City and Shire Councils and members of the respective water users to act on such a committee?

*Answers:—*

(1) "I have not been approached on the matters raised."

(2) "The matter raised would appear to be outside my administration."

#### BALONNE-CULGOA RIVER SYSTEM

**Mr. McKechnie** for **Mr. Hungerford,** pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Conservation,—

In view of the Press statement dated May 9, by the Acting Minister for Local Government and Conservation, Honourable A. M. Hodges, concerning the better distribution of the Balonne River flows—

(1) Has the report been completed and investigated?

(2) If so and it is satisfactory, will the Government urgently consider the building of the structure at the Culgoa-Balonne bifurcation?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Due to the many urgent commitments in which the Irrigation Commission has become involved, due to the continuing drought, it has not yet been possible to complete the report on proposals for better distribution of flows in the Balonne-Culgoa River System. However, the work is well advanced and completion and presentation to the Border Rivers Commission is expected in the near future."

(2) "Although the report is not yet available, the Border Rivers Commission has provided in its Estimates for 1969 some provision for commencement of construction of the proposed structures in the event that the proposals are approved. The first of these would be the structure at the Balonne-Culgoa bifurcation."

REDUCTION OF LEGAL MINIMUM AGE  
FROM 21 TO 18 YEARS

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

In regard to meetings of the Commonwealth and State Attorneys-General and reports that their discussions will result in the reduction of the legal minimum age from 21 to 18 years uniformly throughout Australia, which will allow 18-year-olds to sign contracts, marry, make wills, vote, negotiate mortgages, etc., will recommended changes that have been under consideration involve all consequential matters concerned with the age of majority, including payment of the adult wage at the age of 18 years?

*Answer:—*

"No recommendations have as yet been made by the meetings of the Commonwealth and State Attorneys-General concerning the reduction of the legal minimum age of 21 to 18 years uniformly throughout Australia. The whole matter is still under examination."

STIPENDIARY MAGISTRATE'S RESIDENCE,  
CAIRNS

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

Further to his Answer to my Question on September 5, 1968, concerning the replacement of housing allocated to the Stipendiary Magistrate at Cairns, will new accommodation be made available for the next appointee to take up tenancy and, if not, when can it be expected that a new house will be constructed?

*Answer:—*

"Although the residence originally allocated to the Stipendiary Magistrate, Cairns, is beyond economical repair, it is occupied by a clerk on the condition that he vacate it if it is required for occupation by an incoming magistrate. Provision has been made in the Housing Programme for Country Public Servants for 1969-70 for the replacement of this residence on a new site. As plans have not yet been prepared, I am unable to state when construction will commence."

OFFICE OF PAYMENT OF VEHICLE  
REGISTRATION FEES, CAIRNS

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

Has any consideration been given to the proposal for transferring from the Justice Department to the Main Roads Department the responsibility of receiving payments of vehicle registration fees in Cairns?

*Answer:—*

"The transfer of registration business from clerks of the Magistrates' Courts

Offices to Main Roads District Offices in general, or in Cairns only, would not at this stage be practicable or of any advantage."

CONTROL OF MURRAY VALLEY  
ENCEPHALITIS VIRUS IN  
INNISFAIL AREA

**Mr. F. P. Moore**, pursuant to notice, asked  
The Minister for Health,—

In view of the editorial in the *Cairns Post* of June 28 stating that specimens of mosquitoes examined for their potential for carrying the encephalitis virus were collected from the Mitchell River and Innisfail areas, and of the Answer to a Question asked by the Honourable Member for Cairns on September 10, where were the specimens found in the Innisfail area and what action has been taken to eradicate this particular disease-spreader in that area?

*Answer:—*

"The Director of the Queensland Institute of Medical Research has advised that extensive research on infectious diseases in the Innisfail Area was carried out from the years 1951 to 1965. Mosquito-borne viruses were found to present only a minor problem there. No evidence has been found of the occurrence of Murray Valley encephalitis in this area."

NEW SUPREME COURT HOUSE FOR  
TOWNSVILLE

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

What is the present position in regard to the provision of a new Supreme Court building in Townsville and when is it anticipated that construction will commence?

*Answer:—*

"Preliminary planning of the new building is at present in hand. It is expected that documents will be prepared in time for the invitation of tenders during the first half of 1971."

NEW ACCOMMODATION BLOCK, HEATLEY  
STATE HIGH SCHOOL, TOWNSVILLE

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

(1) Are any plans presently in existence for a new accommodation block at Heatley State High School, Townsville, and have the costs been estimated?

(2) If so, have any funds yet been allocated for the building of such a block, when was Executive Council approval given and when is it expected that building will commence?

Answers:—

(1) "Plans are presently being prepared for a further classroom block at Heatley State High School and an estimate of cost will be prepared as soon as plans are completed."

(2) "See Answer to (1)."

PRISON TREATMENT AND TRAINING OF  
MISS NANCY YOUNG

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

(1) Because so many people have been appalled at the happenings to Miss Nancy Young, who was convicted in April of manslaughter, is appropriate action being taken to make Miss Young a better mother and is she segregated from other hardened female criminals?

(2) In view of the fact that this was a most controversial case, will Miss Young be given specialist treatment and taught hygiene, nutrition, and the elements of dressmaking and good housekeeping?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "Miss Nancy Young who is confined in the Women's Section at Brisbane Prison is not segregated from other female prisoners. No female prisoner at present is regarded as a hardened criminal. The term is often used but seldom understood by those who use it. Miss Young who is 29 years of age, has already given birth to ten children, some of whom, according to her own admission, have different fathers. This prisoner again became pregnant during the period she was on remand awaiting trial and consequently she is not required to perform much work. She assists in the preparation of food for cooking. Although her health is good, she receives full medical treatment and a trained sister is in attendance at the Prison at least five days a week and whenever required. She is taught hygiene, as strict hygiene and cleanliness is practised in the Prison and all prisoners are made to conform with the requirements in that regard. The health standards in the Female Prison are of a very high scale. This prisoner has been taught needlework (knitting and straight sewing) as her condition does not enable her to work on Prison is such that all prisoners have the opportunity to see and participate in good machines. The general management of the housekeeping. Unfortunately, Miss Young is like a number of other people in prison who are not very interested in these subjects."

FORM OF QUESTION

Dr. CRAWFORD (Wavell) proceeding to give notice of a question—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member appears to have a great deal more material in the question than is necessary to make it intelligible. I will need to have a good look at it.

PAPERS

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

Reports—

Licensing Commission, for the year 1968-69.

Chief Inspector of Factories and Shops, for the year 1968-69.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

The Forestry Act 1959-68.

The Harbours Acts, 1955 to 1968.

The State Electricity Commission Acts, 1937 to 1965.

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

Reports—

Eighth Annual Report (1969) of the Totalisator Administration Board of Queensland.

Audit Inspector's Report on the Books and Accounts of the Queensland Coal Board for the period from 1 September, 1968, to 28 July, 1969.

Report of the Queensland Coal Board of its Financial Accounts for the year 1968-69.

At 12 noon,

*In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 17, the House proceeded with Government business.*

ADDRESS IN REPLY

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—SIXTH ALLOTTED DAY

Debate resumed from 11 September (see p. 513) on Mr. Hungerford's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Mr. RAMSDEN (Merthyr) (12 noon): In entering this debate, may I first offer to His Excellency the Administrator, Mr. Justice Sheehy, the congratulations which are due to him for the admirable way in which he opened the Thirty-ninth Parliament, when he stood in for the Chief Justice, Sir William Mack. I know that I speak for every member of the House when I express sincere regret at the illness of Sir William Mack. We hope for his swift recovery to good health. We also offer our sympathy to Lady Mack.

We Queenslanders were pleased to know that His Excellency the Governor, Sir Alan Mansfield, represented the people of Queensland at the investiture of His Royal Highness Prince Charles as Prince of Wales, at Carnarvon Castle.

Having said that, may I offer personal congratulations to the hon. member for Balonne who moved the adoption of the Address in Reply and the hon. member for Wavell who seconded that motion. Both of those members bring to the Chamber a wealth of specialised knowledge, one in the fields of primary industry and local government, and the other in the fields of medicine and surgery. The House must be the richer for their presence and knowledge and the contributions they will make in committee, in caucus and in this Chamber. I congratulate other new members who have earned the right to be here, by the common vote, to represent their electors in this Chamber. Indeed, we see here the implementation of the old rule of government of the people by the people for the people.

**Mr. P. Wood:** You are kidding.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** I do not think that I am kidding. I may be in the case of the hon. member who interjected. He may not represent his electors. But this is self-decided.

**Mr. Bennett:** Caruso wrote this for you. How is your old mate Caruso?

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** If the hon. member for South Brisbane has to get back to court, I wish that he would go back of his own accord and not wait to be thrown out. He has been trying all morning to get thrown out. I hope that he will leave so that I can continue in peace.

We have been accused of so gerrymandering the electorates that we are here because of that system and not because of the voice of the people.

**Mr. P. Wood:** That is so.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** If that is so, as my naive friend on my right claims, why is it that in the State election 11 A.L.P. members and 17 Liberal members were returned for the 28 electorates in the city of Brisbane whereas 22 A.L.P. aldermen and six C.M.O. aldermen were elected to the Brisbane City Council to represent the same electoral districts? If that is gerrymandering, we did a very bad job of it indeed, giving the A.L.P. a commanding position in the council.

On 6 August, 1969, the Administrator, when opening this Parliament, said—

“I would not like to let the occasion pass, without briefly paying a personal tribute to the Parliamentary Institution, the bulwark of democracy.

“To me, Parliament at its best, represents the finest institutional system yet devised by man, for the just and orderly conduct of the affairs of the Community of which he forms part.

“It naturally follows, that it should be the constant endeavour of both electors and elected, to keep it functioning at its very best.”

I draw the attention of hon. members specifically to the words—

“. . . the finest institutional system yet devised by man, for the just and orderly conduct of the affairs of the Community of which he forms part.”

We are all aware of the weaknesses and frailties of the parliamentary system and democracy. For instance, when I had the privilege of representing Queensland at the meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in Uganda two years ago, I did not have the opportunity of meeting one member of the Opposition in that country. All delegates received a letter from the Leader of the Opposition, who was in exile, and it was brought to our notice that certain Opposition members were in gaol.

**Mr. Bennett** interjected.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** As a matter of fact, it might not be a bad idea to put the hon. member for South Brisbane in exile.

Other Opposition members had been “eliminated”—killed in the revolution, gaoled, or forced to live in exile. We are therefore all aware of the weaknesses existing in some parliamentary democracies.

I believe that we are also all aware of the weaknesses of the party system, for parties are subject to policies passed by conferences, conventions and the like. Often such resolutions are not in fact the wishes of the electors as a whole but merely the wishes of the members of the party, yet these cause governments either to fall or not to be returned.

We might therefore well ask ourselves what is this bulwark of democracy, this Parliament? What is the role of a member of Parliament in the modern age? As I see it—I may be wrong, but I think not—the job of a member of Parliament is to be, to use a commercial term, the middleman between his party and the people of the electorate. His job, as I see it, is to present his party's policies to the people, and his people's needs, desires and requirements to his party. If democracy is to function perfectly, that would be the system, and, if it functioned perfectly, party policy would always reflect not only what was best for the people but what the vast majority wanted. When the majority did not want what was best for them, the member who knew his job should be able to convince his people that his party's policy was right for them.

In other words, no member of Parliament can afford to live in the ivory castle called Parliament House and close his ears to the sounds, and his eyes to the sights, of his people and their needs and aspirations. It is his duty and task to see that his constituents get their lawful entitlements and do not suffer injustices at the hands of departmental officers or Ministers of the Crown.

It is not the duty or responsibility of a member of Parliament to obtain for his constituents privileges and rights to which others in similar circumstances, and subject to the same laws, are not entitled.

Let us again return to His Excellency's words. He said—

"It naturally follows that it should be the constant endeavour of both electors and elected to keep it functioning at its very best."

In this regard, I must comment on two matters already mentioned. The first was that raised by the hon. member for Sandgate when he said that His Excellency read a speech which was written for him by the Government. I do not know whether he was complaining or merely stating a fact. The truth is, however, that there is nothing new in that. Whether an Opening Speech be delivered in Queensland, Canberra or London, where Her Majesty reads it, it usually contains the words, "My Ministers advise me," and the Crown, or its representative, at every opening advises Parliament of the reason for its being called together. Indeed, the speech invariably concludes with words similar to those of His Excellency on this occasion, namely—

"I now leave you to discharge your duties to the people of Queensland and pray that Almighty God will bless your work."

There is therefore nothing new in the representative of the Crown reading a speech prepared by the Government of the day.

The second matter to which I wish to refer is the protest of the Leader of the Opposition against the appointment of a committee consisting of three Liberal Party members and three Country Party members, under the chairmanship of Mr. Speaker, to consider ways and means of ensuring the better functioning of this House.

**Mr. Bennett:** The Opposition should have been represented.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** I am glad the hon. member for South Brisbane "came in" on this matter; I shall answer him in a moment. It will be recalled that this committee, set up within the Government parties, was to report back to the joint Government parties. This was done so that these parties could let Government members on the Standing Orders Committee know the mind and will of the Government parties. The Leader of the Opposition, rather badly aided and supported by the hon. member for South Brisbane, with his customary lack of restraint, condemned the setting up of this committee as arrogance on the part of the Government, and demanded, as the hon. member for South Brisbane has just claimed, that A.L.P. members should be included on the committee. This shows a lamentable ignorance on his part of parliamentary procedure, for any permanent changes in it will have to be considered by the Standing Orders

Committee. It would then report back to Parliament, where the changes could be debated prior to being effected. Since both the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition are on the Standing Orders Committee, it can be seen that the Government committee is not usurping the powers and authority of this Parliament. It surely is a most unreasonable and stupid request to come from the Leader of the Opposition—a demand for A.L.P. representation on a Government committee whose sole charge is to crystallise thinking on parliamentary procedures on the Government side of the House, so that the Government parties themselves can more capably and effectively debate, in their own circles, what the Government parties desire.

**Mr. Bjelke-Petersen:** The A.L.P. does not ask us to help decide their policies.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** That is right. In view of the stupidity of some of their policies, I suppose we should be grateful.

**Mr. Hanlon:** What the Leader of the Opposition objected to was the Speaker chairing it, which made it more a parliamentary than a party committee.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** The hon. member for Baroona may have a valid point, but I think we ought to remember that in this country the Speaker is an elected representative. His position is somewhat different from that of the Speaker in the House of Commons, whose seat is not representative and who can afford to remain the Speaker and stay completely apart from party politics. However, I think that every hon. member would agree that the Speaker—and this can be said also of Chairmen from both sides of the House—acts completely impartially in his position and not as a member of the party to which he belongs. I think we can say that; in my short term here I do not think I have ever heard an accusation that the Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, or a temporary chairman, has shown bias while occupying the chair.

**Mr. Bennett:** I would have agreed with that until this morning.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** The hon. member for South Brisbane is here so rarely that he does not know parliamentary practice. He comes into the House, asks a question, gets a headline and disappears for another two weeks. I well remember his protest one morning that he had three most urgent questions of which he wanted to give notice, and then we did not see him for a week.

**Mr. Lee:** Two weeks.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** Was it two weeks? I stand corrected.

The attitude of the Leader of the Opposition justified the point of order I took during his speech. I wanted to make it clear that this committee was purely a Government committee set up to advise the

Government parties so that, when the matters go back to the Standing Orders Committee, our thinking as to what this side of the House is going to propose will be clear.

I want to emphasise that in the past it has been customary to bring to Parliament for consideration only what has been unanimously accepted and agreed to by the Standing Orders Committee. This, I feel, has been a very good custom because Parliament must exercise control of the House and be the master of its own destiny; it should not be subjugated to the whims and fancies of the Government of the day, which happens to have the numbers and can force its beliefs on the House. Such a practice would lead, of course, to instability in Standing Orders, with possibly every Government, when it came to power, changing the rules to suit itself. This would not be in the best interests of the institution of Parliament.

**Mr. Carey:** Do you believe in a four-year or three-year term?

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** I am not debating this point. This is a matter of policy which the Government and parties can put forward in their policy speeches. If the hon. member is asking my personal opinion, I certainly think that an election every three years is a waste of public money and I should like to see the period extended. This, of course, would have to be by unanimous decision of the parties contesting the election.

I trust that neither this Government nor any other Government will repudiate the past custom of changes in Standing Orders by unanimous decision. The fears of the Leader of the Opposition, relating to parliamentary procedures, are groundless and will remain groundless.

There are two methods by which parliamentary procedures can be changed. The first is by amending the Standing Orders. Any amendment to Standing Orders is made on a permanent basis and accepted by Parliament after it has been passed by a resolution of the Standing Orders Committee and then presented to Parliament.

**Mr. Davies:** When was the last meeting of the Standing Orders Committee?

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** I will come to that in a moment.

The second method of changing parliamentary procedures is by making Sessional Orders. This method is the usual one adopted by a Government, which must at all times be in control of the House, either to ensure that Government business takes precedence and that the State's affairs do not grind to a standstill or to temporarily test the smooth functioning of a new procedure before the Standing Orders Committee is asked to consider it, and to incorporate it permanently in Standing Orders.

