

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 15 OCTOBER 1970**

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Sir Gilbert Elliott, as he subsequently became, entered the first Parliament of this State as member for Wide Bay, was elected first Speaker when Parliament met for the first time on 22 May, 1860, and retired from his high and honourable position on 13 July, 1870.

I feel sure that, if Sir Gilbert Elliott could see this Assembly today, he would be delighted by the fact that you, the present incumbent, have emulated his example and displayed all the attributes of a great Speaker.

We rejoice with you, Sir, on this occasion, which is indeed a notable one both for you and for the Parliament of Queensland.

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

## THURSDAY, 15 OCTOBER, 1970

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

### PAPERS

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

#### Reports—

Balance Sheet, etc., of the Public Curator, for the year 1969-70.

Queensland Meat Industry Authority, for the year 1969-70.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under the Racing and Betting Act 1954-1969.

#### Reports—

Burdekin River Authority, for the year 1969-70.

Legal Assistance Committee of Queensland, for the year 1969-70.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### RECORD TERM OF OFFICE AS SPEAKER

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (11.4 a.m.): Mr. Speaker, I should like to take this opportunity of officially informing the House that today is an important date in your official career in that it sees you attaining a record tenure of office as Speaker of this Legislative Assembly.

I am sure all hon. members join me in congratulating you on this achievement. Your record term commenced on 23 August, 1960, and, today—10 years and 54 days later—sees you surpass the previous longest term of 10 years and 53 days. This, by a coincidence, was established in the same time-span, a century ago, by the first Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Gilbert Elliott.

## QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

### REGISTRATION OF VALUERS

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

(1) During the 24 months prior to October 1, 1970, how many applications for registration as a valuer were (a) received, (b) admitted and (c) refused?

(2) How many applications were from residents in (a) the metropolitan area and (b) other parts of the State?

(3) Of the applications refused, how many were from employees of the (a) State Government and (b) Commonwealth Government?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) "The information necessary to answer these Questions is not immediately obtainable as it will require searching each individual file. It will be supplied to the Honourable Member as soon as it is available."

### OPENING OF S.G.I.O. BUILDING

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

How many State Government Insurance Office managers, divisional inspectors and district inspectors have been invited to the official opening of the new State Government Insurance Office building on October 28?

*Answer:—*

"The General Manager has invited 14 Office managers and their wives."

### WATERSIDE WORKERS AND CENTRALISED SERVICE FOR MEAT EXPORTS

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

(1) What is the number of waterside workers currently employed at Queensland ports?

(2) As the Chairman of the Queensland Meat Exporters' Association, Mr. Smeltzer, has stated that Queensland meat exporters would have no alternative but to use the Australia-Europe Conference Container Service which had been offered, what effect will this centralised service have on the occupation of waterside workers in Queensland and will alternative employment be provided for redundant waterside workers?

*Answers:—*

(1) "This information is not available from State sources."

(2) "Queensland meat exports which may be handled in containers by the Australia-Europe Conference represent only a minor proportion of the total meat exports from Queensland ports. However, the effect of any rearrangement of transport for these exports is being kept under constant review."

FIRE HYDRANTS, TRINITY BAY STATE  
HIGH SCHOOL, CAIRNS

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

(1) In view of the Answer by the Minister for Local Government to my Question on October 13 relative to the responsibilities of local authorities and property owners interchanging at property boundaries, how does this clarification of the issue reconcile with his Answer to my Question on July 29 concerning the installation of fire hydrants at the Trinity Bay High School at Cairns, that it was the clear responsibility of the local authority?

(2) As subsidy is not provided for this purpose, will he endeavour to have the policy decision in this matter reviewed?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) "The Question and Answer of October 13 referred to by the Honourable Member dealt with water services inside property boundaries and not with the installation of fire hydrants. My Answer to his Question of July 29 was clear and is in no way affected by and does not conflict with the Answer given by my colleague, the Minister for Local Government."

COMPULSORY RUBELLA VACCINATION

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

Because of the danger of sub-normality occurring as the result of women contracting rubella (German measles) during pregnancy and the resultant heart-break and high costs associated with such sub-normality, will consideration be given to

making immunisation compulsory and free to all girls and women of child-bearing age when ample supplies of the vaccine are available?

*Answer:—*

"Compulsory vaccination against disease is considered only when an emergency exists or the health of the community as a whole is endangered. Rubella vaccine is available free to local authorities for vaccination of girls aged 12 to 14 years. As medical authorities advise there is a possibility of the vaccine affecting the foetus if the woman is pregnant, vaccination in the normal child-bearing age groups should be approached with caution."

RAILWAY GOODS SHED, AYR

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

Will urgent and favourable consideration be given to a request from motor-vehicle dealers in Ayr for the extending of the vehicle-loading ramp on the northern end of the Ayr goods shed by twelve or fifteen feet and the surfacing of the ramp with crusher dust or other consolidating material, to obviate the difficulties presently associated with the loading or unloading of vehicles?

*Answer:—*

"A request recently received by the General Manager, Townsville, for the carrying out of the work mentioned is under investigation."

ALLOCATION OF DROUGHT-RELIEF  
UNEMPLOYMENT GRANTS

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

Which local authorities have benefited and by what amounts from the \$1,250,000 granted by way of drought-relief unemployment grants for the past twelve months?

*Answer:—*

"I assume the Honourable Member refers to the grants totalling \$1,221,000 which have been made this financial year. I lay upon the Table of the House a statement showing this information."