I feel that I should comment on the desirability of changing the members of that committee in view of high-pressure politics and the vastness of the State. The Leader of the Opposition complained that the Standing Orders Committee did not hold any meetings. By interjection I asked, "Why don't you ask it to meet?" He replied, "I have." The hon. member for Maryborough has just now asked me when that Committee last met. I am not trying to be political but constructive when I suggest that it might well be that, in view of the fact that it is becoming increasingly difficult for the Standing Orders Committee to meet owing to the demands on its members, the offices that they hold and the duties that they have, Parliament should consider changing the personnel of the committee. At present that Committee consists of Mr. Speaker as Chairman, the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the Chairman of Committees, and Mr. Diplock, who is at present the only member of the Democratic Labour Party in this Parliament. Those members are domiciled in Brisbane, Redcliffe, Kingaroy, Townsville and Dalby, so for geographical reasons it would be difficult to arrange a committee meeting at a suitable time when those members would not be occupied by the business of the House. In addition, the very nature of their offices militates against regular meetings because each committee member is an extremely busy man in his own particular field.

**Mr. Davies:** It never meets.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** May I interrupt my speech to comment on the colossal ignorance of the hon. member for Maryborough. He said it has never met.

**Mr. Davies:** Tell me the last time it did meet?

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** I would not know for sure the last time that the Standing Orders Committee met; but I have in my hand Amendment to Standing Orders of December 1962, and certainly other amendments have been made to Standing Orders since I have been a member of Parliament. The Standing Orders Committee has met on at least five occasions, and, to my knowledge, on at least five occasions amendments have been made to Standing Orders. The hon. member for Maryborough, in complete ignorance, asks, "When did it meet?"

The basis of selecting the members of the Standing Orders Committee should be altered so that the duties of that committee could be carried out by members of Parliament who, although not being any less busy in their own right, might not be so committed in their official duties as to make it necessary for them to defer meetings of the Standing Orders Committee until one of those rare occasions that could be acceptable to all of them.

**Mr. Davies:** That is a very weak excuse.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** I know that it would be difficult to put forward any argument that would convince the hon. member for Maryborough, but I hope that he can read better than he can hear. If he can then what I am saying might sink in with the effluxion of time.

Only today the Government was accused of gagging questions when at 12 noon the Clerk of the Parliament was asked to read the Orders of the Day. I have never heard of such a stupid accusation in all my life. On a previous occasion question time proceeded until nearly 3 o'clock in the afternoon because every member of the Opposition, not being satisfied with asking one urgent question, asked three questions, perhaps in an endeavour to air his knowledge in his local Press.

**Mr. Davies:** Why not?

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** It does not matter to me in the least if they ask three questions or a dozen, but the fact is that Opposition members cannot expect to hold up the business of the House and they cannot expect to be able to defy Standing Orders by their own form of disruption.

**Mr. Davies** interjected.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** I asked one question. I did not object when I was ruled out of order, as the hon. member for South Brisbane did in the hope that he would be thrown out, so that he could attend to other duties outside the House.

I think we must all agree with His Excellency's remarks about the need for just and orderly conduct in the affairs of Parliament, and, despite the flippant interjections of the hon. member for Maryborough, I am sure that, privately, he agrees with me, although he would not dare to say so publicly.

Having welcomed the new members to the Chamber, may I say how sorry I am that the services of two men of the calibre of Mr. Pilbeam, the former member for Rockhampton South, and Mr. Wood, the former member for Logan, were lost to this House—basically, I believe, on local issues. They will be badly missed until they rejoin us on a future occasion. I believe that, like MacArthur, they will return.

I now wish to refer to a number of matters that I feel merit further consideration. They are not parish-pump matters. Some relate to the welfare of those less fortunate than ourselves, while others are of general interest, touching on the well-being of the State itself.

The first could be called a social service matter. The main social service benefits are functions of the Commonwealth Government but certain ancillary benefits are granted by the State. There is an anomaly which is becoming worse as the value of money depreciates and the amount of wages and the cost of services increase.

I wish to refer to the facts of a case known to me, but, for reasons that will reveal themselves, I do not intend to name the party. No doubt the same circumstances arise in other cases. I will call the man concerned Mr. "A". He has a teen-age son whom I will call "A" junior. Mr. "A" is a divorcee who, for many years, has had the custody of his son. Prior to suffering three strokes in quick succession, he was a hard-working, diligent man in the unskilled labouring field. After a series of strokes he became an invalid pensioner. As well as his pension he received ancillary assistance from The Children's Services Department in the form of State aid for books and so on, and a rent rebate from the Queensland Housing Commission. In this way he managed to carry on, assisted also by an annual gift of clothing from one of the service clubs in the locality.

However, "A" Junior topped his class. He came first in tech drawing, third in metalwork, woodwork and maths, and gained a pass in science, but failed in English. At the end of the year, he hopes to take up an apprenticeship which will give him a gross wage of approximately \$17 a week. That means that his father will lose State aid. I do not suppose we can quibble about that but, on the other hand, I am told that he will lose his rent rebate. When I examined the figures I found that the loss incurred by the father will mean that "A" junior will receive about \$7 to \$10 a week for his work, the rest of his wages being eaten up by the loss of ancillary benefits. I can understand the cancellation of the aid from the Children's Services Department because "A" Junior will be receiving an income of \$17 a week. But, on the other hand, I ask the Minister for Housing, and the Government, to review the present system of rent assessment, particularly in cases where there is only one other income at pension level. When the father's pension was recently increased by \$1, his rent was increased by 35c a week, so he gained 65c. If the child was living with an ordinary family who was paying off a War Service home, or something similar, he would be making a contribution, which would be fixed by his parents, for his board, and the rest of his income would be available to him for saving for his future.

To treat the whole of his income as part of the family income for rental assessment purposes is not only unreal but also unjust. It does nothing to encourage diligence in the young. The whole structure of ancillary relief needs studying, so that we can reward diligence and, at the same time, strike a just decision in the over-all position not only of the family concerned but also of all families in the community. I believe that the Minister and the Government should look closely at the anomalies I have mentioned and then review present policy on these matters.

The next matter concerns the regulations under which a motorist may be required to show cause why his licence should not

be cancelled or suspended. On 17 October last year I spoke at some length on two objections I had to the points system as it then applied. I raise them again now so that when I direct questions in this Chamber to the Minister in charge of the Police Department, who is not the Minister who was in charge of that department at the time of my complaints last year, he will not be unaware that I made some potent criticisms which required attention and amendment.

The first objection was that a driver who had a show-cause notice issued to him was not given a copy of his record on which the show cause was being based. He had no specific knowledge of the offences noted until he "fronted" the interviewing officer, either alone or in the company of his solicitor or other representative. As I said then, and as I say again now, in all justice, he should receive a copy of that record with the show-cause notice so that he can seek legal advice, should he deem it advisable.

My second objection was that in all justice, if a driver's licence was suspended or cancelled, his record at that point should be ruled off and the suspension or cancellation noted; that any further offences should be deemed to be new offences and that the ones preceding them should be ignored in assessing further penalties. Of course, if too many show-cause notices were issued to a driver under this system which I advocate, a new licence should be refused.

Finally in this regard a copy of the points system should be sent out with every licence and/or registration certificate. Lists of offences and the points they attract should be posted at every police station and Government department where members of the public go. Motorists should not be expected to have to look up old "Hansards" or regulations, which are probably out of print and not available, to know what penalties they are incurring by committing certain traffic offences. I am sure that, if motorists realised the number of points being lost, many charges, which are presently not defended because the motorist would rather pay the small monetary penalty, would be defended, because the loss of a licence, when it is the means of earning a livelihood, is a penalty more severe, in most cases, than a mere two or three fines imposed in undefended cases.

I mention these cases again because, within a few days' time, I intend, by asking a question, to find out whether the reforms I advocated last year have been effected or ignored.

I now turn to some other traffic matters. I am convinced that the worst action the Government has taken since it first occupied the Treasury benches in 1957 was to pass over the control of some traffic matters to local authorities. There would not be a stronger advocate than me for the setting up of a metropolitan transport authority to

rationalise transport in Greater Brisbane and, at the same time, ensure that all road-users had their rights protected, whether they be public transport drivers, commercial drivers, private drivers, or pedestrians.

We have witnessed the transformation in Brisbane from a public tramway system to an all-bus system before any adequate preparation or planning for the change-over was effected. We have read of the number of occasions on which the Lord Mayor, the Vice Mayor, and the Executive Adviser, have been overseas on study tours. We would have thought that at least one of them would have seen the bus stations in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, or a host of other places and would have learnt what should be done here in Brisbane. But not one bus station has been built. Indeed, in peak hours, the whole of the left-hand side of William Street, from Parliament House to Victoria Bridge, is a parking area for buses, and private and commercial parking has all but disappeared from Ann, Adelaide, Queen, Elizabeth and Edward Streets, to allow the whole inner-city area to become one great bus stop.

It is true that traffic in the outer city and suburbs has been speeded up with the removal of the trams, but the roadways have never been worse and the tramlines, except in Queen Street, are for the most part still a traffic hazard.

What is worse still, no constructive thought has been given to the motorists' predicament. When trams ran in many of the narrow key streets, it was necessary to prohibit parking between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. to permit a clear run between the footpath and the fixed tram tracks. The trams have gone, but no efforts have been made to lift the parking restrictions which have ceased to be necessary in many suburban streets now that there is greater manoeuvrability of traffic. These unnecessary restrictions should go.

I said that roadworks in Brisbane are the worst that they have been for years. Alderman Rudd is reported in the Press this morning as saying that a document to be presented to the council today will show that there was underspending, for the year 1968-69, of \$33,000 on maintenance of roads, bridges and drainage, and \$54,880 on cleansing of streets and stormwater sewers. Yet in today's "Courier-Mail" there is an article headed, "Concern over State aid cut", in which the Lord Mayor expresses concern that his finances are being cut back because of a reduction in subsidies. All this is, I believe, part and parcel of the big blunder we made in handing over transport control to the Brisbane City Council.

Let me say that the real reason for the trouble is the wasteful and unnecessary expenditure incurred by the Brisbane City Council in the purchase of buildings, in some cases years before they are required, and the subsequent loss of rates. I am sorry that I have not time to develop this point; I shall

have to return to it during the Budget debate because I have a lot to say about it. The council has suffered losses in rates by removing tenants and demolishing buildings years before their sites are required for redevelopment. Those are good examples of extravagance.

If time was available, of course, I could proceed to deal with the city square project, which in itself is the most wasteful extravaganza that we have seen in Brisbane. I am sorry that time will not permit me to go into that matter, but I intend to pursue it fully during the Budget debate. I can show factually, without any fear of error, on the figures that I have here but which I have not time to mention this morning, that this has been a most wasteful expenditure of public money. Indeed, there is a sum of \$924,000 which is completely unaccounted for in the city council car park project. Nobody has yet been able to find out where it went to, who paid it, or to whom it went.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. HANLON** (Baroona) (12.39 p.m.): At the outset, I wish to associate myself with the remarks of the new members on both sides of the House who have paid tribute to those members who did not seek re-election at the general election in May of this year. When one looks through the list of those who retired and those who passed on in the last three years, one sees a remarkable combination of colour, character, and—not the least—controversy by which those members, through their contributions for perhaps a generation, made this Parliament a vital institution in this State.

I think it will be generally agreed, from the speeches that have been made by new members during this debate, that there is ample evidence that these members will not lack the colour and character of those who preceded them. Nevertheless, I think it is obvious that, because conditions and circumstances naturally change, the new members will find conditions different from those that applied at the time when the retired members first entered Parliament.

Undoubtedly there are new problems, and a changing emphasis on the old ones that still remain. The biggest difference today is in the environment of Parliament itself. Most members will recall that Mr. Duggan, who is now retired, said towards the end of last session that he regretted that much of the colour and the atmosphere that had pervaded the Chamber during most of his time as a member did not seem today to exist to the same extent. The hon. member for Logan referred to the fact that Parliament should keep in mind whether it is in danger of becoming regarded by a great percentage of the population, particularly the younger generation, as something of an irrelevancy, an old curiosity place, a "talk shop", which does not have the importance that it once had in our democratic system. That

it should be regarded, if it is so regarded by any significant number of the population, as an old curiosity rather than as the living, breathing institution it should be, is a matter that must concern members of this House and the public alike. It is true that this Parliament, in the heyday of Mr. Duggan, Mr. Mann, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Alf Muller and others who are now retired, was a place of confrontation on issues that affected the life of the people of the day, confrontation that was duly reported to the people through the news media, which essentially were the newspapers of the day.

Now, with the change of media, particularly television, that confrontation appears to have moved more and more from this Chamber into the media, so that instead of the news media reporting to the public the ultimate discussions of these issues where they might be altered, that is, in this Assembly, the discussion is actually transferring itself discernibly to the media—television and the columns of the Press. I think this is not necessarily a bad thing; I think that the more that people in the community can be involved and the closer these issues can be brought to them—by television and the more advanced techniques of reporting and presentation of news by newspapers—the better. Nevertheless, we have to watch and be careful that the media, in all aspects, do not become more important than the decision making in this Parliament.

There are a couple of points in regard to this that I feel are relevant and on which I should comment this morning. With this concentration on the presentation of issues through television and the Press, we find it more and more necessary to use public relations consultants, Press officers or this type of adjunct to the normal activity of any parliamentarian, particularly the senior members of the Government, the Leader of the Opposition and so on. I think it might be an opportune time for both sides to have a look at the trends that are developing in this country.

It is unfortunate that possibly one of the most full-blooded debates we have had in this session so far has been not so much a confrontation on policy or issues between the respective sides of the House or members of the House, as a "gunslinging" on behalf of outside consultants and advisers to one side or the other. I think it was regrettable that the Minister for Mines and Main Roads—I put this forward only as my own opinion—saw fit in this debate on Thursday, perhaps while seeing some political mileage in it as well, to more or less act as a "gunslinger" in some personal altercation that had arisen between the public relations advisers to the Country Party and advisers to the Australian Labour Party outside this Chamber. It is only natural that, when he did so, a refutation and some defence would have to be entered

from this side, and that was done; however, when we find that the association of public relations officers with Parliament has reached the stage where their personal differences are being debated in the Parliament itself, through one member or the other on one side or the other, it is something we should take note of.

If we cast our minds back to the pre-election period, the Premier had forced upon him by the Country Party—as I saw it—a public relations officer. It will be remembered that, soon after the present Premier's appointment, when the Country Party apparently felt that it could see some value in specialised public relations assistance to him from a party political point of view, apart from the normal Public Relations Bureau which the Premier has in his own department, the Premier first of all said that he did not need anyone like that and that he was quite capable of looking after these affairs himself. It was soon apparent that he had changed his mind on that issue, or had it changed for him, and we saw attached to him, per medium of his party, a public relations consultant. I have no objection to this, but what I do object to, and what concerns me, is that for a brief period at least it was significant that in some respects Government policy was almost, if not completely, taken over by this consultant; it was not in the hands of the Premier himself. It might be said that this is a weakness on the part of the Premier.

If that sort of thing happens it creates a dangerous situation. No-one can deny that the Government back-flipped, somersaulted and dived sideways in its policy on the use of radar units and the enforcement of the Traffic Regulations, and no-one could be blamed for believing that that policy was decided upon not in the public interest but in an endeavour to present the Premier in a way that might be considered by his public relations officer to be more acceptable than the way in which the Premier presented himself.

I am led to believe from information given to me—and it may be right or it may be wrong—that this trend towards the formulation of Government policy by a public relations officer led to the Leader of the Liberal Party, Mr. Chalk, confronting the Premier and telling him that he was the Leader of the Liberal Party, which had formed a coalition with the Country Party and not with any consultant who was hired by the Country Party, and that Government policy would be decided by the coalition after Mr. Chalk had been consulted and was not the prerogative of a person who was not a member of the coalition. This information came from a reliable source.

**Mr. Murray:** But it may be right or it may be wrong.

**Mr. HANLON:** I challenge the Premier or the Leader of the Liberal Party to say that what I have said did not occur. I mention it as an example of what could happen.

**Mr. Sullivan:** What is the source of your information?

**Mr. HANLON:** I am not obliged to reveal the source of my information.

In the early months of this year when this consultant was attached to the office of the Premier it would have been apparent to anyone that the Government's policy, particularly on traffic matters, was temporarily formulated by him for public-relations purposes. I have said that that sort of situation is a dangerous one. The Liberal Party recognises the significance of this sort of presidential set-up in which the Premier relies on advice given to him by a person who was hired for him by his own party and not by the public through the normal Public Service channels. He was not even hired by the Country-Liberal Government coalition, in which the Liberal Party has influence and representation.

**Mr. Murray:** Normally you make very constructive speeches, but I think you are disappointing the Chamber today.

**Mr. HANLON:** I hope that I have given an instance of what could occur, but I think that it was nipped in the bud fairly quickly by the Leader of the Liberal Party for his own purposes and not necessarily in the public interest. The Liberal Party sensed that, if it allowed the situation to develop, that party would not be securing its rightful place in the formulation of Government policy.

We need to pay regard to this sort of situation because as greater use is made of the media of public relations it will arise again.

To give an extreme example of what can occur, I cite what happened to Lyndon Johnson when he was President of the United States of America. A great number of his statements on the Vietnam conflict were made obviously against the background of public relations and were not designed to be necessarily factual or helpful in resolving that conflict. They were designed to be acceptable to the media at that time, and consequently as the situation in Vietnam changed, as it does so often, the American people lost a great deal of confidence in him and his reliability because his tracks were uncovered and the part that public relations played in the matter was revealed.