*Paper.*—Whereupon Mr. Chalk laid upon the Table of the House the statement referred to.

PRIVATE HIRE-CAR LICENCES

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

(1) How many applications have been received for private hire-car licences?

(2) How many have been (a) granted and (b) rejected and what were the reasons for rejection in each category?

Answers:—

- (1) "Applications received, 46."
- (2) "(a) Number granted and licences issued, 17; (b) Number rejected, nil."

INCIDENCE OF VENEREAL DISEASE,  
QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY

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

(1) What is the reason for twenty-one members of the University's English Department having to report being infected with V.D. recently?

(2) Has the cause of this V.D. epidemic been discovered?

(3) What is being done to prevent the spread of this objectionable disease?

(4) Do V.D. sufferers from the University have to report to the clinic supervised by the Health Department?

(5) How many pregnancies have been (a) reported to the Health Officer and (b) listed at the University this year?

Answers:—

(1 and 2) "The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Queensland has no evidence that this is true. I suggest that the Honourable Member have a confidential talk with his medical adviser."

(3) "The University of Queensland has an active health education program which includes films, pamphlets, talks, and individual consultations and which gives particular attention to venereal disease."

(4) "No one is required to report to the Health Department clinic. The University of Queensland Health Officers, like all other doctors in the State, are required to notify the Health Department, in confidence, of cases of V.D."

(5) "A number of pregnancies have been diagnosed by the University Health Service in 1970. In a majority of cases, the patients are married women. The number diagnosed in unmarried women is low."

STATEMENT BY FORMER POLICE  
COMMISSIONER

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

(1) Has he read the claims of the retiring Police Commissioner, Mr. Bauer, which appeared in *The Courier-Mail* of October 2?

(2) Who is now the spokesman for the Queensland Police Force?

(3) Who decided that the killing of human beings on the roads is more a social offence than a criminal offence and does this opinion reflect the Government's attitude?

(4) Does the Police Force demand a conviction for everyone taken to court?

(5) On what statistics and information did the retiring Commissioner make the claim that it is very rarely that a person is convicted in the top courts?

(6) Will he tell the present Commissioner to concentrate his energies on police matters and leave the work of the courts to qualified judges more skilled in these matters?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "The Commissioner of Police."

(3) "I presume it is the opinion of Mr. Bauer. The Government is concerned at any unnecessary death."

(4) "No."

(5) "As Mr. Bauer is not now occupying the office of Commissioner of Police, I am not in a position to advise on this aspect."

(6) "No. This is not necessary."

EFFECT OF ALCOHOL ON MOTOR-VEHICLE  
DRIVERS

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

(1) As he was present at the experiment recently conducted by Dr. L. R. Newsome, lecturer in psychology at the University of Queensland, does he agree that the exercise proved that the more alcohol one drinks the better one drives?

(2) What were the highest percentages obtained at this so-called test by the human guinea-pigs who participated at Lakeside on October 2?

(3) As they left to drive home in their own cars, were they again subjected to a breathalyser reading?

(4) What police officers were in attendance to ensure the safety of the participants?

(5) What was his breathalyser reading and did he use the services of a chauffeur on the way home?

Answers:—

(1) "No."

(2) "The results are in the possession of the University Research Team."

(3) "Six personalities participated by invitation from the Queensland Road Safety Council and all were driven to their destinations by Council staff."

(4) "Three police officers were in attendance."

(5) "No breathalyser reading was taken. As usual the Honourable Member, by the very tenor of the Question he has asked, has attempted to belittle the worthwhile efforts of those endeavouring to assist the cause of road safety. I wish to publicly acknowledge the co-operation of all agencies or individuals who assisted in a worthwhile project. The Honourable Member's attitude seems to be in keeping with that of his leader who was reported in this morning's paper as referring to drunken driving as a minor offence."

#### PROSECUTIONS UNDER RURAL FIRES ACT

**Mr. Miller**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Lands,—

How many prosecutions have been conducted under the Rural Fires Act since its inception and how many have been successful?

*Answer:—*

"Records of the Rural Fires Board show that 181 prosecutions have been launched under the Rural Fires Act of which 177 have resulted in conviction. At present 22 instances of possible breaches are under investigation."

#### CONDUCTORS, BRISBANE-CAIRNS RAIL PASSENGER SERVICE

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

With the introduction of a revised rail passenger service to Rockhampton and Cairns later this year, will he ensure that the present conductors stationed at Rockhampton are retained as conductors?

*Answer:—*

"This will be considered."

#### PROTECTION AGAINST DAMAGE AT STATE SCHOOLS

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

(1) How much have the Education and Works Departments spent on the replacement of State school property which was wilfully damaged, destroyed by fire or stolen during 1969-70?

(2) Why has his Department not taken positive action, by the provision of adequate security, to protect its own and teachers' property in State schools against robbery and vandalism?

(3) Why is it not possible to employ the State Police Force, a private security service or an alternative measure to ensure year-round adequate protection of our educational institutions?

*Answers:—*

(1) "A total of approximately \$35,000 which includes some \$25,300 for repairs following a fire at Labrador State School; the balance being for replacement of damaged or stolen property."

(2 and 3) "The Honourable Member is referred to my Answer to the Leader of the Opposition on September 1, the final paragraph of which reads—'The possibilities of watching services, security-type fencing and floodlighting have been studied, but there is no assurance that the effectiveness of such facilities would be commensurate with expenditure involved. However, the matter is still being considered.'"