**Mr. Porter:** That is standard practice throughout the world. There is nothing sinister in it.

**Mr. HANLON:** It is standard practice throughout the world. I am pointing out that in our own little way we should have some regard to it as it occurs here.

**Mr. Porter** interjected.

**Mr. HANLON:** I am not suggesting that. It is a fact of life that the news media today, particularly television, are such that we require the services of people to provide expertise, whether by way of draft speeches or arrangements for public appearance and so on. But there is an inherent danger if the person receiving the assistance—as the Premier did with traffic policy—allows the adviser to become the policy-maker. In such circumstances a very unfortunate situation arises.

While interest is moving away from Parliament more and more because of this situation, there is a tendency to consider that Parliament is operating at its best if everything is going along quietly, with nothing at all happening. This morning when the hon. member for South Brisbane tried to raise an issue—I will not deal with it as such—concerning the Premier's shareholdings at the present time and sought information from the Premier about it, his question was struck out, apparently because it was considered that it should not be asked. Yet, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in due course the Premier will appear on a "Meet the Press" programme, and other Ministers will appear on television programmes, where personnel of the media, rightly doing their job, will ask searching questions. Members of Press panels and other persons will be interviewing them and asking probing questions about different matters. Undoubtedly the Premier will be asked a question about this matter when he next appears on such a programme. The Premier will answer it in one way or another, but whether his answer is considered to be satisfactory will depend on the opinion of those viewing the programme.

Television appearances by the Premier and Ministers are becoming everyday occurrences. On one occasion, even Mr. Speaker appeared on a "Meet the Press" programme and answered questions about the conduct of Parliament and so on. I do not think there was anything wrong in that because he was bringing Parliament closer to the people. However, it is obviously ridiculous that the Premier can appear on a news presentation and be asked any question whatsoever by Press officers, who are trying to carry out their responsibility to their readers by probing for information, when relatively the mildest form of question by a member in this Assembly is ruled out of order. This situation is getting really silly. One reason for the trouble in this Parliament is that there is a tendency to rely, almost excessively, on Standing Order No. 333, which states—

"In all cases not specially provided for by these Standing Rules and Orders, or by Sessional or other Orders, resort shall be had to the Rules, Forms, and Usages of the Commons House of the Imperial Parliament . . . which shall be followed and observed so far as the same can apply to the proceedings of the House."

On one occasion when the Leader of the Opposition was being reminded of this Standing Order and the advice furnished in Erskine May's book on parliamentary practice in the House of Commons, I went to the Parliamentary library and asked the librarian to give me at random a "Hansard" from the House of Commons. In the proceedings I looked at, I found this sort of question being asked of the Attorney-General, without any interruption from Mr. Speaker—

"Is he deliberately refusing to give the information to the House in an attempt to cover up the scandalous conduct of the Prime Minister?"

If the hon. member for South Brisbane or any other member, instead of seeking information about the shares held by the Premier, and the Government's policy on this matter, had asked the Attorney-General if he was deliberately covering up the scandalous conduct of the Premier, Mr. Speaker would have had a heart attack. Because of this resort to the House of Commons' practice, and May's Parliamentary Practice, much milder questions are ruled out of order in this Chamber although questions such as I have outlined are asked in the House of Commons.

We are told by Mr. Speaker that we cannot ask if newspaper articles, or items that appear in newspapers are true, but in the very same House of Commons' Report I found that this question was asked—

"Would not the Minister agree that the despair and degradation depicted in the Sunday Times articles, if true, amount to a public scandal?"

Again, there was no interruption from Mr. Speaker in the House of Commons.

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

**Mr. HANLON:** I have been pointing out that where our Standing Rules and Orders are silent on a matter we have recourse to the rules and practice of the House of Commons. I quoted some examples at random from a House of Commons "Hansard" to indicate that in my opinion we rely too heavily on "May" in restricting our practice in this House. I acknowledge the contribution made by "May," who relied on his experience as a Clerk of the House of Commons. However, his work is similar to many reference books in that it is possible to find something to suit one's purpose if one is applying one's purpose to it. The examples I used were taken from the report of one day in the House of Commons, and they indicate that the House of Commons apparently does not enforce to the letter its own rules and practices in debate; it allows a certain amount of latitude in these matters and particularly in questions.

I turn now to the election of members of this Parliament, the machinery by which they are elected, the State Electoral Office and, more particularly, the registration of voters. The hon. member for Nudgee, by

way of question, has already suggested to the Attorney-General that there is room for improvement in electoral registration procedures and in the machinery of the Electoral Office. I make it clear that I am in no way reflecting on the Principal Electoral Officer or his staff. A good deal of the difficulty is experienced because of human nature. The Electoral Office is a service department; its work is not particularly rewarding, like building schools and hospitals which attract public attention. However, that office plays an essential part in our community and more priority should be given to it in the allocation of staff and equipment.

We on this side of the House, and unsuccessful candidates who represented the Australian Labour Party in the recent State election, received a barrage of complaints from electors relative to the system of registration, the preparation of the electoral rolls and, more particularly, the removal of names from those rolls.

The basic difficulty in this direction arose from a decision taken by the present administration some years ago to vary the residential qualification for enrolment. Since then the State and Commonwealth residential qualifications have been different, the State requiring three months' residence and the Commonwealth requiring one month's residence before enrolment. This has led to a good deal of confusion and many people have enrolled for the Commonwealth and not for the State.

The check carried out in the metropolitan area by the Commonwealth Electoral Office and availed of by the State Electoral Office had a number of unfortunate repercussions on some members of the public. The Attorney-General pointed out to the hon. member for Nudgee that the roll check at the end of last year was carried out by the Police Department in country areas and by the Commonwealth Electoral Office in provincial cities and in Brisbane, the information being made available to the State Electoral Office for its use.

A number of electors came to me complaining that the Commonwealth Electoral Office had objected to their enrolment because of an error in the information given to that office. The electors duly answered the Commonwealth's form of objection. That evidenced that they were still residing at the addresses shown.

About a month after they answered the Commonwealth objection, along came another one from the State Electoral Office virtually repeating the objection at State level and asking them to fill in the State form in the same manner. The ordinary human reaction of most people is to get upset; they say, "The so-and-sos must be mad. I have been living here for years. Why do they want this?" They do not understand the administrative machinery and the fact that a mistake has been made somewhere. Not realising

that the State has separate electoral machinery, they screw up the form and throw it in the wastepaper basket.

Under section 31 of the Elections Act, if the Registrar does not receive an answer to the objection, he is obliged to strike the name of the person concerned off the roll. When such persons go to vote at an election, they are amazed to find that their names are not on the roll. Although they may claim a vote under section 35A, the vote cannot be counted because the name has not been wrongfully removed from the roll. Although they have been removed from it whilst still resident at the same addresses and actually entitled to vote, they have not been wrongfully removed from the roll because the Registrar has merely done what he is obliged to do. Therefore if the persons concerned claim votes under section 35A, the votes cannot be counted because they have not been wrongfully removed from the roll. As well as being annoying to electors, such a situation can be of importance in the event of a close result. For instance, in Hawthorne only four votes separated the hon. member for Hawthorne and the A.L.P. candidate, Mr. Adsett.

I think the Government should examine the matter of bringing together, as far as is possible, the provisions of the State and Commonwealth electoral legislation. I do not agree that control of our electoral machinery should be given to the Commonwealth authority. As a sovereign State, we do not want to be beholden to someone else for arranging registration for electoral purposes, nor do we want essential matters controlled outside the State. However, I do think that there is room for a considerable amount of simplification in electoral procedures through co-operation between the two Governments and their electoral officers.

Common sense indicates that when the Commonwealth list of objections was being used in the metropolitan area, it would surely have been wise to check with the Commonwealth office instead of taking its list and sending out our complaints on it. Apparently a lot of things which are merely common sense were not done. I do not believe that the Principal Electoral Officer and his staff in Queensland are any less capable than their counterparts in the Commonwealth, or in any other department. I think that the only explanation of what has happened is that the State authorities are understaffed and have not the necessary facilities to handle the work entrusted to them, particularly under the pressure of an election year.

I might give another instance of the penny-pinching attitude to electoral machinery that I found in the conduct of the election. An elector whose son turned 21 in March came to me and wanted me to assure him that his son would have a vote in the State election. I pointed out that if he was

enrolled before the closing date, which I think was 9 April, and his enrolment was in order, he would be registered to receive a vote.

When the supplementary rolls came out, the father rang and asked me whether the lad's name was on the supplementary roll for Baroona. I checked and found that it was not. I said, "There is only one explanation that I can see. He must have sent it in after 9 April." The father assured me that the son had not, that he had sent it in on 21 March, or whatever the date was—it was over two weeks before the closure of the rolls—and he could not understand why his name was not on the roll.

I investigated the matter further, and I was told that the Electoral Office had no record of the card's having been received. Being a keen type, the man went to the Electoral Office himself and apparently persuaded the officers to check more thoroughly. He was told that the card was there but that an error had been made in filling it in. Although he had completed the card correctly in all other respects, he had inadvertently omitted to fill in on the card his date of birth. He said, "Why didn't you send it back? It was a couple of weeks before the rolls closed. The claim could have been completed correctly and sent back in time for the election." The answer was, "Well, we have so many of these that we just have not had time to deal with them."

Again, that comes back to the point that I have been endeavouring to make. It is not the result of inefficiency on the part of the electoral officer and his staff or failure to carry out their duties. It appears to be the result of the Government's refusal to provide adequate staff and facilities in the Electoral Office to ensure that things such as that do not happen. The man concerned informed me—I have no reason to doubt his story—that the indication was that there was a significant number of similar cases from various electorates. He asked, "When will these go out?" and he was told, "We haven't got time to worry about them until after the rolls close."

That is what happened to a lad in my electorate. I do not know how he would have voted, but, from his father's interest, I imagine that he might have voted for me. Fortunately, it did not make any difference to the result in my electorate, but it could have made a great deal of difference in Hawthorne or some other electorate in which the result was close.

**Mr Houston** interjected.

**Mr. HANLON:** As the Leader of the Opposition points out, it could cut both ways. Votes could be lost by the Liberal Party, the Country Party or the A.L.P. Many features emerge when the count is strict and close—I think that the hon. member for Hawthorne would probably bear out what I am saying—that indicate ways in which voting procedures could be tidied up.

Again, on election day a polling booth was set up in the Police-Citizens Youth Club Hall at Lang Park.

**Mr. Ramsden:** It won't be there for long.

**Mr. HANLON:** Unfortunately, it will not be there much longer. Before arrangements for the election were completed, I pointed out to the Returning Officer for Baroona that election day would fall on the Saturday of the interstate Rugby League match between Queensland and New South Wales, and that one could normally expect 25,000 to 30,000 people to be present at the game, many of them getting there at 11 o'clock, or perhaps earlier, to secure suitable positions in the grounds. I reminded him that, human nature being what it is, many of them would not think about voting until after they came out of the football ground, at about 5 or 5.30 p.m. They would suddenly realise that they had not voted and would not have time to get back to their own electorate to vote. Those people would want, and would be eligible to have, an absent vote at that booth because they could honestly say that they would not be back in their own electorate in time to vote. Unfortunately, the official reaction of the Justice Department—not the reaction of the returning officer in my electorate—was that these people should vote in their own electorate before they went to the football. That shows the official mind at work: it is not what people do; it is what they should do. People came to Lang Park from various parts of Brisbane, and perhaps from areas outside Brisbane, to see the football. If they had thought of it, they would have cast their vote in their own electorate before they came to the ground, perhaps at the City Hall or somewhere such as that. But quite a significant number of them did not think about it until they were coming out of the football ground. They would see a booth there and try to get an absent vote.

All hon. members would know that an absent vote, even for a nearby electorate, perhaps on the other side of Brisbane, involves a considerable amount of time for the presiding officer. He has to fill out the forms; they have to be signed; he has to put them in a special envelope, and so on. It is not just an ordinary vote so far as time is concerned and, when a number of these people converge on a booth, it is very difficult to process their votes speedily.

As I understand the situation, my returning officer himself went there to try to give what assistance he could, to act more or less as a presiding clerk and to deal with as many voters as possible. Again, human nature being what it is, we can all imagine that many of these fellows who were standing around for 10 or 15 minutes would say, "Oh well, they can fine me, the so-and-sos, if they can't make facilities available for me to vote" and then go away without a vote.

This situation in the Hawthorne area could have either increased Mr. Kaus's majority or resulted in Mr. Adsett being elected. I am not saying that it happened, as these things are in the realms of the unknown, but I do not think it is a fair thing to leave it to the electoral officer or his staff, or presiding clerks or returning officers, who have to adopt this sort of pinch-penny attitude. If it is obvious that a situation will arise that calls for additional staff, the Government should say, "Well, we will have to provide them," even though the people, by not voting in their own areas in those circumstances, are perhaps not helpful.

Furthermore, for a considerable time in the pre-election period the Principal Electoral Officer, and, I think, his deputy, were in North Queensland. I am not sure of the reason but obviously it was some official duty that required their attention.

**Mr. Wallis-Smith:** They were doing the rounds of the missions.

**Mr. HANLON:** The hon. member for Tablelands interjects, "They were doing the rounds of the missions." I suggest that, if this had to be done purely for electoral office purposes, it should not have been necessary for the principal officers of the electoral office to carry it out. If it was a bona fide purpose not connected with any advantage to one side or the other—I am not saying that their instruction to go there was given politically—it was a bit silly, in the pressure weeks leading up to an election, to have it attended to by the principal electoral officers whose duties in the Public Service are so specialised that they should not be away from Brisbane. We might all think we know a great deal about electoral procedures, but as in most of these things, the more one does then the more experienced one becomes and the easier they are to do. There are many electoral procedures which would bog down an officer who did not know them and had to look them up. I am informed that there was a considerable amount of inconvenience and difficulty in Brisbane because of the absence of these officers. Again, I am not in any way criticising the officers; they were carrying out their duties wherever they were, but I think that it was very silly to have the principal executives of the Electoral Office in particular electorates at the time when the electoral machinery was being wound up, and I hope that it will not occur again. Whatever the basis of the decision to send them away, I think it was ill-advised administratively.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG (Mulgrave) (2.34 p.m.):** It gives me pleasure to take part in this debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Opening Speech so ably delivered by His Excellency the Administrator of the Government, Mr. Justice Sheehy. I regret that ill health prevented the Chief Justice from performing this task. No doubt he would have been looking forward

to it, but he was robbed of the opportunity at the eleventh hour. Like all hon. members I wish him a speedy and full recovery to good health.

On behalf of the electors of Mulgrave I again pledge unswerving loyalty to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, and hope that she is spared for many years to reign over our nation and see it develop to a greater extent than it has up till now.

I am delighted that, on the historic occasion of the investiture of Prince Charles as Prince of Wales, our State was so well represented by the Governor, Sir Alan Mansfield. I am sure that that occasion will live in his memory for a long time.

I congratulate the Premier for leading this forward-thinking Government to victory in the recent State election and I look forward to another three years of very successful government.

**Mr. Davies:** You realise that you are a minority Government?

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** I will talk to the hon. member about that later.

I look forward also to a further three years of advancement of this State. I sincerely hope that very soon a substantial part of it will be blessed with good seasons. For many years Queensland has been ravaged by drought, and a great number of city dwellers and other people, who do not have the opportunity of seeing the conditions that prevail in the West and other areas, fail to realise the magnitude of the problems that face the people who live in those parts of the State and the heartbreak that is suffered by them.

I congratulate both the mover and seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. Both of the members demonstrated their ability in the fields in which they are greatly experienced, and I am sure that with the passing of time they will be able to make worthwhile contributions to the affairs of this State.

I welcome all new members and trust that they will be able to do some good for the people whom they represent. Of course, I cannot wish a long stay for all new members.

**Mr. Ramsden:** It would be good if we had a new member for Maryborough.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** It would be helpful if we had.

I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your re-election to your very high and important office. You have come to be almost an integral part of this Chamber, and, as you perform your duties so well, I look forward to working harmoniously under your control for the balance of this Parliament's term.

I congratulate our two new Ministers. I know that they will apply themselves diligently in their high office, both to the State's

advantage and to their own satisfaction. Both of the new Ministers are very capable men, and have gained a good deal of experience in many fields. I am particularly pleased to see the western portion of our great State represented by an able Minister who is well versed in the problems that confront the people who live in the West. During his term as a back-bencher in this Parliament, he did everything he could for the electors. Unlike members of the Opposition, he was never frightened to speak his mind. We did not suggest that he should be expelled, as members of the Opposition sometimes suggest when a member of their own party does not conform to policy. Look back in history at what happened to some who did not do so. I need go back only a couple of years to cite an instance, but I am not interested in doing so at present.

I thank the wise electors of Mulgrave for again placing their confidence in me by electing me to represent them for a further three years in this Chamber. I intend to do so to the best of my ability as I have since first being elected to the Chamber.

There are many objectives that we try to achieve, and, on looking back over the years, we realise that we have done a great deal, yet, on looking closer, we can see that much more has to be done. In every field of Government endeavour we are limited by the amount of money to be spent by the various departments and that is the yardstick of progress.

I share the views expressed by the Leader of the Opposition about accommodation and office facilities in this House. I think all hon. members agree with his remarks. I know I have found difficulty in applying myself to some matter as diligently as I would wish when two or three members are in the room speaking on the telephone. Some of them really do not need telephones because their voices can be heard for more than 100 yards. It is very difficult to work under such conditions.

**Mr. Davies:** To which of your colleagues are you referring?

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** I could relate my remarks to every member in this Chamber. We all work under the same difficulties. The only difference is that the Opposition has better seating than we have, which proves Mr. Speaker's impartiality. He has looked after the Opposition, which we expect him to do, but we hope that before too many months pass we will have soft chairs at our end of the building. Apparently Mr. Speaker started at the other end and is working back progressively. I think I should remind hon. members—and we should keep this constantly before us—that we had almost 40 years of Labour Government in Queensland and during that period, as the hon. member for Townsville South would know, little or nothing was done. That is one reason why Mr. Speaker is faced with such a big problem.

**Mr. Aikens:** The Aborigines had better conditions than we had.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** The hon. member may be right. I was not then in Parliament and did not have to suffer those very crude conditions.

It is 12 years since this Government was elected to office and, in that time, it has not ceased working on this building. I think I could truly say that Mr. Speaker has done everything in his power to make our lot as good as he can in the circumstances. We have asked him for various things and, if it was humanly possible to provide them, he has done so. We have only to look at the Chamber to realise what has been done, although new members cannot realise the change that has taken place since we became the Government. We now have soft seats and desks and can do a little work in the Chamber when an hon. member is speaking about something in which we are not specifically interested.

It is interesting to note the money that has been spent on this building since we became the Government—over \$500,000. It is also interesting to know that Mr. Speaker is fully aware of the conditions under which we work, and that he is trying to plan on a long-term basis and so cater for members for many years to come.

**Mr. Davies:** Why don't you get in behind and help him?

**Mr. Aikens:** Some day we might get conditions like the union officials have at the Trades Hall, and then we would be right.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** I doubt that we would be game to take the taxpayers' money to supply such extravagant fittings as would be found in that place.

Mr. Speaker, I am one of those members who appreciate what you have done over the years and I have no doubt that you will continue to bring about better conditions in which we can do our work. This is a real problem for those of us who come from well outside the metropolitan area. Occasionally people representing hospital boards or local authorities, or directors of companies, come here to interview us. The only place we can take them to is the balcony, and we have to hope that it will not be too windy for them or that they can put up with the cold weather. In those circumstances we try to discuss their problems over a cup of tea. Of course, we trust that there are not another six members trying to do the same thing.

**Mr. Aikens:** The Labour Party used to make me sit out in the Alice Street gutter to meet deputations.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** I would not doubt that. If anybody would know, it would be the hon. member for Townsville South. I know the A.L.P. did not handle him with kid gloves when he, despite the efforts made to keep him out, entered Parliament.

My friend the hon. member for Maryborough refers to our being a minority Government.

**Mr. Davies:** Quite right.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** I do not agree at all with his suggestion. The A.L.P. claims that it got a certain number of votes but it contested every seat in the State; the Government parties did not do that.

**Mr. Newton:** Because you are not major political parties, and you are not game to.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** For the information of the hon. member for Belmont, if he cares to read the political history of this State, and indeed of this Commonwealth, he will find that the Country Party has been one of the most stable parties that has ever existed. It has not fallen to pieces as the A.L.P. has done from time to time. And this will occur again because the A.L.P. still has problems and worries.

**Mr. Aikens:** There is no Right Wing or Left Wing in the North Queensland Labour Party.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** Nor is there in our party. In our party, every man puts his case in a forthright manner. When we meet as a joint party or as two parties, we are not a team of yes-men by any means, but I think I can say truthfully that never have I seen one party vote against the other at a party meeting. That might indicate that this is a coalition Government, and might dispel some of the mist and gloom that the A.L.P. endeavours to spread by claiming that problems and troubles exist in the coalition Government. The history of Australia shows that the best Governments have been coalition Governments.

**Mr. Hanson** interjected.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** The hon. member mentions the Curtin Government. Curtin was fortunate indeed to attain office. He would not have done so had it not been for a tragedy. I do not want to get taken off the track. This is a subject I should like to discuss at the right time and in the right place.

My colleague, the hon. member for South Coast, put the record straight in this regard. He told us that the Country Party received 49.7 per cent. of the valid votes in the seats it contested, whereas the A.L.P. received only 45 per cent., and the percentage received by the Country Party is even larger if we consider only the seats won. I do not want to reiterate everything said by the hon. member for South Coast. However, those figures cannot be denied. Hon. members opposite forget about that when they talk about gerrymandering of seats.

**Mr. Hanson:** Of course you did some gerrymandering.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** All I hope is that, when the tribunal is set up to look into this matter, we can do as good a job as the A.L.P. did in about 1949. There were then some electorates with under 5,000 voters. I have heard some belly-aching here because some members have 15,000 voters and I have about 7,200.

The Government has done a very good job in many fields. We have now entered the field of agricultural colleges, with two already in operation or close to it.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** There should be one in North Queensland.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** That is what I am trying to get. I am pleased to see my colleague the Minister for Primary Industries, who knows all about this, sitting in the Chamber. I suggest to him that when he is in conference with the Minister for Education he recommend the Mulgrave area, and I should say that Gordonvale would be the most suitable location. There are many forms of industry in close proximity to it. There is the sugar experiment station almost adjoining the town. There is the research station at Kairi, on the Tableland, which deals with quite a variety of industries. There is also the experimental station at South Johnstone, which is not very far away, and the tobacco research station at Parada.

If an agricultural college was established in this location, there would be plenty of trained men readily available. When I refer to "trained men", I mean just that; there are on these stations scientists who could hold their own with anybody else in the world. The work of plant breeders at the sugar experiment station at Meringa has made a tremendous contribution to the development of sugar varieties in this State. My friend the Minister for Mines and Main Roads and the member for Mirani know only too well the great work done by these plant breeders for their areas, as evidenced by the record of the Mackay district today compared with what it was 30 years ago. The difference is about as great as that between day and night.

**Mr. Aikens:** The best tea in India and Ceylon is grown on the high, hilly tablelands. Can any be grown on the tableland in your area?

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** That is another industry that I almost overlooked, and it is the only industry of its type in Australia. I hope that before the end of the year tea grown in North Queensland will be on sale in the shops. My area is capable of producing many commodities such as maize, approved pastures, milk, cheese, tobacco, peanuts, seeds of various types, peas—you name it and we have it. We have the population, too, which I shall speak about later. When the next agricultural college is under consideration, I sincerely hope that serious

thought is given to building it in the township of Gordonvale, where at present the Crown has sufficient land available for it. As I said earlier, all the important industries in North Queensland are within easy reach of it, and it would be an ideal place for it.

I am sorry that the Minister for Mines and Main Roads is not in the Chamber, because I wish to deal now with the Palmerston Highway, which is on the boundary of my electorate. It is one of the most important highways in North Queensland because it links Innisfail and its port, Mourilyan, with much of the hinterland. Over it are carried large quantities of milk for towns such as Townsville, Home Hill, Ingham, and their surrounding districts, and also for Mount Isa, and large quantities of timber. I think that one should congratulate the old P.E.I.—I do not know whether all hon. members remember when it was in existence—upon the way in which the highway was built. It is a monument to the P.E.I., having been built about 34 years ago and had very little spent on it since.

**Mr. Aikens:** The surface is cracking up.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** The hon. member and I would both begin to crack a little after 34 years. Although it had a very good foundation, it was not built for the type of traffic it is carrying today. It is only a narrow strip of roadway, with many twists and turns, and I suggest that the Main Roads Department should consider rebuilding the whole 42 miles of it.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Carey):** Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** In my opinion, it would give access to some of the points about which I have been speaking and would make a very considerable contribution towards improving the economy of the State in the years to come.

I am not unmindful of the work being done by the Minister and the Main Roads Department. Queensland is the second largest State in Australia, and they face a very difficult task in providing good roads for the whole of Queensland. A great deal of effort has gone into improving the Bruce Highway.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** Not very much round Mourilyan.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** If the hon. member has a careful look, he probably will find that he is getting more than his fair share. A new bridge, costing a considerable amount of money, is to be built in his electorate very soon.

**Mr. Houghton:** Will it be a toll bridge, similar to the Bribie Island Bridge?

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** No. In northern areas such as these there are so many streams that the department has to build a bridge every

few miles. Some of them are major bridges, such as the one over the Mulgrave River. I understand that it is the biggest bridge in Queensland built by a local authority using day labour. It was built when I was serving as a member of the local authority, and the council did have a good bridge-building gang at that time.

Important as the Bruce Highway is, I again draw the Minister's attention to the need to do something to improve the Palmerston Highway after the many years that it has been in use. The traffic flow is increasing and heavier vehicles are coming into use year by year. Strangely enough, the Palmerston Highway has a very good record in the field of fatal accidents. It has always been an unwritten law, particularly in the wet season, for one vehicle to pull up and let another pass, and I think that is the reason for its good record.

I was astounded the other day at a scene I did not think I would ever witness in this Chamber. I was astonished to see Opposition members trying to prevent a member of this House from speaking. From time to time they claim to be the custodians of democracy, freedom of speech and so on, but here was a man replying to criticism that had been levelled at him over a period of months and the Opposition sought to prevent him from doing so. He was not tearing strips off anyone opposite, but, if he had been, they would have deserved it, because all they did was use the matter he was speaking about for political purposes. They only discovered it just prior to the election. I repeat that I was amazed and astounded to think that they would endeavour to stop anyone from speaking in this Chamber.

**Mr. Ramsden:** If they had had a machine-gun they would have used it.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** I think they would. I did not think much of their actions, and in saying so I would be speaking for very many people who were shocked at the Opposition endeavour to gag a man in this Chamber.

**Mr. Aikens:** The public were absolutely shocked.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** They were. It has always been a privilege of a member in this Chamber to allot his time to another member to enable him to finish a speech, and I think it ill behoves any political party to try to take this privilege away.

Another matter I should like to touch on is our university. I know this subject has been fairly well aired in this Chamber, but I want to inform hon. members that the parents of children in this State are becoming quite alarmed at the incidents that take place at St. Lucia. We are not looking seriously enough at the situation.

**Mr. Davies:** Whom are you attacking now?

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** I am not attacking anybody; I am simply expressing the concern of some of the sensible parents living in my electorate, who are anxious to educate their children to the highest possible standards. They come to me and say, "How can we send our children to this alleged place of learning when we pick up the paper and read of the drug rackets and other things that go on there? We have no desire to send our children to a place like that." I have pointed out to them that we have a university, or will have very soon, in Townsville, and I sincerely hope that none of the nonsense we see down here will ever take place there. I think it is a fairly serious matter when law and authority are flouted, because our whole social structure is based upon obedience to law and authority, and, if we are going to tolerate this sort of thing, I do not know what will happen to us when some of these people reach maturity. I am very doubtful that they ever will reach that stage, but, if they do and they elect to carry the A.L.P. banner, we could find them in this Chamber and the Lord only knows where we would finish up.

I simply want to draw to the attention of this House the concern that is felt all over this State about the happenings at our university. It is an institution of which we should be extremely proud. It has magnificent buildings and all sorts of very good facilities. I am not endeavouring for one minute to suggest that all the students can be judged on the actions of a small minority, but unfortunately a chain is only as good as its weakest link and the minority get so much publicity that people, who do not have the opportunity of studying these things, as some of us here do, are of the opinion that all the students behave in the same way.

**Mr. Aikens:** Would you say that the medical students are the worst of the lot?

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** I would not know which students are the worst, but nobody would be impressed by the few whom I have seen parading around the streets. I can remember one occasion on which other hon. members and I were on the balcony of this building observing a students' protest march or some other activity, and not one of us had any words of praise for them. In fact, a number of my fellow spectators said they thought it was scandalous that the taxpayers' money should be spent on that type of person. Before the university falls further into disrepute in the minds of the people, some very firm stand should be taken.

I should like to congratulate the Premier for the stand that he has taken on freights and transport charges. This matter has annoyed many of my northern colleagues and me for a long time.

**Mr. Wallis-Smith:** Hop into the Government on this matter.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** Hop into the Government? Anomalies have existed in these things since the beginning of time, as the hon. member for Tablelands should know. The situation has become hopeless. I have some figures here, which I shall not quote because I do not have time, and they show how useless it is for anyone to try to follow our policy of decentralisation while these anomalies exist in freight rates. I congratulate the Premier for having the tenacity to grasp this "nettle", and I sincerely hope that, when the inquiry that has been set up has made its findings, justice will be meted out to all parts of the State. We have seen a great number of things happen down through the years.

**Mr. Newton:** Particularly over the last 12.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** Well, before the last 12 years we had to use either a boat or the railways to travel round; we certainly could not use the roads. It was not that the Labour Government did not construct a few of them but it had a closed policy and it gave franchises. I am sorry that I did not have a franchise because road haulage was a very lucrative business. On each occasion that the Labour Party elected to raise the freight rates, the franchised road haulier obtained an extra charge. When we became the Government we found that railways were carting fertiliser and other goods that were not profitable to cart. Do not talk to me about freights; I know a little bit about them. I have pointed out previously to members of the Opposition that they had the dishonour of raising freight rates seven times in six years, so they should not talk to me about freights. I am not complaining about the rise in freights but about the anomalies that exist, and many existed under the Labour Government. In those days there may have been good reason for a number of those anomalies, but there is no need to perpetuate them. At least today people can move about the State a little more freely. If the roads are not suitable, then the railways can be used.

**Mr. Newton:** What are you talking about? You pulled them all up.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** We built more railways than the Labour Government built. As a matter of fact the Labour Government's record in rail-building was a very bad one. Members of the Opposition should not forget that their Government pulled them up, too.

**Mr. Newton:** Tell us where.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** The Labour Government pulled up two or three of them.

**Mr. Newton:** Where?

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** One was pulled up in the Flinders electorate.

**Mr. Newton:** Where?

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** My word there was!

In the short time left to me I want to touch on a matter of national importance, that is, the ever-increasing costs that are inflicted on the people of this State. I cannot understand why this problem cannot be ironed out, although I notice that the newly-elected President of the Australian Trades and Labour Council does not want to be in this sort of thing. I think that anybody who is interested in the welfare and standard of living of our people should look——

**Mr. Bousen:** Reintroduce price control.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** Oh, reintroduce your grandmother! If I were in business I would want price control. The only way to handle this is on a productivity basis. When we get extra goods and services for the same cost, we can give a genuine increase in wages, but today the idea seems to be to take something out of somebody else's pocket. If the person is successful he will only pay a little extra income tax to the Federal Treasurer. This policy has almost made bankrupt all our local authorities and many other semi-governmental bodies. The worst feature of all is the effect this policy has on our overseas credits. If something is not done about it before long, we will be in a lot of trouble.

**An Opposition Member:** Why don't you do something?

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** The only people who can do anything are the unions, the producers and the governments. They must all get together to iron out a sensible policy but, unfortunately, as I said, the new President of the Trades and Labour Council is not interested in this. He wants a 35-hour week and higher wages. I am not opposed to that if the cost can be met from increased productivity. It can be achieved and will lead to a genuine rise in the standard of living. Every exporter, irrespective of his field, is getting into trouble because of increases in production costs. World markets are highly competitive and the higher our cost structure rises in Australia, the less chance he has of staying in business. And if the trend continues, the stage will be reached when there will be fewer chances of our people getting good, lucrative jobs.

The Queensland Government cannot do anything about this, but the National Government can. The Chambers of Commerce and various unions can do something about it by adopting a sensible approach. If benefits flow from productivity it is immaterial how high wages rise, because the balance will not be disturbed. We will continue to have overseas credits and all our people will enjoy a genuine standard of living. The stage will not be reached at which some of our primary producers become poorer and poorer, which is bad for any country. Without prosperous primary industries, the cities, towns and various services related to them must fall by the wayside. This serious problem is world-wide, but I do not see

why we should follow the trend in other countries in the world. Surely to goodness, in 1969, all people in industry—we all have our eggs in the one basket—can iron out a sensible, equitable basis of sharing the benefits of increased productivity. When that day arrives we will be much happier than we are today.

**Mr. R. JONES** (Cairns) (3.14 p.m.): In making my contribution to the address to be presented in reply to His Excellency the Administrator's speech when opening the first session of the 39th Parliament, I desire to renew my own pledges of loyalty and to express on behalf of the citizens of Cairns their continued allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Concurrently, I offer felicitations to Her Majesty's representative in this State. I was very pleased to learn that Queensland was represented by His Excellency the Governor, Sir Alan Mansfield, at the investiture of the Prince of Wales on 1 July, 1969. I am sure that my relations in Wales would have treated him well and looked after him during his visit, if they had had the opportunity.

In accordance with parliamentary practice, I join with other hon. members in conveying my congratulations to the mover of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. To the other "new boys" I express the hope that their terms of office will be fruitful, that they will represent their constituents faithfully and well, and that they will, by their contributions and work, help to advance the State of Queensland.

While speaking in that vein, let me congratulate the two new far northern members, namely, the hon. member for Mourilyan, my good friend Mr. Peter Moore, and the hon. member for Cook, another good friend, Mr. Bill Wood. Those two hon. members join the hon. member for Tablelands, Mr. Eddie Wallis-Smith, and me as a sound and solid force of northern representation in this august House. It is in striking contrast to the representation of the electors of Mulgrave, which is evident in the inept contribution just made by the hon. member representing that electorate. Also fortunate in electing A.L.P. members to this Assembly are the electorates of Warrego, Logan, Isis, Toowoomba West, Mackay, Brisbane, Bundaberg, Ipswich East and Rockhampton South, and I congratulate Mr. Jack Aiken, Mr. Ted Baldwin, Mr. Jim Blake, Mr. Ray Bousen, Mr. Edmund Casey, Mr. Brian Davis, Mr. Eugene Jensen, Mr. Evan Marginson, and Mr. Keith Wright, respectively, on their election to represent these electorates. I point out that the hon. member for Toowoomba West is an old railway colleague of mine. We served together on the State Council of the Australian Railways Union, of which I am a life member. The hon. member for Mackay follows in the footsteps of Mr. Fred Graham and the illustrious Mr. Forgan Smith.