#### GAS EXPLOSION IN BRISBANE

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

In view of the gas leak on October 13 in Burnett Lane near the scene of the gas explosion on July 17 in which a girl was killed and 38 other persons were injured, what has been the outcome of meetings of appropriate utilities convened by the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works?

*Answer:—*

"The utilities have been brought together to discuss interrelated problems of underground space utilisation. The Brisbane City Council has now reconvened its street opening committee which affects inter-utility operation. A draft code of practice has been written to cover allocations and operations under roads and footpaths. Its aims are—(1) To ensure the co-operation of all authorities concerned to co-ordinate use of space under roadways and footpaths; (2) To reduce the frequency and cost of opening and reinstating roadways and footpaths; (3) To issue codes of practice relating to such matters as above, as agreed to in principle by the Authorities concerned; (4) To secure more effective maintenance work and to improve public relations by co-ordinated effort in the field."

#### LOCAL DESCRIPTIONS IN REAL PROPERTY ADVERTISEMENTS

**Mr. Casey**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Lands,—

(1) Is he aware that the practice of publishing real property descriptions in advertisements, as inserted by his Department in newspapers so that objections may be lodged, does not give the general public,

who are used to the generally-accepted local description of such properties, the opportunity to lodge objections?

(2) In view of this problem, will his Department in future publish the generally-accepted local description of lands as well as the real property description?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) "In advertising closure of roads, etc., the lands affected are described in accordance with relative titles and published lithographs. My Department would not be aware of the local description of lands; a term which in any case could be subject to different interpretation in the minds of persons in the locality and any attempt to describe by local name could very well mislead at least some interested persons. Most of the advertisements relate to applications to close public roads and in this event a calico notice of the application is required to be posted on a conspicuous part of the road for a considerable period of time. There is a problem in identifying a real property description with the local names for properties. However, I consider the placing of the notice is a most effective way of overcoming the difficulty. The application will not be considered unless the inspecting officer verifies that departmental requirements regarding the notice have been strictly observed."

#### OBSCENE TATTOOING

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

(1) Is he aware that a notorious tattooist of recent infamous mention in this House has been named as one who is perpetrating obscenities on the persons of young men and that one of the obscenities is the most degrading of four-letter words that is applied to one of the most necessary natural functions between opposite sexes?

(2) Is he aware that one place of wearing this word is to have it tattooed on the inside of the lower lip so that by dropping the lower lip a ready-made insult can be silently delivered?

(3) Has he had any complaints from parents or teachers of the unfortunate, misguided wearers of the word?

(4) If he has not already had this matter investigated, will he commence an investigation at the apprenticeship classes in the automotive school, Merivale Street, South Brisbane?

*Answers:—*

(1) "I have received information alleging that a well known tattooist did tattoo an obscene word on a young man. The information mentioned suggests that the word tattooed is as suggested."

(2) "It has been suggested that the word has been placed inside the lower lip."

(3) "No."

(4) "The information received is currently being thoroughly investigated by members of the Police Force."

#### ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE FACULTIES, QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY

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

What was the (a) expenditure on research, (b) number of staff employed, (c) number of students who passed the first-year examinations, (d) second-year enrolment and (e) number who graduated, in the University departments of (i) engineering, (ii) applied science in industrial chemistry, (iii) physics and (iv) chemistry, in each of the last three financial years?

*Answer:—*

"The University has advised that it has not been possible to collate the information requested in the time available. As the Answer will be lengthy and will involve a number of sizable statistical tables I shall forward a reply by letter to the Honourable Member when the details are received."

I hope that the hon. member makes good use of this information because, in terms of both time and money, it was expensive to obtain.

#### NEW PRISON FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS

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

(1) When will construction of the new young-offenders prison commence?

(2) Where is the proposed site?

(3) How many prisoners will the prison accommodate?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) "This is a matter of Government policy as and when funds are available."

#### REPORT ON RAILWAY FREIGHT RATES

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to an article in *The Courier-Mail* of October 14, in which a report commissioned by the Freight Study Committee and prepared by management consultants, W. D. Scott & Co., is alleged to seriously criticise the Government's arbitrary method of charging rail freights?

(2) Are the findings of this report in line with the findings to date of the freight investigation which the Government ordered to be conducted by Beckingsale Management Services Pty. Ltd.?

(3) Are there at present more than 7,000 different concessions given by the Railway Department for freight outward bound from Brisbane?

(4) What is the freight rate per ton-mile charged for export coal on the Moura and Blackwater lines?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "No."

(3) "No, but the number of concessions operating from Brisbane to stations throughout the State must necessarily be great because of the large number of destinations involved and the large number of commodities. This, in itself, is not an anomaly."

(4) "So far as coal from Moura is concerned, I would refer the Honourable Member to "The Thiess Peabody Mitsui Coal Pty. Ltd. Agreements Act of 1965". The freight rates applying on coal transported from Blackwater are the subject of an agreement between the Commissioner for Railways and the Companies concerned."

#### THARGOMINDAH HOSPITAL

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

(1) Is he aware of the dilapidated state and antiquated equipment of the Thargomindah Hospital and of the dangerous state of decay of the verandah floors?

(2) Is he aware that the hospital ward is one large room, with male and female patients frequently being hospitalised together?

(3) Because of the lack of ambulance facilities and the frequent need to borrow a station wagon for stretcher cases, will he have a suitable vehicle provided for this centre?

(4) Is he aware of the lack of dental services, the fact that the nearest dentist is at Cunnamulla, 120 miles away and that many workers are unable to travel such distances to obtain services for their children?