Let me digress for a moment to compliment the new Labour members on their maiden speeches, which I consider were exceptionally good. I offer my sincere congratulations to the 11 new A.L.P. members on their election and extend to them a fraternal welcome to this great parliamentary institution.

I congratulate the three new Country Party members and the two new Liberal Party members who replaced former members, and I congratulate also the two new Ministers. I should like to see recorded in "Hansard" after the name of the new Minister for Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs, the decorations bestowed on him, namely, the M.M. and the A.F.M. I extend best wishes to all Government members for a short term of office, to conclude in 1972.

As this is the first occasion on which I have addressed this Assembly since my election for a third term, it behoves me to express my appreciation of the confidence and trust reposed in me by the electors of Cairns. In common with other members of the A.L.P., I am obliged to uphold the fine traditions of the party and to give full-time representation in the best interests of the electors.

For their assistance to me during my campaign, I extend my thanks to State officials Mr. Tom Burns and Mr. Bart Lourigan, the zone organiser, Mr. Jerry Jones, my campaign director, Mr. Kevin Crathern and to members of my campaign committee, who worked so diligently and zealously on my behalf and on behalf of the A.L.P. I express deep gratitude and appreciation to all of them for the hours they devoted to the organisation of the campaign. I thank the dedicated members of the Cairns, North Cairns, and Earlville A.L.P. branches, the Cairns women's branch of the A.L.P., the Young Labour Association in the area, and the affiliated unions. These people traditionally work voluntarily for the cause, year by year, campaign by campaign. On each and every election day they work as booth attendants, scrutineers, and supporters. They participate in a manner that makes one appreciate why one is in this place. No words of thanks or praise can adequately repay these members for their meaningful and spontaneous approach to their task.

With the opening of Parliament, hon. members learnt of the absence through illness of the newly-appointed Clerk of the Parliament, Mr. William Thomas Johnson. It is pleasing to welcome him back and to congratulate him on receiving his commission. No doubt many present in this Chamber will not witness another officer producing his commission and taking the oath of allegiance and the oath of office, as their remaining term of office will not be sufficiently long.

His Excellency the Administrator, commenting in his Opening Speech upon the honour he felt in his first opening of Parliament, said—

"To me, Parliament at its best represents the finest institutional system yet

devised by man for the just and orderly conduct of the affairs of the community of which he forms part.

"It naturally follows that it should be the constant endeavour of both electors and elected to keep it functioning at its very best."

Much has been said about long parliamentary recesses, and I add my voice to those who reject that concept. So far as I am concerned, a recess of eight months is shocking, to say the least, and the best interests of the elected or the electors cannot be served by such a long recess. It is quite evident that the electors are justified in questioning the efficiency of any institution which can go into recess for eight months. The parliamentary institution is weakened by such recesses, and the "bulwark of democracy", as His Excellency described Parliament, will crumble if that practice is allowed to continue.

Equal to, if not actually surmounting, the need to keep the parliamentary institution at its very best is the need to provide for elected members facilities that will enable them to represent the electors to the best of their personal abilities. Much has been said on these subjects by members on both sides of the House. Their sentiments and mine have been expressed in other places.

Apparently conditions in Queensland are similar to those in other parts of the world, and on that subject I quote from an editorial in "The Parliamentarian", the Journal of The Parliaments of the Commonwealth, for July, 1969—

"Facilities provided for Parliamentarians vary greatly throughout the Commonwealth. In many Parliaments inadequate working conditions and also the lack of essential services are matters of real concern."

Further on it states—

"This applies to backbenchers generally but in some cases especially to front-bench opposition Members in Commonwealth Parliaments who have no access to departmental sources or assistance. The onerous and growing complexity of demands made on Members undoubtedly requires that urgent attention should be given to this problem."

It states also—

"The facilities provided for Members of the U.S. Congress are beyond the dreams of Commonwealth Parliamentarians. So opulent are these services, and especially the provision of highly-qualified personal assistants, that one may reasonably wonder whether Congressmen ever have to write a speech or think out a personal approach to problems which face them in the course of their work."

I digress for a moment to say that if one speaks to a senator or congressman one finds that he has personal assistants, research workers, secretaries, and what-have-you. Every assistance is given to him to carry out his duty as a member of Parliament.

The editorial later states—

“Few Commonwealth Members would consider it reasonable to claim staff and facilities on the American scale, but all would undoubtedly welcome, within the limits of their Parliaments, some services along the lines of those provided by the Legislative Reference Service in Washington. Several of the larger Commonwealth Parliaments have already developed important research and other facilities to assist members in their work but there is need for further expansion of such services.”

**Mr. B. Wood:** How much did it cost you to set up your office?

**Mr. R. JONES:** I will tell the hon. member later; I do not think that I could give him an estimate at this stage. My office in Cairns, which is under my dwelling, would have cost me about \$1,000 to construct, without furnishings.

On the job, I think that hon. members on this side of the House—when I say “on the job”, I mean before coming into Parliament—would have banded together and appointed a representative or shop steward to advocate better working condition and higher standards if they had had to suffer conditions similar to those under which they now work. I will put my head on the block and say that I believe there is a natural reluctance on the part of members to advocate for something on their own behalf. Probably that is not something peculiar to members of Parliament; probably it applies equally to each and every Australian. It may stem from our British heritage and ideas such as “a stiff upper lip”, “don’t flinch”, and “one must bear up under stress”. However, I think we should look closely at a situation that is inhibiting efficiency and preventing us from giving the electors of this State the service that they demand.

I contend that the strain on the health of members of Parliament is highlighted by the death, during the 4½ years that I have been a member of this Assembly, of one Premier (Hon. J. C. A. Pizzey), one Minister (Hon. Ernest Evans), and two hon. members (Mr. “Watty” Wallace, whom I replaced, and Mr. Bill Ewan, who was member for Roma). Those men all died in office.

**An Honourable Member:** Your hair was not grey before you came in.

**Mr. R. JONES:** That is true. My hair was not grey before I entered Parliament. In addition, hon. members have seen, shortly after his retirement, the demise of Mr. Arthur Coburn, the former member for Burdekin. I believe that this underscores a definite need for re-thinking and a realisation of the situation with which members of Parliament are confronted.

I recall that, as a barefoot boy, probably in my brother’s hand-me-downs, I used to see one of our more affluent neighbours, who

owned a corner butcher shop, clip-clopping off to mass on Sunday in a very fine sulky. I recall, too, the local taxis, because in those days the only people who had cars were the managers of the various firms in Cairns and they were driven stylishly around the city. I mention those things to make the point that in my short lifetime, I have seen the last of the horse-drawn vehicles, the change from steam to diesel-powered locomotives in the railways, and recently man’s greatest single achievement (to this hour), the Apollo venture to the moon—man setting foot on the moon and walking in confidence. I believe that this is a magnificent human endeavour, with all its applications of technology, science, education, intelligence, international co-operation, and prestige. It is a magnificent achievement of man.

I shall not endeavour to analyse at this stage the policy relative to the space programme or to seek the details of the huge appropriations for space research and exploration or the aero-space industry. However, I understand that in the 1960-69 fiscal decade they amount to between 225 and 228 billion American dollars. To quote the words of my colleague the hon. member for Rockhampton South, astronaut Edwin E. Aldrin, Jnr., was only a “homo sapiens”. I repeat: the wonder is that in my short life span there has been a change from the fastest thing that a man could muster to carry him—the horse—to a manned flight to the moon. The horse served man as a means of conveyance for thousands of years, yet in my lifetime, in a short 30 years, I have seen the transition from that stage to one in which the most fantastic and, to the layman, the most incomprehensible feat of man, has been achieved, namely, to walk on another planet. Although they cannot be compared with the magnitude of advance in that vastly accelerated medium, three things have occurred, which I mention simply to indicate that technologically acceleration has interceded even in my short Parliamentary life of four and a-half years, without noticeable changes in the ordinary facilities of my everyday working conditions and life as a Parliamentarian. With the advent of the Seacom coaxial cable I can lift my telephone in Cairns and dial Brisbane S.T.D. and, for that matter, many other parts and cities in Australia. Through that same cable I can watch, in Cairns, television programmes of events, interviews and current affairs that keep me abreast of events as they are happening. In Cairns, through these media, I can now much more expeditiously and expeditiously keep abreast of current news as it is presented. I can step aboard a DC-9 aircraft at 7 a.m. in Cairns and arrive fresh in Brisbane at 9.25 a.m., less time than it takes many Sydney-siders to commute to work daily, or a Sunday driver to travel from Brisbane to the Gold Coast.

But, lamentably, I work in an office where 15 other members are trying to telephone, conduct deputations, interview constituents, entertain visitors or friends and even rehearse speeches, question one another, discuss current topics of the House, dictate correspondence—all seated at desks that are only three to six feet apart. With the confusion and contradictions in this space era, it could hardly be regarded as ideal working conditions for a member of Parliament.

**Mr. Bromley** interjected.

**Mr. R. JONES:** That could be correct. I advert to the original question by the hon. member for Cook. In Cairns during week-ends or long recesses, I have found it necessary over the years to construct my own office under my own residence. I have not received any assistance whatsoever from the Parliamentary institution—not a stick of furniture or any facility at all.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** You are not Robinson Crusoe.

**Mr. R. JONES:** The hon. member for Chatsworth interjects that I am not Robinson Crusoe, but he as a metropolitan member at least has at all times available to him the facilities of an office and a pool of typists. All he has to do is drive from his electorate into this House. And he has immediate access to every departmental officer in this area, whereas from Cairns it costs me in trunkline charges \$1.80 for every three minutes I talk to any departmental officer in this area.

Here again, necessity is the mother of invention, and, with true Australian initiative, we persevere. We have to preserve the privacy of our homes and respect the privacy and confidence of our electors. A country member must, therefore, provide an office and equipment, a typewriter and so on, in order to give the degree of efficiency demanded in basic matters that arise when Parliament is in recess or he is away in his electorate, even when, as in my case, he is only two hours 30 minutes from the metropolitan area. Because no staff is provided in my electorate, my wife has to act as my secretary.

**Mr. Bromley:** Unpaid, too.

**Mr. R. JONES:** She also becomes ex-officio member when I am not in the area. She is my assistant in all things. If, when I was a voluntary union sub-branch secretary, the volume of work that is placed on my wife in my absence fell to the lot of one of my members, I would have been advocating that he should have assistance. In the same way, the country member should be provided with adequate staff so that these onerous duties will not have to be performed by his wife. Not every hon. member's wife can competently handle secretarial work. She may not have the necessary education or temperament to assist a member of Parliament in his local

duties. It behoves all members of Parliament to seek secretarial assistance in their own electorates. While I am in Brisbane I have to burn the midnight oil to complete my work. I have to wait until the House is deserted to return to my table, which is in a room with 14 others, to do my writing or my study and research or whatever else is necessary to enable me to perform my parliamentary duties.

When I return to The Lodge, unless I get to bed and to sleep before my two room-mates, I spend hours lying awake listening to their snoring. Three of us share one room, and their beds are nearly as close to mine as are the tables in the office that I share with other members.

**Mr. Hughes:** They tell me you snore, too.

**Mr. R. JONES:** That is a contradiction; I definitely do not snore.

**Mr. Hughes:** They say you do.

**Mr. R. JONES:** My wife tells me that I do not—and I would rather believe her than the hon. member. In addition, I have checked with my room-mates, and they realise they snore.

While on the duties and responsibilities of members of Parliament, I must comment on one matter—and I do so facetiously. One of my colleagues said that a member of Parliament needed at least two degrees. Far be it from me to shudder at the thought, but, at the risk of being branded either "intellectual" or "anti-intellectual", I will. I would take the risk and advocate a few members of Parliament with university degrees, but certainly not all members of Parliament. I would also advocate and accept the election of members of Parliament with degrees of intelligence, wisdom, judgment, integrity, sincerity, common sense, concentration, good taste, humour, and, of course, a degree of oratory as well.

**Mr. Bromley:** And a degree of patience.

**Mr. R. JONES:** Yes, patience, charity, and all the Christian virtues as well. But no university course has yet been provided to give anybody a degree of instant statesmanship. I feel that democracy is served best by a cross-section of the community.

**Mr. Bromley** interjected.

**Mr. R. JONES:** I think that most members on this side of the Chamber have been through the university of hard knocks and the hard school of experience. Talking about degrees, I sometimes wonder whether a number of us did not stand for too long out in the sun in 110 degrees when we decided to take on the job in the first place.

I now wish to advert to a statement made on 19 August by the Minister for Mines in which he said that drilling can be controlled so that the risk is remote. In his Ministerial statement on the Ampol—Japex Mackay No. 1 well he said, "Everything

involves a risk." He also made the alarming statement that he decides, as he is empowered to do under the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act of 1967, what seems to be best and that his decision involves consideration of the least risk and the greatest benefit. In all sincerity, I ask him: the greatest benefit to whom?

I shall quote from "The Christian Science Monitor" of Saturday, 9 August, 1969, which is published in Boston and was supplied to me by the hon. member for Brisbane. Under the heading, "Focus on Washington", and the subheading, "How and Why", this appears—

"Those who've been shocked by the Santa Barbara oil spill will not be happy to learn that Santa Barbara was not a rare occurrence.

In the first seven months of 1969 a total of 110 oil spills were reported to the Federal Water Pollution Control Administration. Its spokesmen say that 22 of these were in excess of 10,000 gallons each.

In addition, 10 major spills of other hazardous materials (chemicals, paints, and acids) were reported.

The Federal Water Pollution Control Administration Director, David D. Dominick, says that stronger legislation, more manpower to fight the spills, and more funds for research to prevent spills are needed.

'Too often,' he says, 'we are fighting effects when we ought to be determining causes'."

I agree wholeheartedly.

The Minister in his speech on Thursday, 10 September, castigated members on this side of the House who, while making their maiden speeches, dared to be cryptic or criticise the Country-Liberal Government. I respectfully suggest that the pattern was set very early by the mover of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply and, indeed, by the seconder, too, when the mover deigned to adopt the manner of the ghost writer, and stated that he knew that socialists did not approve of the naming of streets and national assets after our renowned citizens; that they prefer numbers to names. Well, in reciprocal childlike fashion, I should nominate that statement as plain old-fashioned "No. 2", having in mind that such revered names as Chifley, Curtin, Bruce, Gillies, Story, and Wallace, which are emblazoned in Australian history, have been given to many of our institutions, assets, highways, bridges and streets. They have been named after illustrious members of the Labour Party, our forbears.

The Minister also said in his very aloof way that members of the Opposition, because they were not familiar with mining or mineral terminology, could not comment on, or disclaim, his theory on oil drilling. If mineral terminology covers them, I should

like the Minister to inform me of his terminology for "wanton destruction", "sell-out", "despoilation", and "disenchantment". As a Northerner with an electorate adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef, I say that he shall forever be held responsible for such utter foolishness. This is tragic and poor consolation for the heritage which should fall to the lot of future generations of Australians. Man, in his relentless lust for oil, is in danger of destroying one of the greatest wonders of the world, namely, the Great Barrier Reef.

We have also been accused by the Government of not raising our voices prior to the election campaign. I commend to the Minister's attention some of the debate from this side of the House when the submerged lands legislation was being debated long before the election. I refer him to some of the comments made from this side, and particularly my comments on the conservation of the Great Barrier Reef. The Minister will recall that that was just after the Torrey Canyon disaster.

The moguls of the world's great oil empires have set their sights on our reef. They are convinced that oil lies beneath the waves and they are prepared to spend a fortune in finding it. I ask, what do the people of Queensland want? Do they want more oil, or the continued existence of the greatest future tourist attraction and wonder of the world—a unique asset, a tremendous food-producing area, and a scientific wonderland?

Should it not be a question for Queenslanders to decide? There are two schools of thought. One is represented by the Premier, who, it is not denied, holds over 1,000,000 oil shares in Exoil No Liability, which are valued at more than \$720,000. I shall not debate the pros and cons of his obtaining those shares or of his \$4 transaction. His is the "more oil at any cost" school. The second school of thought, the one that I represent, is the "Hands off the Great Barrier Reef altogether" school. The A.L.P. makes it quite clear that the Great Barrier Reef should be preserved only for posterity and for the tourist and fishing industries. It is a natural wonder, and oil and reef-water will not mix. The fight is on. The preservation of the reef has become a major issue and anyone who wishes to choose weapons is quite welcome to do so.

Professor Jones of the Townsville University said that the sea can, and should, be farmed. He said that one acre of the sea could produce at a lower cost twice as much food as can one acre of land under beef production. He forecast also that the reef will become the world's largest cess-pool or marine desert if its exploitation is allowed.

During the election campaign the Minister for Mines was reported as follows in "The Courier-Mail" dated 26 March, 1969—

"It should be known that we have never granted any authorities to prospect for minerals in reef waters," Mr. Camm said."

Further on the article reads—

“Mr. Camm said the Government deferred decision on six applications for off-shore prospecting well before the A.L.P. began its campaign against the Premier.”