(5) Because of the lack of an X-ray plant and as patients have to be transported over a rough, dusty road for 120 miles to Cunnamulla, will he have at least a small X-ray plant installed?

(6) Have plans and specifications for a new hospital been held in his Department for some time and, if so, and as land is readily available, why have the existing shocking conditions of the Thargomindah Hospital been tolerated?

Answers:—

(1 and 2) "The Cunnamulla Hospitals Board has been given approval to prepare sketch plans and estimates of cost for a new outpatients centre with two holding beds, together with residential accommodation for a matron and wardman at Thargomindah. The new facility is to be erected on a new site which is being made available by the Bulloo Shire Council. As yet, the plans and estimates of costs have not been received from the Hospitals Board."

(3) "The question of the provision of ambulance services is one, in the first instance, for the consideration of the Cunnamulla Hospitals Board which controls the ambulance service in that area."

(4) "The dentist employed by the Hospitals Board at Cunnamulla supplies a service to the people at Cunnamulla and Quilpie. Whilst this dentist, based at Cunnamulla, is the only resident dentist available for the area, it is considered not practicable to further extend his area of operations to include Thargomindah."

(5) "It is the prerogative of the Cunnamulla Hospitals Board, in the first instance, to consider whether the provision of X-ray equipment at Thargomindah can be justified, taking into account medical needs, supervision of the operator, and the extent to which it could be used. Any request from the Board for X-ray equipment would, in the usual manner, be referred to the Queensland Radium Institute for consideration and advice."

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

#### WAGES CLAIM, BLIND WORKERS

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

As it has been 23 weeks since the Blind Workers' Union of Queensland made application to the Health Department for increased wages on behalf of its members and the application was then forwarded by that Department to the Public Service Board on June 29, what progress has been made with regard to the application and consequent wage justice to these handicapped persons?

Answer:—

"The Union is being advised by the Health Department this week of the decision made in the matter some days ago."

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### DEPARTMENT OF VALUER-GENERAL

**Mr. LONERGAN:** I ask the Minister for Local Government and Electricity: How can the Minister justify the estimated expenditure of \$1,269,493 for the year 1970-71 on the Department of Valuer-General? Will he also state what useful purpose this department serves for this State?

**Mr. RAE:** This is rather a curly question, so the hon. member must expect a curly answer. He knows full well that I am now having this department examined with a view to amending the legislation under which it operates. When any decisions have been made, the House will be informed of them.

### CENTRAL QUEENSLAND RAIL SERVICE

**Mr. HANSON:** I ask the Minister for Transport: Can the Minister please inform me of the exact date from which Central Queensland rail passengers will be able to participate in the reasonable comfort afforded passengers in other parts of the State? Will a statement be made advising people in Central Queensland of the revised time-table? Can he tell me how many rail coaches and what facilities are expected to be available?

**Mr. KNOX:** The answer is "Yes".

**Mr. HANSON:** I ask a supplementary question. Can the Minister tell me the exact date when Central Queensland rail passengers will be able to participate in the reasonable comfort afforded passengers in other parts of the State?

**Mr. KNOX:** The original question was somewhat lengthy. It asked for a statement from me, and I said that the statement would be made.

**Mr. Bennett:** In other words, you don't know.

**Mr. KNOX:** I do know.

**Mr. Bennett:** Well, get up and tell us.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

### PRESS REPORT ON MR. SPEAKER

**Mr. W. D. HEWITT:** I know that Standing Orders do not provide for questions to be directed to you, Mr. Speaker, but because of the significance of this day I hope you will permit me to direct a question to you relative to a report in "The Courier-Mail" this morning. It indicates that your age is 66 years. When one looks at your youthful countenance, that is very difficult to believe. I therefore ask you whether the report is correct and, if so, whether you possess the elixir of youth, and also whether you will share it with other hon. members?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I do not wish to create a precedent by allowing a question to be directed to the Speaker. In the first place, the hon. member's question is out of order because it seeks to ascertain the truth or otherwise of a Press statement. However, as it is a special occasion, I will confess that the statement is correct.

As far as the elixir is concerned, there is nothing special about it; two brands are readily available on the market. As I have ruled previously that "commercials" are not allowed in Parliament, I do not intend to name the brands. I might mention also that hon. members have had an opportunity in the past of sharing the elixir with me.

### ACCOMMODATION FOR WOMEN TEACHERS, TULLY

**Mr. F. P. MOORE:** I ask the Minister for Education: Is he aware that the duplex units supplied for young women teachers in Tully have no car tracks leading under them; also that they have only one W.C. for the four occupants? Therefore, as they pay for their electricity and also pay \$15.57 each a fortnight, giving a total amount for the units of \$63, is it not unfair that the Government is entering into profit-making at the expense of young women public servants?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! That is not a question, it is a speech. It also calls for comment. However, I shall leave it to the Minister.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** I am a little behind in my W.C. research. As the question involves a great amount of detail that could not possibly be within any Minister's knowledge, I suggest that it be placed on notice.

### STAFF REQUEST, INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, BRISBANE

**Mr. F. P. MOORE:** I direct another question to the Minister for Education. What further action has he taken on the request by letter from the President of the Academic Staff Association of the Queensland Institute of Technology, Brisbane, dated 17 June this year, which he acknowledged on 18 June, and is he of the opinion that colleges of advanced education are second-rate institutions?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The question calls for an expression of opinion. I shall leave it to the Minister to decide whether a question of that nature deserves an answer.

**Mr. FLETCHER:** I greatly deprecate this sort of question. I most certainly am not in a position, nor am I in the humour, to answer a question of that nature.

### PRINTING OF ELECTORAL ROLLS

**Mr. MELLOY:** I direct a question to the Minister for Works and Housing. Is it a fact that—(1) the contract for the printing of the majority of the State's electoral rolls has

been given to Griffin Press, of Adelaide; (2) the tender of "The Courier-Mail", Brisbane, was rejected; and (3) if so, how does he reconcile this action with the professed policy of preference to Queensland industry?

**Mr. HODGES:** I ask the hon. member to direct the question to the appropriate Minister.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I suggest that the hon. member put the question on notice. The appropriate Minister, the Minister for Justice, is not present.

**Mr. MELLOY:** The Minister for Works and Housing controls Government printing. That is why I addressed the question to him.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I feel that the question, which is concerned with a contract for the printing of electoral rolls, is one for the Minister in charge of the department that handles electoral rolls, and that is the Minister for Justice. As he is not present, I suggest that the hon. member place the question on notice.

#### SALE OF TAXIS

**Mr. HOOPER** (Greenslopes): I ask the Minister for Mines and Main Roads: When a motor vehicle that has been operated as a taxi is sold or traded in, are all vendors required to declare that the vehicle was formerly a taxi? If so, does this requirement apply only to the first occasion of trade-in or resale? If the answer is that there is no requirement, will the Minister investigate the possibility of instituting a measure of declaration?

**Mr. CAMM:** As far as I am aware—and I feel sure that I am correct—there is no obligation on a taxi proprietor who wishes to dispose of his vehicle to indicate that it has been a taxi. For registration purposes the Main Roads Department regards a motor-car as a motor-car, whether it is operated by a taxi-driver or used for private purposes. As a matter of fact, a taxi-driver can transfer the registration of his taxi to himself, simply by applying to have it registered with an ordinary registration number without the "T", and keep the registration papers. Then he can transfer his taxi licence to another vehicle.

I will have the matter examined to see whether it is desirable to compel taxi proprietors, when disposing of their vehicles, to disclose that they have been used as taxis. However, I cannot see any necessity for doing so.

#### DAYS ALLOTTED TO SUPPLY

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

"That during this session, unless otherwise ordered, the House may, on the days allotted for Supply, continue to sit until 10 o'clock p.m. Each of the periods between 11 o'clock a.m. and 4 o'clock p.m. and between 4 o'clock p.m. and

10 o'clock p.m. shall be accounted an allotted day under the provisions of Standing Order No. 307. Three allotted days shall be allowed for the discussion of the Estimates of a department. At the termination of the period so allowed the Chairman shall put every question necessary to decide the Vote under consideration and shall then proceed to put the question for the balance of the Estimates for that department; all such questions to be decided without amendment or debate: Provided that, if the discussion of the Estimates of a department be concluded before the expiry of the three days so allowed, the period remaining shall be allocated to the discussion of the Estimates next brought before the Committee. All provisions of Standing Order No. 307 shall, *mutatis mutandis*, continue to apply."

Motion agreed to.

#### ERROR IN BUSINESS PAPER

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Before calling on the Premier to move the next motion, I draw attention to a printer's error in paragraph 2, which refers to "Standing Order No. 108". It should be "Standing Order No. 109". The error was noticed too late to have the Business Paper reprinted.

#### TIME LIMIT OF SPEECHES

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

"That during the remainder of this session, unless otherwise ordered, the following amendments to the times allowed for certain speeches shall apply—

(1) Under Standing Order No. 37A (Disallowance of Proclamations, Orders in Council, Regulations or Rules):

Mover of the motion, fifteen minutes; seconder of the motion and any other Member, ten minutes; Minister in reply, twenty minutes. Total time allowed, two hours.

(2) Under Standing Order No. 109 (Time Limit of Speeches):

(a) Paragraph 4—In Committee on a Bill, Motion or Estimate—substitute 'ten minutes' for 'fifteen minutes'.

(b) Paragraph 8—In Committee on the introduction of a Bill—substitute 'twenty minutes' for 'twenty-five minutes'.

All other provisions of Standing Orders Nos. 37A and 109 shall continue to apply."

Motion agreed to.

#### RECORD TERM OF OFFICE AS SPEAKER

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Hon. members, before calling on Government business, I wish to express my appreciation. I did not take

the opportunity to do so before simply because I preferred not to break into question time or delay the House any more than was necessary.

Briefly, I say "Thank you" to the Premier for his kind remarks this morning. I also desire to thank all hon. members who have conveyed their good wishes to me. The breaking of a record, I suppose, is an important day in anyone's life, although personally I do not feel that today has any very great significance. I have always tried to apply myself to the job, and if, with the aid of good health and hon. members, I have helped build up the prestige of Parliament, I am happy. Hon. members have at least allowed me to live long enough to let me create a record. This is indeed a very happy day for me. I am very proud of my achievement, and I again thank hon. members for their good wishes.

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

### SUPPLY

#### COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT— RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

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

Debate resumed from 13 October (see p. 1052) on Mr. Chalk's motion—

"That there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1970-71, a sum not exceeding \$5,093 to defray the salary of Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor."

**Mr. NEWTON** (Belmont) (11.44 a.m.): The manner of presentation of a Budget to Parliament is always governed by the political atmosphere of the day. With the Senate election on the horizon, there can be no doubt that the Prime Minister, John Gorton, has cracked the whip and told the State Tory Governments that an attractive picture must be presented on Commonwealth-State relations. In addition, as the Federal Government could not get the necessary legislation passed, there has been a hand-out to recoup the States for the loss of receipt duty.