Earlier he had said—

“It is our aim to give all possible protection to the reef and adjacent areas.”

What he did not say was that in mineral terminology, which he claims we do not understand, oil is not a mineral. Therefore, he said, the companies were not prospecting for minerals in reef areas. However, during that period, they were certainly prospecting for oil.

Let me deal now with a tragic situation that was the most noteworthy and newsworthy event in years. The “Santa Barbara News-Press” dated 7 May, 1969, reported—  
“100 Days—and Still the Oil Spews”

That refers to the 100 days between 28 January, when the oil first burst out into the sea, to 7 May.

On page 10 there appeared—

“On January 28, 1969, the crew of Union Oil Co’s. Platform A hit a gas pocket while drilling under 192 feet of water. Attempts to stop the gas blow-out in the drilling hole caused an ocean bottom fissure to open. This brought up gas and oil in extensive amounts. Estimates ranged from 5,000 barrels a day to 500 barrels a day. As a result of plugging the hole, the flow from the fissure has been reduced to an amount estimated at about 840 gallons a day by the U.S. Geological Survey and 10 times that amount by independent scientists. The oil continues to spread out over the channel surface and onto the area’s beaches. Today is the 100th day of the flow. The pictures on this page were taken yesterday by Dick Smith of the News-Press staff.”

Those pictures depict the devastation on the shores on the Santa Barbara coast.

On page 1 this appeared—

“With no end in sight, the Santa Barbara Channel oil pollution crisis went into its 100th day today. Crude oil continued to flow into the channel waters from fissures in the ocean bottom near Union Oil Co’s. Platform A, 5½ miles off Santa Barbara’s contaminated beaches. It started with an oil well blowout on the platform, Jan. 28, and all efforts to stop the underseas eruption have failed.”

The public relations manager for Union Oil, Mr. Fritz Springmann, was asked to make a statement on the 100th day, and he said, “What can we say after 100 days? The same thing I said 99 days ago: I wish the damn thing would stop.” Alan Allen, research specialist of the General Research Corporation, who estimated the flow of oil, said that about 3,250,000 gallons of crude

oil had entered the water. He estimated the current flow at about 8,000 gallons a day or more.

Further on it is stated—

“Santa Barbara Harbour looked especially dirty’, he said. ‘Oil in large swirls was seen all over the surface of the water. Oily residue floated away from the dredge outfall on East Beach. The dredge was picking up bottom sand that looked as black as tar and was spewing it out into the ocean below the harbour.’”

It is stated at page 3—

“Nature may need five years to clean area beaches. If the oil flow from Platform A stopped today, it would take three to five years for nature to restore the sands of Arroyo Burro Beach to a clean state.”

There also is an illustration showing the overburden of sand that has been applied by the hands of others to clean up the beach. Underneath the photograph this appears—

“Fairly clean overburden of sand lying between the hands of Dr. Robert Curry, geologist, is above a coalblack band of oil-saturated sand at Arroyo Burro Beach, a county park highly popular with area residents for many years. The oil band extends about two feet below his lower hand, then there is another layer of cleaner sand, and below that the oil-coated stones of the pebble beach as it existed when oil from the channel spill first came ashore about Feb. 1.”

In effect, sand was put on top of the oil-soaked sand to clean up the beach, and that is why the beach looks all right now. It also is stated in the newspaper that the oil-soaked sand two feet below the surface will permeate through to the top in the winter season when natural erosion takes place, just as it takes place in Queensland on the South Coast and in the far north.

The report states what is happening in the courts and refers to the issuing of an injunction. It mentions also what is being done by Senator Cranston and Charles M. Teague, who is the local representative.

I ask the Minister if he will ask the companies for unlimited liability if they drill on the reef. I should say that no oil company would be game to drill under those conditions because history shows that no-one can give an assurance that there will not be a blow-out. So far as North Queensland is concerned, the risk is too great to be taken. The Great Barrier Reef is our asset and our heritage, and we cannot afford to allow oil drilling to take place on it. Only oil company top executives and shareholders can gain from drilling on the Reef. As Queenslanders, we have an inherent right to the Reef and its environs. It has a tourist and fishing potential. And let no-one mention national parks to me, because they probably will suffer the same fate as was suffered by

the Aboriginal reserves at Weipa when the big companies came in and wanted to mine on the reserves.

(Time expired.)

**Hon. S. D. TOOTH** (Ashgrove—Minister for Health) (3.55 p.m.): I regret that my contribution to this debate will not be what I had originally intended it to be, namely, a detailed analysis of the conduct, tactics and results of the recent State election. As hon. members know, I am a man of peace, and I was looking forward to a calm, objective, unhurried and pleasant discussion of the campaign and of all that had happened.

**Mr. Davies** interjected.

**Mr. TOOTH:** However, since then, as the hon. member for Maryborough said, a number of things have happened, and in view, in particular, of the attacks upon the Department of Health by the hon. member for Wavell, a member of my own party, the Liberal Party, and a pledged supporter of the Government, it is incumbent upon me to make a reply in defence of Government policy and of those officers, both professional and lay, who, notwithstanding Dr. Crawford's frequent disclaimers, are under attack.

**Mr. Bromley:** Why didn't the doctor say these things before he entered Parliament?

**Mr. TOOTH:** The hon. member can ask the doctor that. I do not know.

I make these comments because, right at the outset, I wish to indicate to Liberal Party members and supporters that this situation is not one of my seeking.

**Mr. Bennett:** Did you give Tom Aikens those questions to ask about the doctors?

**Mr. TOOTH:** Certainly not.

Indeed, when I learned, prior to the opening of Parliament, from the hon. member himself, that he intended to pursue this course, I strongly urged him to refrain from any hasty action until such time as he had an opportunity to study Parliamentary procedure, the general effect of any precipitancy on his part, and to study from the inside the workings of Parliament and the workings of the administration of government. I pointed out to Dr. Crawford that if his feelings and convictions were such as demanded immediate relief, the proper places for an initial airing were within the councils of the Liberal Party and within the private meetings of the Parliamentary group.

Unfortunately, this advice was not heeded. For reasons best known to himself, Dr. Crawford has deliberately chosen to leap without delay into the Parliamentary spotlight, to denigrate 12 years of work by this Government under most difficult conditions, work which has markedly advanced and improved the health services of Queensland—the first seven years being under the administration of my late friend and colleague, Dr. H. W. Noble, the last five being my responsibility.

Dr. Crawford is a surgeon with three post-graduate degrees and a quarter of a century's practice behind him. On this basis he claims to be expert in all matters of health administration. There are many who would combat this pretention, but I will content myself by quoting a comment made in another context by a medical colleague and close friend of his, Dr. A. W. Hartwig, formerly President of the Liberal Party in Queensland.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. TOOTH:** In "The Courier-Mail" of 1 September, 1969, Dr. Hartwig wrote—

"... it is incumbent upon a democracy not to take any statement at face value, irrespective of the authority, position or reputation of the person making it."

**Mr. BENNETT:** I rise to a point of order. Under the Standing Orders, is it proper for the Minister to be prosecuting a quarrel with the hon. member for Wavell?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I cannot see that a quarrel is being prosecuted. Only one person has spoken.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** I rise to a point of order. Under Standing Orders, is it possible for any hon. member to comment on a speech made by another hon. member in the current session?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I ask the hon. member for Norman not to rise on trivial points of order that are unfounded and not in accordance with the Standing Orders.

**Mr. Bennett:** You told me I could not prosecute a quarrel here.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. Davies** interjected.

**Mr. TOOTH:** In reply to the hon. member, for the second time I suggest that he direct his inquiries as to Dr. Crawford's tactics and statements to Dr. Crawford and not to me. I am not in any way answerable for anything Dr. Crawford has said in this Chamber.

Since Parliament assembled, Dr. Crawford has pursued a vigorous policy of continuous criticism and attack through Press, radio and television. It is therefore necessary, indeed inevitable, that this reply must be equally public and that I must make the defence that these circumstances demand in the same way that he has mounted his attack.

Now let me say right at the outset what my attitude is towards the Health Department and to problems of administrative efficiency and review. I made this very clear during a television interview on the A.B.C. shortly after Dr. Crawford made his first assault. I was asked whether I was rejecting out of hand that there was

any need for drastic reform. I replied that I would firmly reject a charge that there is need for drastic reform, that is, an over-turning of the whole system, but, on the other hand, I would never and no administrator ever should reject the proposition that there is always need in these rapidly changing times, for continual review and progressive reform in the conduct of the administrative arm of government. That is so axiomatic that it would appear to be unnecessary to say it. The sort of reform to be attempted must, of course, be approached with realism and the most important factor involving realism in the affairs of not only the Health Department but of all departments of State is the financial resources that are made available to us. Any "bull in a china shop" attack upon our problems must rapidly exhaust those resources and the last state of our affairs will be worse than the first.

Let me state one simple proposition—there is no situation in the Health Department that cannot be vastly improved by more money and very few problems that sufficient additional funds would not completely solve, so that it would seem that all we have to do is to get more money; but first let us see what the hon. member for Wavell has to say about this.

In his maiden speech he said, ". . . with every person doing the job he has been trained to do costs should decrease . . .", but five minutes later in the same speech, discussing daily bed costs, he said, "The price of this unit in Queensland has risen from \$9 to \$14 daily in the past three years and it will go higher . . . This rise is inevitable and will continue rapidly for many reasons we cannot control."

Seeing that the hon. member achieved this remarkable volte face in a few minutes it was not surprising to read some days later in "The Courier-Mail" on the first of this month that he said, "The current health budget of \$48 million annually should be raised to \$80 million." that is an increase of \$32 million.

Actually the current health budget is already about \$80 million but by Dr. Crawford's standards, that error is only a trivial matter, as we shall see, because, in "The Australian" another three days later, we read, "They say money is tied up with everything", said Dr. Arthur Pinkerton Crawford, 'But it is only a minor detail. Everything costs money but that aspect is not my main concern. This money business is only a red herring.'

An immediate increase of \$32,000,000 annually is some red herring—at any rate, by my standards—but I assure the House that if the Treasurer can produce it the Health Department will consume it with relish, and then, perhaps, we may have a little peace for a time.

In passing, let us note the airy comment, "that aspect is not my main concern". This, I have noticed, is always the attitude of the righteous reformer. The sordid matter of money is never his concern. That part is always the responsibility of the lowly politician.

However, let us look for a moment at the problems that confront the Treasurer, the man who has to find the money. I will give some approximate round figures. Out of a pool of about \$400,000,000 annually, after returning approximately \$100,000,000 to the Railway Department for working expenses, he allots over \$100,000,000 to education, something to the order of \$60,000,000 to health (the difference of \$20,000,000 comes from Commonwealth allocations and other sources), and he then has \$140,000,000 in round figures for everything else—for local government, police, the courts of justice, prisons, primary industries, harbours and marine, fisheries; all the multifarious and essential activities of government.

If Dr. Crawford would concern himself for a brief space of time with matters of finance, may I ask him if he would take the extra \$32,000,000 from those areas that I have just enumerated, or would he demand it from the teachers? Bear in mind that the president of the Teachers' Union was recently reported as having said that the education Vote should be doubled to over \$200,000,000. That would have to come out of the Treasurer's pool of \$400,000,000. Let me say to the House that, if we cannot get a little realism from the advocates of drastic change, the only alternative, if they are to have their way, is a steep increase—indeed, a Draconian increase—in taxation. Does Dr. Crawford advocate that, or does he suggest that we reduce the education Vote instead of increasing it as the teachers demand? Or shall we cut down on police—the friends of the hon. member for South Brisbane—or primary industries or local government? I say to the doctor, "Let's be practical. Let's have a few simple proposals to solve this not-so-simple problem."

I have not forgotten that the hon. member has offered one suggestion. He did say, "Massive fund-raising projects could be undertaken to involve the general public, and unlimited benefit would flow therefrom." Is this where he proposes to get a substantial part of the additional \$32,000,000 per annum? The hon. gentleman is living in a world of fantasy. Let him talk with the fund raisers for the Cancer Appeal, the National Heart Foundation or one of the other numerous worthy causes seeking public support at present. Better still, let him talk to the organisers of the ill-fated Children's Hospital Foundation. Finally, let him talk to John Citizen about his proposal to mount fund-raising projects for the State's public hospitals system. The hon. gentleman has a lot to learn about relatively simple things.

One further comment on finance: we have Dr. Crawford's advice vide his maiden speech—

**Mr. BENNETT:** I rise to a point of order. I like a certain amount of dignity and decorum in this Chamber. Is it proper for the Minister to refer to the hon. member for Wavell as "Dr. Crawford"? Should he not refer to him as "the hon. member for Wavell" like any other member of this Parliament?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** It is the custom to refer to another member by the name of his electorate, and I hope that the hon. member for South Brisbane will remember that, also.

**Mr. Bennett:** It has me worried.

**Mr. TOOTH:** I am distressed that the hon. member for South Brisbane should be worried by any dereliction on my part. I hope that he will survive the agony of this incident.

We have the advice of the hon. member for Wavell, vide his maiden speech, that "The Nimmo Commission's Report... will when its recommendations are implemented help Queensland immeasurably." I regret to say that the hon. gentleman is wrong again in that it will not help Queensland immeasurably. It may help the State to the tune of between \$1,000,000 and \$2,000,000, still leaving it with over \$30,000,000 to find to match Dr. Crawford's ideas on finance; and, furthermore, there is no guarantee that it will be implemented. It is currently under heavy fire from many doctors and other interested groups, as, of course, are the other proposals, including those from Mr. Whitlam, that have been placed before the people.

Turning from the matters of dollars and cents, the hon. member demanded that the Hospitals Acts "be repealed in toto as no modification of the Acts would suffice" and made reference on two occasions to evidence of the influence of "a persecuted, paranoid mentality" in the Acts. Well, thank God I did not have anything to do with their enactment, although from time to time I have had something to do with amendments. One would expect this extraordinarily extravagant and intemperate language to be followed by a careful and detailed analysis of the Acts, section by section, to illustrate their total incompatibility with the conduct of an efficient hospital system; but no such analysis is attempted. Apart from one specific complaint about a regulation—not mentioned in the Acts—prohibiting employees of hospital boards from criticising publicly or in the Press the policy and administration of their employers—

**Mr. Marginson:** That is in the regulations.

**Mr. TOOTH:** I said it is in the regulations. The hon. member for Ipswich East is expert. I acknowledge him.

**Mr. Bennett:** You were about to kick an administrator.

**Mr. TOOTH:** I keep my eye on the hon. member. I have very great respect for his knowledge of the Acts and the administration of a hospital.

I repeat that, apart from one specific complaint about a regulation—not mentioned in the Acts—prohibiting employees of hospital boards from criticising publicly or in the Press the policy and administration of their employers, the hon. gentleman indulged in a series of wild generalisations, finally coming up with a demand to sweep the entire Act away.

**Mr. Bennett:** Do you think that the Attorney-General should cite him to the A.M.A.? On your argument, I think he should charge him.

**Mr. TOOTH:** I understand the intention of the hon. member for South Brisbane, but I assure him that I will take the necessary steps to stick to what I have to say and see that it is written into the record.

I repeat that the hon. member for Wavell came up finally with a demand to sweep the entire Act away—to get rid of it; to throw it out. This remarkable proposal to "throw the baby out with the bath water" is a measure of the intemperate, emotional material that is an element of the whole of the hon. member's sustained attack on the Queensland hospital system.

One recent development in the hon. member's public utterances has been a series of assurances, repeated over and over, that he is not opposed to Queensland's free hospital system.

I will not say, "Methinks the doctor doth protest too much". Rather will I say how glad I am to have his reassurances, because it will be recalled that in his original speech he referred to free hospitalisation in derogatory terms as the "holy cow" of Queensland political thinking, and said, "This is not nearly as important as it has been thought to be in the past." When one notes the hon. member's close association with a small but vocal group of Liberals both inside and outside Parliament who have shown a consistent lack of enthusiasm for the State's free hospital system, it is not unreasonable to have had some small anxiety as to where he stood on this question. To find that he stands four-square with me on this particular issue is some consolation for everything else that has happened, because I want there to be no doubt as to my attitude. I firmly support the present measure and degree of free hospital treatment in Queensland, and I hope there will not be any development within the Government ranks which will require me, or any who succeed me, to reduce it.

It is necessary, however, to return to the points of difference between the hon. member and myself. The hon. member for Wavell seems to be mesmerised by certain words. He talks of boards of governors for hospitals as if the use of the word "governors" will confer some special quality on hospital boards which he considers they do not possess at

present, and then he offers an affront to all members of existing boards by saying, "As long as a man is not a criminal or insane he need have no qualifications whatsoever", and follows that by describing his own ideal board in these words—"a board of governors of practising doctors, nurses, and leading citizens such as lawyers, accountants and union administrators should be appointed."

I do not know whether the hon. member for Wavell had the hon. member for South Brisbane in mind when he enumerated these possible members of the board. I hope he did not.

The hon. member for Wavell does not seem to be aware that these are the kind of people who make up our hospitals boards at the present time. Let me describe the board controlling the Royal Brisbane Hospital at this moment. In addition to the chairman, who is a highly qualified and experienced administrator, there is the vice-chairman, who has a long record of service as a leader of a trade union. His industrial experience has been immensely valuable to the hospital. Other members include a well-known barrister, the managing director of an Australia-wide company, two ladies, one with wide nursing experience throughout the State, and a professor from the Faculty of Medicine at the university. Until his recent lamented death, one of the State's leading practising doctor-knights was also on the board. He has yet to be replaced. These people do not merit the description of "having no qualifications whatsoever".