The position would have been entirely different if the Senate election was not being held next month. On the results of the Federal election held in October of last year, there can be no doubt that the job of the Premiers and the Treasurers of the various States was made very easy for them because of the vote cast in the various States against the Gorton-McEwen Government. In that election, on primary votes, the Gorton Government had a win in only one of the six States. Because of the votes cast against him last year, the Prime Minister realised that he would have to handle financial allocations to the States very carefully on the eve of the forthcoming Senate election.

Last year's election figures indicate that the following vote percentages were gained by the major political parties:—

State	A.L.P.	Liberal-Country Party
Queensland ..	48.23	44.50
New South Wales	44.71	43.53
Victoria ..	41.34	43.39
South Australia ..	52.39	42.35
Western Australia	50.04	42.43
Tasmania ..	52.67	36.17

As can be seen, Victoria was the only State in which the Liberal-Country Party polled a higher percentage of votes than the Australian Labour Party. There is no doubt that these figures would have weighed heavily with the Prime Minister in his determination of financial allocations to the States on the eve of the Senate election.

This was followed by the 1969 State election in which the Australian Labour Party polled the highest number of votes since 1956.

**Mr. Miller:** Is this the opening of the Senate election campaign?

**Mr. NEWTON:** If the hon. member thinks it is, that is all right with me, because I am quite capable of opening it.

There is no doubt that the A.L.P. will again increase its percentage of the total vote in the Senate election in November because Queensland people will remember this year's Federal Budget, as they have remembered Federal Budgets in the past.

The Premier was the main spokesman at the recent Premiers' Conference attended by him and the Treasurer. We on this side of the Chamber expect the Premier to speak on behalf of the Government, and he is reported, in "The Sunday Mail" of 28 June, 1970, as follows:—

#### "Premier Satisfied with State Revenue Grant

"The Premier (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) said yesterday that Queensland had done very well out of the Premiers' Conference, and he was completely satisfied with the results.

"He said that, while Queensland would receive less per head than South Australia in the increased revenue grants for 1970-71, this had been the case for many years . . .

"But last year we received an extra \$2 million and, this has been repeated this year,' he said. 'The way it works out, in five years we will get an extra \$38 million.'

"New South Wales and Victoria are a long way below us, and in those States they feel strongly about our extra money,' he said.

"Mr. Bjelke-Petersen said the Government did not want to apply to the Grants Commission to see if its allocation should be lifted.

"South Australia will have heavier State taxes in going to the Commission," he said.

"Mr. Bjelke-Petersen said the Government hoped to be able to balance its budget if it could get the receipts tax carried through, and he had again asked the Prime Minister (Mr. Gorton) to get it through the Senate."

There is no doubt, as was pointed out by the hon. member for Baroona during his Budget speech, that the Treasurer must now find himself in a very difficult position, not because of the Commonwealth Government's hand-out on the eve of a Senate election but because of the future financial position of the State. Of course, it will be his responsibility to overcome that problem.

There is no doubt that in presenting the Budget the Treasurer has had to support the views of the Premier. If one studies the Budget carefully, one cannot but help read into it increased taxation. I sound a warning here and now that, following the investigation being carried out into rail freights, increased freights will be announced shortly.

**Mr. Miller:** What was the history of freight rates under the A.L.P.?

**Mr. NEWTON:** I do not have time to deal with that matter today; I shall deal with it at another time. I do not intend to break up my speech for the sake of the hon. member for Ithaca. I have a lot to say, and as yet I have said virtually nothing.

Another point discussed at the Premiers' Conference was daylight saving, on which the Premier indicated this State's position. Another most important matter was the Government's somersault on the granting of voting rights to 18-year-olds. The Premier, as Leader of the Government, made his statement on this subject in an endeavour to cover up the situation, because every other State agreed on the granting of this voting right. The Premier gave as his excuse that it is not just a matter of giving 18-year-olds the vote; he said, "We also have to consider whether they will automatically get the basic wage."

**Mr. Wallis-Smith:** Where is that reported?

**Mr. NEWTON:** In "The Sunday Mail" of 28 June of this year.

**Mr. Miller:** Do you think they should get it?

**Mr. NEWTON:** Definitely. Let me finish my point.

**Mr. Miller:** I am talking about the basic wage.

**Mr. NEWTON:** The hon. member for Ithaca well knows that many apprentices who commenced their training at 15 would be getting, at 18 years of age and after three

years of training, more than the basic wage. When I was a young man, if I did a man-size job I got a man-size wage. That is happening today, too, but hon. members opposite are too blind to see it. They are living in the past.

What was in fact the real reason for not allowing 18-year-olds to vote? It was to allow hon. members opposite to continue their smear campaign. If 18-year-olds had been given the vote, the problems of moratoriums and the "treason room", which is so often referred to here, would have been overcome. Hon. members opposite cannot leave out of their criticism members of Parliament, clergymen and barristers, because we have all given advice at some time to young people who have been called up for service under the National Service Act. Hon. members opposite are so naive that they do not even appear to know that appeals are allowed in some cases under the National Service Act, even on medical grounds.

A golden opportunity was presented to decide this issue by granting voting rights to 18-year-olds. But all that hon. members opposite can do is bandy round the word "treason". I will not go as far as saying that Government members have committed any crimes, but I will say that, in refusing to give the vote to 18-year-olds, the Government has shown an irresponsible attitude and, as we on this side have said before, in fact it supports moratoriums, the "treason room", and everything else about which it has been complaining.

If the Government had given 18-year-olds a vote, it would have given them the opportunity of deciding the political colour of the Government they wanted on the parliamentary benches in Canberra. Hon. members opposite knew that it would lead to the downfall of the Gorton-McEwen Government, so they played politics. They were not concerned about the 18-year-olds; they preferred to maintain the present system. Government members support conscription by the drawing of a marble out of the barrel, and they have supported it ever since they have been in Government in this State. They would like also to be able to conscript labour. In this debate the Committee heard the hon. member for Chatsworth speak of industrial matters, and he referred to collective bargaining. Very nice words! It might be as well to have a look at that question, too.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** Be my guest!

**Mr. NEWTON:** The Government is even prepared to gamble on the future of the young men of this State, and of Australia generally, by refusing to give 18-year-olds a vote.

**Mr. Kaus:** Who said they have been refused a vote?

**Mr. NEWTON:** The Government has refused them a vote. The decision was in the hands of hon. members opposite, but

many different statements have been made about the question. The Minister for Justice said that he was in favour of the proposal, but then a meeting of Cabinet was held and a statement completely contrary to that was issued.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** That is not correct.

**Mr. NEWTON:** No matter what hon. members opposite say, they will not face up to the situation. The Australian Labour Party has made its position quite clear on the issue. It believes that if a person is to be conscripted by the drawing of a marble from a barrel, he should have the right to vote and to say which political party should be responsible for carrying out the provisions of the National Service Act.

One hears from hon. members opposite a great deal of stupid nonsense about 18-year-olds being entitled to the basic wage if they are given a vote. Let us look at the policy of the Federal Government. What does it say in advertisements? It does not worry about 18 years of age. It says, "What sort of conditions can you expect in the Army? In the army you get adult pay even at 17." The Federal Liberal-Country Party Government puts that in newspaper advertisements to attract people into the Army. What is the policy of the Queensland Government? It does not know where it is going. On the one hand, the Federal Government says that young men are entitled to adult pay at 17 years of age; on the other hand, the Premier says, on behalf of the Government of this State, that 18-year-olds are not entitled to vote because it may have some effect on the payment of the basic wage.

**Mr. Miller:** Can I take it that you are definitely in favour of 18-year-olds receiving the basic wage?

**Mr. NEWTON:** I have pointed out to the hon. member before that 80 per cent. of 18-year-olds in this State are doing a man's job and receiving the basic wage.

**Mr. Miller:** You are in favour of it?

**Mr. NEWTON:** I am not against it. I do not see anything wrong with it.

**Mr. Miller:** If you accept it, what will it cost?

**Mr. NEWTON:** That is the hon. member's usual performance. He is always worried about the cost; he is worried only about what it will take out of the employer's pocket.

**Mr. Miller:** You have not even looked into the matter.

**Mr. NEWTON:** Let me turn now to housing. The amount allocated for housing in the Budget must be alarming to people in the low-income brackets, those who are interested in purchasing a house, or those who are endeavouring to get a State rental house through the Queensland Housing Commission. It must also indicate to the builders

and to the members of the building trade unions that the Government is not concerned about the problems facing the building industry in this State.

One would have thought that the Treasurer would have given this aspect of the economy of the State greater consideration in the Budget. However, the Federal Government cannot escape criticism on this very important matter, either. In the Federal sphere, Senator Dame Annabelle Rankin has been Minister for Housing for many years. One would think that a woman would understand women's problems. Housing is one of their main problems today, yet Queensland is getting the worst possible deal from the Federal Government in this respect.

I am pleased that the Minister for Works and Housing is in the Chamber because I want to say that there is no excuse for either Senator Dame Annabelle Rankin or the Federal Government. The present Minister for Works and Housing recently made a very forthright statement—and it is a long time since any forthright statements came from Government Ministers—with which I entirely agree. Let me say that we go along with most of what he is reported in "The Courier-Mail" of 16 June, 1970, as saying just prior to the Loan Council meeting. The article reads—

"Queensland would need \$500,000,000 over the next five years to keep pace with the housing requirements of workers employed in the State's booming industrial developments, the Housing Minister (Mr. Hodges), said last night.

"A case for this money has been prepared and would be presented at the next Loan Council meeting in Canberra, Mr. Hodges said.

"We have asked that the Federal Government lend us \$100,000,000 each year for the next five years because of the incredible expansion of our mining and industrial developments", Mr. Hodges said.

"The grants would cover the housing requirements of Queenslanders in cities, towns, and on the expanding mineral fields.

"The Housing Commission spent \$35,000,000 a year in Queensland, but this was merely a 'drop in the bucket' compared to what was needed to satisfy the housing demand."

According to the same article Mr. Hodges went on to say—

"In various orders of priorities there were 4,000 applications for homes at present before the Department. The present allocation of \$35,000,000 just wasn't enough."

That is a very sound and sensible contribution from the Minister, but what did he get from the Federal Government? We have not heard anything about it in the Budget. It is pigeon-holed, as everything else is, and, by this time the 4,000 applications in Queensland will probably have grown to 5,000.

As I have indicated previously in this Chamber, a very serious situation has resulted from the lifting of rent control and it will be disastrous by next year unless something is done about it.

Let us look at what the master builders have to say on the question. Mr. D. C. Watkins is the main spokesman for the Master Builders' Association, and in "The Courier-Mail" of 14 May, 1970, he is reported as saying—

"The Federal Government's credit restriction policy was having a disastrous effect on the building industry, particularly the housing sector, the Queensland Master Builders' Association President (Mr. D. C. Watkins) said yesterday.