The hon. member seems to labour under the delusion that practising doctors are excluded from membership of hospital boards. The reverse is the case. Where they are available and willing to serve, medical practitioners have been appointed to hospitals boards in all parts of the State.

**Mr. Lonergan:** Since when did you change the policy on that? You told me something totally different a few years ago.

**Mr. TOOTH:** I am afraid that the hon. member for Flinders has misunderstood me on that issue, as he has misunderstood me on a number of others.

As far as administrative staff is concerned, let me refer again to the Royal Brisbane Hospital. The hospital system belongs to each and every member of this House and all hon. members might as well know something about it. There obviously is an abyssmal ignorance of it at present. The manager of the Royal Brisbane Hospital is a qualified accountant; the assistant manager also has his accountancy qualifications; the officer in charge of the Central Accounting Bureau has his B. Com. degree; and so it goes on.

The hon. member for Wavell should have acquainted himself with these facts before he launched into the scathing and derogatory and, let me say, rather condescending references that he indulged in during his maiden

speech. Hospitals boards and hospitals staff throughout the State maintain a generally high standard with, of course, the occasional exception to the rule, and it is a matter of considerable regret to me that their efforts should have attracted the rather contemptuous comments of the hon. member.

The hon. member really goes beyond all reasonable bounds, however, when he says, "In Queensland a medical man who is, on the whole, non-practising or minimally practising is appointed to be in charge of a hospital . . . and then a board is appointed whose members electively have no qualifications. This is almost a Gilbertian situation."

Such a derogatory reference to the superintendents of our public hospitals is, I feel, quite unacceptable. What does the hon. member know of the quality of these men? What opportunity has he to judge? Let me assure the House and the community that our hospital superintendents are, with very few exceptions, dedicated and devoted practitioners of medicine, involved daily, and often for long hours, in the care of the public patients of our much-maligned public hospital system. Only in the case of the great metropolitan hospitals do administrative burdens now tend to outweigh participation in active practice, but superintendents have not by any means retired from this field. They involve themselves both directly and indirectly as needs demand and opportunities offer. They are continuously available to members of the full-time staff in a consultative or advisory capacity, and are thereby almost continuously involved in active work.

And what of their academic standing? In addition to the basic degrees which are required of all registered medical practitioners, superintendents of base hospitals throughout Queensland possess higher academic qualifications in various specialist branches. One of the metropolitan superintendents is a member of the Royal College of Physicians, London, and Elected Fellow of the Royal Australian College of Physicians, and a Foundation Fellow of the Australian College of Medical Administrators; another belongs to that small elite group holding the degree Doctor of Medicine conferred by his university after acceptance of a learned treatise on a medical subject. In addition, he is also a Foundation Fellow of the Australian College of Medical Administrators and a Member of the Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh.

Ten superintendents of hospitals in provincial cities are registered specialist surgeons. Nine of these are Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons of either England or Edinburgh; four are Fellows of the Royal Australian College of Surgeons. In addition, three are Foundation Fellows of the Australian College of Medical Administrators. So much for the different groups directly associated with the public hospitals.

The hon. member has also indicated his poor opinion of those whom he variously describes as "the Minister's advisers" or "the Health Department planners". His fixation on this matter is so immovable that only as recently as last Wednesday, when describing legislation I brought to this House as being "up to world standard", he was unable to refrain from the comment that he did "not trust the judgment of the planners of the Department of Health".

May I remind hon. members that, because of a series of deaths and retirements, there are virtually no members of the top echelon of the Health Department who have been in their present offices for more than three years. To whom does Dr. Crawford refer? Is it the old brigade, most of whom have gone to their eternal reward, though some are still with us—men under whose leadership the health services struggled out of the morass of war and post-war difficulties; men who held on grimly, making the most of every cent whilst the new Government after 1957 endeavoured to overtake the appalling lag in education, and who came to the end of their course just as the glimmerings of a better day began to appear? Or is the reference to their successors, the men who have inherited their triumphs and their problems—men who will be able to seize the opportunities now presenting themselves and provide for this community an ever-increasing measure of the health and welfare that it is our task to provide? Be it the old or the new, it is my privilege to stand here today and reject the aspersions cast upon them by the hon. member for Wavell.

All men are fallible, even the hon. member for South Brisbane. No public servant, high or low, has ever, to my knowledge, claimed perfection. But let me assure the House that, in loyalty and dedication to the task of securing for the people of Queensland the best that our circumstances and resources will permit, we are well served by "the Minister's advisers".

I turn now to one specific complaint upon which the hon. member has talked at some length and upon which also he obviously is confused. He said, "Any member of any section under the control of the board should be given the right—not forbidden as at present—to present constructive criticism to the board."

The hon. gentleman is very much astray in these statements. Any employee of any board has the right now to present criticism, constructive or otherwise, to the board. Comments and complaints come frequently from the medical superintendents and matrons who attend board meetings and participate fully and freely in discussions. Staff members have access to the chairmen and secretaries of their respective boards, sometimes with quite dramatic results.

**Mr. Porter:** What about the lass in Townsville?

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**Mr. TOOTH:** Be cautious. For example, in an important country hospital recently, members of the trained nursing staff made written complaints to the board regarding the matron's disciplinary measures—please note, not on the grounds of their severity. The board investigated the complaint and the matter was resolved to the sisters' satisfaction.

**Mr. Houston** interjected.

**Mr. TOOTH:** Is the Leader of the Opposition not interested in the story?

The matron was not happy with the board's decision and resigned.

The thing that is forbidden—not specifically in the Act but by regulation—is public comment by an employee of a board in the Press, on radio or television, or at a meeting or in any other way. The relevant regulation reads—

"An employee shall not—

(i) Publicly comment upon the administration of any Branch of the Board; or

(ii) Use for any purpose other than for the discharge of official duties information gained by or conveyed to him through his connection with the service of the Board."

There is nothing unusual in this prohibition. It applies also to the State Public Service. It is the rule in the Commonwealth Public Service. Indeed I recently heard the Federal Attorney-General himself vigorously explain and defend this provision at a gathering of Young Liberals. In another context, let me remind hon. members, Dr. Crawford has referred favourably to Mount Isa Mines Limited and Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd. Would the boards of either of these companies permit an employee to comment publicly and critically on their organisation and policy?

I have no doubt that in his Wickham Terrace suite, Dr. Crawford employs a couple of nurse-receptionists and pays them well. Would he be happy if one of them attended a meeting of the Nurses' Association and commented publicly and critically on his attitude towards his patients. I am sure he would punish this apocryphal young lady with instant dismissal—and in my opinion, he would be fully justified.

Would any hon. member listening to me now approve if one of our uniformed attendants in this Chamber approached the Sunday Press and commented that the member for A, or B, or C was indolent or lazy or ignorant and was unworthy to be one of this august Assembly. I can imagine the cries of anguished indignation that would assault Mr. Speaker's ears—and with every justification, too.

The only organisation of any consequence of which I am aware, that permits this sort of thing is the University of Queensland. It is true that on the campus at St. Lucia junior staff and other employees are permitted to take part in the creation of mock

courts to try members of the university Senate; and in other ways they exercise full licence to comment upon and criticise those who pay them and who are supposed to direct their activities.

It has been explained to me that universities are peculiar and special places and that their dissent, disagreement, disputation and disorder are good things. "You must allow everyone to talk freely, even if they talk bosh," the Acting Vice-Chancellor told us last Sunday. This, I have been assured, stimulates mental and emotional activity and promotes great intellectual development. The fact that it also promotes the interruption of Senate meetings and the occupation of the Senate Chamber by lounging students, is, I am told, just an unfortunate by-product.

Be that as it may, hospitals are different. They are frequently dealing with precarious life and near instant death and must run as smoothly and as amicably as possible. Assent, agreement and order are important to their task and these would rapidly erode were every employee from the senior physician or nursing sister down to the junior wardman or housemaid permitted to take "pot shots" through the Sunday papers at the medical superintendent, the matron or even the Board.

Let me repeat: comment, critical or otherwise, within the organisation directed to the boards is not prohibited. Public comment is.

(Time, on motion of Mr. Hooper, extended.)

**Mr. TOOTH:** It would be proper, at this point, to turn to another issue raised by the hon. member for Wavell—the matter of esprit de corps in our hospitals. Dr. Crawford said, ". . . there has never been in my experience—my colleagues to a man would endorse this—any esprit de corps or sense of belonging . . . fostered in any part of our hospital system."

By any standards, this is pretty rough talk and is a gross reflection upon every medical superintendent and every matron in Queensland, apart from board members. From the admittedly superficial judgments that I am able to make during not infrequent visits to hospitals throughout the State, I would say that the hon. gentleman is so wrong that it is pitiable. Esprit de corps is, however, an intangible, a difficult thing to judge. How does Dr. Crawford judge it? It is wrapped up in the personalities of the leaders in each and every situation. I can think of a hospital in a large provincial city which, through a variety of circumstances, has not been particularly well favoured by the provision of new buildings and the uplift in morale that usually accompanies them. Yet I have always felt on my visits there that there is a real team spirit in the place and that it is generated and sustained by those carrying the responsibilities of leadership.

In other places one senses a clash of personalities and that things are, perhaps, not so good.

How does the hon. gentleman make a judgment that permits him to say that esprit de corps is not fostered in any part of our hospital system? He gives us one clue. He tells a story of a London doctor who became a drug addict and was rehabilitated by his own hospital in a non-medical field. The hon. gentleman then comments, "That could not happen in this State." As a matter of fact, it did happen in this State quite recently, and we did better than the hon. gentleman's English model. The man concerned is still practising his profession of medicine and, on latest reports, doing very well. Furthermore, we are currently looking after another young doctor with a similar problem, and here, too, the latest reports are very encouraging.

The one additional comment that I would make is that many people who help to promote frequent and futile controversy in the Press and elsewhere do little to create or sustain esprit de corps in our hospitals. On the other hand, I am immensely grateful to those who, by private letter—and I have received a very large number of them—or by letters to the Press—and there was one this morning—where they occasionally see the light of day, help to boost the morale of staff at all levels.

To revert for a moment to our free-hospitals system, let me quote from one of the many Press articles that have appeared recently. It said—

"One specialist said, 'Our dual system of hospital practice is ideal. If you feel you are going to be financially embarrassed by the need for hospital treatment, then you can have it free. If you can afford it you can go to a private hospital.'"

He might well have added, "or to a private medical practitioner in his rooms."

This underlines what the Government is trying to achieve—a delicate balance between private and public services in health to the community, each, to some extent, supporting the other. This mutual support is exemplified not only in the system of part-time paid specialist staff but in many other ways as well, such as the acceptance by medical practitioners in smaller centres of responsibility for the superintendency of the local free public hospital on a paid part-time basis; or the support willingly given, in most cases, by private practitioners in the larger country centres for the full-time medical superintendent to enable him to have some relief and relaxation.

If this balance is to be maintained it is immensely important that public confidence in the system be not undermined because we are under constant pressure not only from those who wish to erode the free-hospitals system but also from those who wish to expand it—and expand it extensively.

I think that at the moment we have a pretty good division of responsibility between the public and the private services, but any major breakdown or undermining of confidence could so marshall public opinion on one side or the other that the whole balance could be upset, with unforeseeable consequences.

Two other comments of Dr. Crawford's should engage our attention. Firstly, he said, "After the old legislation is expunged the whole health service should be divided into three self-governing sections; first, mental health and welfare; second, public health; and third, hospitals." Secondly, he said, "I still like a truly 'honorary' visiting staff." I cite these two statements to show how out of touch with up-to-date thinking Dr. Crawford's proposals are. With regard to honorary specialist services, there is a strong trend away from them in the southern States towards something like the Queensland system, especially where teaching is involved. As for Queensland itself, is there any enthusiasm for a reversion to the honorary system among the hon. gentleman's colleagues? Will they support him? I've seen no evidence of it.

The hon. members' advocacy of a three-fold division of our health services, with autonomy in each, is also a departure from modern thinking. Integration, not fragmentation, is the firm policy of the Queensland State Health Department and we have been implementing it as and when opportunity offered and funds became available, with, let me say, an increasing tempo in recent times.

I now quote from Professor Thomas McKeown's book, "Medicine in Modern Society", quite a recent and, indeed, epoch-making work, published in 1965. At page 133, he said—

"The disadvantages of isolating any medical service have been discussed but there are some which are special to psychiatry. The idea that mental illness is fundamentally different from physical illness is deeply rooted, and seriously prejudices efforts to prevent and treat it. This attitude is unlikely to be shifted so long as it appears to be endorsed by medical opinion, and this is the conclusion which will inevitably be drawn from a decision that psychiatry patients must be segregated."

The hon. member's idea that mental health and welfare should "have its own board of governors which would be quite autonomous" would, of course, only perpetuate the situation condemned by McKeown, and reverse the policy steadily pursued by Queensland since it was initiated by Dr. Noble. It was he who fully implemented the first step by removing senile patients from the mental hospitals to annexes attached to various acute hospitals.

Since then, there has been a series of progressive reforms involving the development of psychiatric units at our general acute hospitals, the best known of which is probably

the neuro-psychiatric unit at Chermside. In the new multi-storey block at Townsville, three floors are to be devoted to psychiatry, completely integrated with the general acute hospital. Careful classification of patients in the mental hospitals has been proceeding apace and we have now been able to identify and remove to Sandy Gallop large numbers of the intellectually handicapped, as distinct from the mentally ill. Sandy Gallop has been re-named Challinor Centre and was the subject of a most glowing review in the latest issue of "The Sunday-Mail Colour Magazine". I commend that article to the attention of any hon. member who has not yet read it.

All these moves are rapidly leading to the complete implementation of the policy we have been driving towards during the last ten years, namely, the fullest integration of treatment of the mentally ill with treatment of other illnesses in the acute general hospitals. The mental hospitals, we hope, will ultimately become rehabilitation centres for the chronically ill.

These reforms were stimulated through missions overseas by the then Director of Psychiatric Services in 1959 and by his Deputy in 1964. They had, however, been foreshadowed as early as 1955, when Sir Earle Page—then Commonwealth Minister for Health—made certain financial proposals for the payment of hospital benefits for the mentally ill, provided they were accommodated in acute wards. In general, the Commonwealth, then as now, resolutely refused, and still refuses, to pay hospital or sickness benefits of any kind for the mentally ill in mental hospitals. There are a few special exceptions.

Queensland led amongst the States in beginning this new concept of removal from the mental hospitals and integration with general hospitals and, in the last decade, our finances as a result, have benefited, in round figures by about \$10,000,000 from Commonwealth sources. This, of course, is unimportant when compared with the vastly more important factor, namely, the tremendous therapeutic benefits which have accrued to the patients.

I have explained this at some length to demonstrate how remote from recent thinking one of the hon. member's most important proposals is. I wish however, at this point, to say that because I have quoted McKeown on this particular subject, it does not mean that we have accepted all his theories. They are, nevertheless, being carefully reviewed with other matters by the expert committee presently making preliminary studies for the proposed Mt. Gravatt hospital.

There is a great deal more in the speech of the hon. member for Wavell which I wish to canvass, but that must suffice for the present. The Budget debate and discussion of departmental Estimates will, I hope, present further opportunities to pursue these matters.

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH** (Tablelands) (4.46 p.m.): After hearing the speech of the Minister for Health, one could be forgiven for thinking that the House is debating a motion for the adoption of the speech of the hon. member for Wavell and not of the Opening Speech of His Excellency the Administrator. Never have I heard a Minister devote 99 per cent. of his speech to pulling to pieces the remarks of an hon. member.

I shall begin in the opposite way by thanking the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader and members of the branches in my electorate for the support that they gave me in the recent election campaign.

I welcome new members on both sides of the House. Judging them by their maiden speeches, I am sure that they are worthy representatives of their electorates. Through you, Mr. Speaker, I say to the hon. member for Wavell, "Your effort was courageous and sincere. Please do not change." The businesslike approach adopted by new members foreshadows some forthright and good speeches from them when legislation is before the House. I am sure that the tenor of proceedings in the House has improved greatly since the election on 17 May.

Early in the election campaign the hon. member for Isis and I were singled out for special attention by "The Courier-Mail" and other newspapers, probably at the instigation of Government members. It was claimed that our seats would be won by the Government and that Government candidates were almost certain to be elected. Although it is pleasing to one's ego to see that one is attracting a good deal of attention from Government members, Ministers and party officials, I must say that some of the methods used during the recent campaign reached an all-time low. I intend to deal with some of them in detail so that the methods used by people who are supposed to be leaders and law-makers in the State will be on record.

Let me refer to the "offensive" that was waged in my electorate, because that is where I was and I have first-hand knowledge of the tactics.

The first phase included that departmental replies and Cabinet decisions were channelled to the Country Party candidate, and I shall outline to hon. members how that was done, taking only one instance in each case. Election day was 17 May. The following paragraph appeared in "The Ravenshoe Times" of 15 May, 1969:—

"Mr. Mick Borzi, endorsed Country Party Candidate for Tablelands, has received the following telegram from the Minister for Education, the Hon. A. R. Fletcher: 'Ravenshoe State School, being class two, will be covered by policy announcement that janitor groundsman will be appointed. Unable advise exactly when appointments will be made until after elections. Signed Fletcher, Education Minister.'"

After the election I thought that, as I was the representative of the people of Ravenshoe, I would send a telegram to the Minister for Education. I did so, and I received this reply on 23 May—

"No definite date yet appointment of groundsman. Regret Herberton and Dimbula will not qualify. Fletcher."

When the House eventually met, I asked the Minister when the appointment of a groundsman to the Ravenshoe school could be expected.

His reply was—

"In terms of the Premier's policy speech, it is expected that janitor-groundsman will be employed in Class I and Class II Primary Schools as from January 27, 1970. Ravenshoe and Atherton will both qualify."

A telegram containing that information was sent to the Country Party candidate two days before the election, yet no action is to be taken till 27 January 1970. I wonder why there should be such urgency? Can hon. members follow it? I think they can.

So much for the first point. The second point in conducting the offensive is to see that the party's candidate is well known—someone such as a shire chairman—and it does not matter if he resigned from the A.L.P. less than three years ago.

The third point is to make sure, even at major country functions such as the opening of the Etheridge Bridge at Georgetown, that the sitting member is seated right at the back of the tent, and that the Country Party candidate introduces the Premier to the early pioneers. That was quite ridiculous when the candidate lived over 200 miles from Georgetown and did not know one of the pioneers. However, that difficulty was overcome quite easily by attaching large name badges to all the pioneers. There, standing on the veranda, the Country Party candidate was able to say, "This is Mrs. Jones," and so on. When he came to me he said, "Oh, you know the member for Tablelands." That shows how ridiculous that sort of thing is.

Members of this Assembly know how important it was to have the Etheridge Bridge completed. The Minister for Main Roads knows only too well that I fought to have that link completed, because what was the use of a beef road without a bridge across the river? All of that went on at the opening function because the bridge happened to be completed just before an election. It was too bad for me, but it did not "pay off" for the other side. Of course, the residents of Georgetown realised the situation, and they were embarrassed.

In accordance with the policy of the Government, a Cabinet meeting was arranged at Mareeba. Ministers arrived from all directions, and on the way they met various people. I will single out for attention the Minister for Lands, because he singled me out before I entered Parliament. He is the

man who said, "We are laughing here because a trade union man has beaten a certain shire chairman as the endorsed Labour candidate for Tablelands."

Now let me tell the Minister a few things. At times he rallied to the defence of the Premier and obtained headlines in the Press. But when he got a chance to go to an Aboriginal Community with the Country Party candidate, a statement in the Press said, under the big headlines, "Local M.L.A. uses methods to confuse Aborigines." "He is not a Government member. He is a member of the Opposition." Fancy that—"He is not a Government member. He is a member of the Opposition!"

I do not say that the Minister for Lands thought that out himself, because I have here another newspaper article headed "Premier accuses Mr. Inch," which said that Mr. Inch had no influence on the Government's policies, as a member of the Opposition.

It said also—

"The Premier said that Mr. Inch had claimed credit for progress in roads, housing and public works in the electorate, but these claims were untrue."

What are hon. members here for? What does the Government think that the people really are like? Does he think that they do not think for themselves? It is ridiculous.

I will admit that the Minister for Lands did invite me on the Gulf trip and I accepted his invitation. But he cancelled that trip and deferred it till a date on which he knew only too well that I had a very important commitment at Ravenshoe.

**Mr. Sullivan:** Do you think that I put the trip back deliberately?

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** I do not think it; I am sure of it.

**Mr. Sullivan:** If you think that, keep on thinking it.

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** I am an elected representative, and I have as much right as anyone else—more than many—to be there. As I develop my argument, hon. members will see that I am right. With a clear field, the Minister was able to brand me as a fraud, and that is what upset the people.

The hon. member for Baroona said, "I wonder where the members of a certain department were?" I will tell him where they were. This is a real classic. Suddenly senior departmental officers arrived at the Mitchell River Aboriginal Community and wanted to speak to the people, and their opening remarks were along these lines—

"You know you will be required to vote on election day soon, and this time you will have to choose another man because your man in Parliament is finished."

Although that was in my electorate, the person speaking then referred to Mr. Adair. Another senior departmental officer said, "No, not Mr. Adair." The person speaking said, "Oh, no, I have made a mistake. It is not Mr. Adair; it is Mr. Wallis-Smith." That confused the people more than ever, and when I arrived there they said, "Aren't you finished?"

When the hon. member for Baroona was speaking this morning, I wondered what relevance his remarks had to people going round at a certain time and making speeches to people whom the Minister for Lands says can think for themselves and are the equal of other Queenslanders. The Country Party's desire to win the seat and influence the vote was so great that it stooped to the most un-Australian, unethical devices to achieve its objective. If that was the object of the visit of the senior departmental officers, I am sure that they went away satisfied that they had done a good job.

The Country Party candidate was not to be outdone by the Minister for Lands or the departmental heads. Let us see what he did on election day.

The Minister for Justice, who was in charge of the arrangements for the election and whose department appointed the officials to conduct the elections, remembered the outcry of the hon. member for Townsville South and Government members about the underhand work that went on at the previous election. His department sent by aircraft from Normanton and other centres all the returning officers and presiding officers who were needed to conduct the election at Mitchell River and Edward River. The Country Party candidate, in spite of that, decided to send his own scrutineers by charter plane, and they arrived the day before election day. To charter a plane for three days, which would have been necessary, would cost about \$300. Now, let us have a look at the result of all that intrigue, all that arranging, all that desire to win votes. At Mitchell River he received 15 votes and I received 153; at Edward River I received 107 and he received 14. Add 14 and 15 together and it comes to 29, so I should say to all hon. members opposite that if they want to woo the Aboriginal vote, it is worth \$10 a vote. Eliminate all the subterfuge and arrangement and one can get them for \$10 a vote.

The same Country Party candidate also tried to influence the chairman of the council. This is absolutely deplorable. He made a special trip from Mareeba to Cairns to see this man. He talked to him, gave him a bundle of how-to-vote cards and asked him to influence his people. I shall tell hon. members how much they know about these people. The answer he got from the chairman of the council was, "I will not influence my people; I will let them decide;" and those figures I have just given represent the decision of the people.

I bring these matters to the notice of the House because I have had to suffer the fate of being branded by the Minister, and then listen to the hon. member for Townsville South and other people saying that I had done the wrong thing. I did not do what I was accused of. I now show my how-to-vote card for anyone to see. "Australian Labour Party" can be seen on it. Let us look at my opponent's card. It contains not a word about the Country Party or any party at all. It reads—

"Tablelands Electorate.

How to Vote on Saturday, 17th May, 1969.

(1) BORZI, Micheli.

(2) Wallis-Smith, Edwin."

Then, listen to this: "Note: Each square must be numbered as shown above. Place no other marks on the ballot paper."

**Mr. Sullivan:** What is wrong with that?

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** That makes it mandatory how to vote. The candidate sent that through the post. On the other end it says, "Your number on the roll is 108", and the name of the man to whom he sent it is there.

**Mr. Sullivan:** What is wrong with that?

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** Is he ashamed of his party? Why does he not put its name on the card? For the simple reason that it is subterfuge. It is an unethical and un-Australian approach to the matter. In addition, he had this to say about my representation—

"A recent Melbourne published national weekly magazine described Atherton as being in 'The backblocks of North Queensland' which is a reflection on how poorly we are represented."

That is what he says. He lives in Mareeba, not Atherton. Listen to what was said by his campaign director, who lives in Atherton—

"Let's all pull with the Government that had done so much for our area."

I repeat, I bring these matters to the notice of the House mainly to urge hon. members opposite not to think of the area as one where they can go and have a good time, not to think of it as an area where people can be trampled over roughshod. Think of this as part of Queensland, and particularly think of the Aboriginal people as they would want us to think of them. Government supporters were not doing that when they acted as they did in the last election.

I should now like to deal with some of the industries that are ready to go in my area and also in other parts of Queensland.

**An Opposition Member:** Gentleman John Row was not in that.

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** No, he was not, and it was a very fortunate day for me when the portfolio was handed over to him.

During the war years the Atherton Tableland supported many thousands of troops. By "supported" I mean that it provided the food and housing necessary to accommodate the troops in that area. Quite often this fact is forgotten when people think of other industries. One example is the potato-growing industry, which has flourished and expanded as no other industry previously had. However, that industry has reached saturation point, and something will have to be done to enable its product to be marketed.

A great number of crops are grown in North Queensland, and the main problem is the marketing of those crops. At present the tobacco industry is in the throes of indecision, and a large amount of over-quota leaf remains to be sold. A marketing authority has been set up, but tobacco-growers will need to be patient. They made a mistake by growing far too much tobacco during a very good season. With other crops no such problem exists, and, if they can be processed, then the marketing problems that face North Queensland can be overcome.

I have spoken of the need to establish manufacturing firms in North Queensland, and I know that a number of big manufacturing firms are interested in becoming established in that part of the State. I would like the Government to try to woo a number of big firms to become interested in food processing on the Atherton Tableland. The Tableland is close to the markets of South-east Asia and Mt. Isa, and it possesses an excellent climate as well as an abundance of water and power. All that is required now is Government assistance to establish a processing firm. Once a firm is established it will not fail because produce that can be processed locally will not wilt or wither and will not deteriorate while being transported to processing works that are situated in warmer or more humid climates. Practically any crop can be grown between Mareeba and Ravenshoe. Mareeba has a hot dry climate, whereas Ravenshoe has a cooler climate.

If a processing plant can be established on the Atherton Tableland, the drift of population from the northern portions of the State will be halted. Other hon. members have spoken of the population drift. A remedy is needed, and I believe that the processing of local products will provide that remedy. That aspect should be examined quickly otherwise it may be too late to prevent a number of fruit and vegetable growers, particularly potato-growers, from swamping the market. At present, potatoes are being marketed as far south as Melbourne. At one time it was claimed that Victorian and Tasmanian potatoes were the best quality potatoes in the Commonwealth. That is no longer so. Buyers in Melbourne and Sydney are asking for Queensland potatoes, particularly the unwashed potatoes from the Atherton Tableland that still have red volcanic soil on them. If that product is so good

in its raw state, then once it is processed it would be acceptable to overseas and home markets.

Not so long ago I asked a question about the establishment of a rural college in far North Queensland. I do not wish to be parochial by saying, "Let us have it in the Tablelands area." I want it for all the boys of North Queensland. I want it to be much closer than the existing colleges at Longreach and Gatton, so that the sons of graziers and farmers in the North can learn about their agricultural pursuits and receive agricultural training in an environment similar to their home environment. Ample land is available. The answer to my question on the subject stated that an investigation was being made into the possibility of getting a site for this college. I should like to know that a thorough investigation is being made because to a great extent the siting of the college will determine its success or failure.

When I first went to the North in 1948, I found that in many areas people were walking off their farms because of lack of irrigation. That era has passed. Apart from the Tinaroo scheme farmers, many other people are making sure that they have irrigation before planting crops. In other words, they are making sure of the security of their crops prior to planting them. One farmer told me, "If you want to advise anyone to go on the land, tell him to remove most of the doubts in farming by providing adequate irrigation." The investigation of sites for a rural college in North Queensland is most important to me, to the people of North Queensland, and to Queensland as a whole. I suggest that it should be adjacent to a railway line, that it be large enough to cope with all the pursuits in the northern part of the State, and that it be in an area where adequate water is available.

Anyone who remembers my speeches in the House knows that the provision of adequate water supplies is one of my strong points. I was surprised at the answer to a recent question I asked about the water level in the Tinaroo Dam. Our most serious drought was in 1966. The level was 18ft. 9 ins. below the top of the spillway. The answer to my question of 3 September this year, which was a date similar to that on which the level was 18 ft. 9 ins., stated that the level of the dam was 17 ft. 4 ins. below the top of the spillway. The level is now only 1 ft. 5 ins. higher than that in the most severe drought period. In 1966 water was curtailed for the hydro-electric generating plant at Barron Gorge. I asked the Minister a question about the likelihood of curtailing water used for electricity generation purposes, and he assured me that that would not be done. I wonder if he will be able to keep his word if we do not receive early storm rains or early general rains. It is now September and the tobacco-planting season is in full swing. In the next 13 or 15 weeks there will be a big call on irrigation water. At the same time, there will be a cry for electric power. I have had an assurance on very good authority, that the Barron Gorge

hydro-electric generating plant has not operated fully for any length of time. I will admit that once or twice each day it may reach its peak, but it was not designed for that; it was designed to supplement the other generating plants. The water is available and, if Labour had been given the opportunity to carry out its policy, the Flaggly Creek scheme would have been completed. It was designed to supply water for this hydro-electric scheme. But no, this has been rejected by the present Government. Now we must rely on the Tinaroo Dam where the water level is 17 ft. 4 ins. below the spillway.

The present rate of release into the channel is 128 cusecs, which is equal to 256 acre feet per day. At the same time 200 acre feet per day is being released into the Barron River for the generation of electricity. If this continues, there will be a curtailment in the supply of water for irrigation or power generation. This is alarming, because, with crops like tobacco, a reduction in the water available to the plants is as bad as, if not worse than, a complete cessation of supply. If the dry-farming method is used, the tobacco becomes accustomed to using the small amount of moisture available to it. However, if it is given a good supply of water for some months, and then the supply is suddenly stopped, the plant will wilt quickly, and once that happens, quality is lowered. This results in a lower price being obtained for the leaf. And it is the farmers who suffer, simply because of the short-sighted policy of the Government in not proceeding with the Flaggly Creek scheme.

I hope that more money will be spent on water conservation in my area. I have been responsible, regardless of the Premier saying that, because Opposition members are not the Government, we are not responsible for anything, for obtaining a water supply at Croydon. That town, which is on flat country, is dependent on the water from the old mines and bores. Before long, it will have a reticulated water supply. I want more of these towns to have a water supply. I should like Karumba to have an adequate, potable water supply, not a supply of water containing phosphorus and fluoride which is of no use except for washing floors. The Government has spent some money in an attempt to provide this water supply and I thank it for spending the money. Somebody has got the money, but nobody has got water. Unless the Government provides this, it is failing in its duty.

I referred recently to the need for more homes for aged people in areas in which they have lived all their lives. I have visited quite often and regularly a very good home established in Maryborough by this Government in 1957. It is the type of home that should be provided in other provincial towns and in the country. We do not want large places where people become numbers. We want them to retain their identities and have, as their neighbours and friends, people who

have lived in their localities for many years. They need something like the early days to talk about. Homes should be adjacent to hospitals where these people can get medical attention should they require it. These homes should not be a financial burden on the people on whom these aged persons are dependent. I made a mistake in saying that the Government built the home at Maryborough. I was not sure if it had been built prior to 1957. It was opened in 1957 by Dr. Noble, and was built under a Labour Government. That is good news to me, because I was quite prepared to give the credit for it to the present Government. I thank the hon. member for Maryborough for bringing that to my notice; I know that he was responsible for obtaining this very good home.

It is far better to have such a home than to have to travel all the way to "Eventide" at Charters Towers, or to meet the financial obligations of putting aged people in homes run by churches and other institutions which are, in many instances, quite expensive. This type of home is not expensive, and I know that pensioners living there still have \$9 spending money every fortnight. They also have the facilities and the company that aged people need, so that their last years are pleasant and they are able to feel independent and not a burden on their relatives. This gives them a wonderful feeling of satisfaction.

I have asked the Minister for Health to consider this request, and he has promised to keep the Tablelands area in mind when other homes are to be built. This is the type of home that is required, as I think all members who have the welfare of the aged at heart would agree.

An additional Minister has now been appointed to Cabinet. The portfolios have been shuffled, and we now find that there is a Minister for Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs. I am wondering why the word "conservation" was used, as there are so many types of conservation that the Minister does not administer. All that I can find under his jurisdiction, from the little research that I have been able to do so far, is water conservation. What about fauna and flora conservation, and soil conservation? What about all the other types of conservation needed?

**Mr. Row:** They are mine.

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** The Minister for Primary Industries says, "They are mine". Why then do we have a Minister for Conservation?

**Mr. Sherrington:** Because the Government does not understand conservation.

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** There is the reason. Lip-service only is given to conservation in this State.

**Mr. Sherrington:** They wouldn't have re-introduced it if I had not attacked them on it in a speech a couple of days before.

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** As the hon. member for Salisbury says, the Government was not interested in it till the hon. member made his speech just prior to the Government's announcement of a conservation portfolio. If there is to be a Minister for Conservation, let there be conservation in more than name only. Let there be action, and let it embrace more than water conservation only.

**Mr. Sherrington:** Don't lop this Minister's head off as they did the last one's.

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** Apparently this is the year for lopping heads off. After what we have heard today, I would not be surprised if a lot of other heads are lopped off before long.

I conclude my comments in this debate by affirming the allegiance of the people of Tablelands to the Crown, and I ask His Excellency the Administrator to convey that expression of allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Debate, on motion of Mr. Kaus, adjourned.

#### AUDIT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

##### INITIATION

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Audit Acts Amendment Act of 1926 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

#### SWINE COMPENSATION FUND ACT AMENDMENT BILL

##### INITIATION

**Hon. J. A. ROW** (Hinchinbrook—Minister for Primary Industries): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Swine Compensation Fund Acts, 1962 to 1965 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

#### FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE EXPENSES AND COMPENSATION FUND ACT AMENDMENT BILL

##### INITIATION

**Hon. J. A. ROW** (Hinchinbrook—Minister for Primary Industries): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Foot and Mouth Disease Expenses and Compensation Fund Act of 1958 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 5.26 p.m.