"The only real employment in the building industry is in the commercial-industrial world', he said.

"The reason for this is bridging finance for these projects was teed up some time ago; but the squeeze inevitably must affect these builders also if the brake continues'.

"Mr. Watkins said the policy was bound to create widespread unemployment among building workers throughout Queensland unless corrective action was taken quickly.

"A survey among 13 leading Brisbane house builders in the last fortnight had revealed a 94 per cent. rejection of housing loan applications.

"This compared with a 98 per cent. acceptance immediately before, when ample finance was available.

"I did not believe the Government's credit restriction policy could have produced such a complete reversal in such a short time', he said.

"There should be enough regeneration of funds to have allowed the housing finance business slowly to taper off."

In that statement Mr. Watkins clearly indicates the seriousness of the situation in this State on the home-building front. I am fully aware of the serious situation in my own calling. On many occasions, on behalf of the Opposition I have indicated that the building industry in this State has been hit by credit restrictions, all of which have been applied by the present Federal Government. I can recall them quite well. They were applied first in 1952, later in 1960; and then in 1961, when they nearly killed the building industry. And they are now being applied again.

**Mr. Miller:** What is the present unemployment figure in the building industry?

**Mr. NEWTON:** If the hon. member considered what Mr. Watkins has said he would realise that terrific unemployment in the building industry would result if the commercial structure collapsed tomorrow. However, all the hon. member does is look at the present. As a member of the Government he should have a broader outlook and look at the future, too. We do not want to see an employment situation similar to that of

1961. I hope we never see that again. That is why I do not complain bitterly about a deficit Budget. If full employment can be maintained the Government, irrespective of its political colour, deserves credit.

I wish to deal now with what was said at the 1970 State Conference of the Building Workers' Industrial Union.

**Mr. Lee:** What do you think about the registration of builders?

**Mr. NEWTON:** The hon. member for Norman has indicated the feeling of the Australian Labour Party on that matter.

**Mr. Miller:** What is yours?

**Mr. NEWTON:** I will deal with that at the appropriate time. The hon. member will not side-track me now while I am talking about the seriousness of the housing situation.

I have here a full account of the position in each State after a survey was made by the Queensland branch of the union. Like most other departmental reports presented since this Government took office, that of the Queensland Housing Commission provides less information each year.

This account compiled by the B.W.I.U. says—

"The report of the Queensland Housing Commission is even more sparse than that of the Victorian Commission. It is a contemptuous report. Nowhere does it give any indication of the number of applicants for Government housing.

"The only reference to demand is as follows: 'The demands on the Commission for housing for families, particularly large families, is such that preference is given to the construction of dwellings suitable for such families, rather than to flats which provide less accommodation.'

"The number of dwellings completed under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement in 1968-69 was 1,678, compared with 1,716 the previous year.

"Houses provided for Service personnel during 1968-69 totalled 557, and the overall total of those yet to be provided is 725."

Then it sets out that the present rentals being charged for Government housing in Queensland range from \$4.85 to \$16.50 per week—those figures are contained in the 1968 report—however, the rentals are revised from time to time.

As I have indicated, a comparison of that report with those of all other States shows clearly that a greater amount of information is available from the other States on the true situation in housing.

The Building Workers' Industrial Union has put forward positive suggestions as to how the problems, which affect the whole of the Commonwealth, can be overcome. It recommends, first, the implementation of the present A.C.T.U. policy, which calls for a

vigorous and expanded Government home-building programme designed to provide good housing at low cost to the people, and suggests that that programme be brought into competition with private enterprise as a means of reducing both the capital and annual cost of housing. It calls for the restoration of the principles of the 1945 Commonwealth-States Housing Agreement; namely, low interest rates and a good rental rebate system.

Here again let me take a shot at the present Federal Government. The agreements that it has drawn up since it took office in 1949—and we were lucky that the Chifley agreement drawn up in 1945 extended until 1956, so that the Federal Liberal Government could not get its hands on it—have been most unsatisfactory. Instead of reviewing the agreements every 10 years, the Federal Government reviews them every five years. It stood over the States and said, "We have now amended the Chifley legislation covering the Commonwealth-States Housing Agreement. If you don't accept it as is, you won't get any money at all."

That was political blackmail, demonstrating what a shocking Government we have in the Federal sphere.

**Mr. Bromley:** Typical Tories.

**Mr. NEWTON:** That is so. I have always called them that; they are no different.

The other recommendations of the Building Workers' Industrial Union are—

"2. Commonwealth Government assistance to the States to enable them to engage in land development and sale of land at cost to persons wanting to build their own homes. The States should retain Crown land and use it for building rental houses.

"3. The cost of housing finance (interest on housing loans) to be tax deductible.

"4. Deposits paid into home-building societies to be tax deductible.

"5. The introduction of a uniform building code.

"6. The Housing Agreement Act 1966, which expires at June 1971, should be replaced by an Act providing for:

(a) Increased and guaranteed sums of money over the five-year period of the Act, to be advanced to the States in order to ensure forward planning and a guaranteed continuing and expanding programme of Government housing.

(b) Reduction in interest rates to 3 per cent."

The last recommendation has been submitted previously.

Recently, His Excellency the Governor made quite clear to the Federal Government what should be done for the man on the land in drought-affected areas throughout the State. He had to appeal for money at low interest rates to help them out.

Housing should be removed from the area of economic restraint by the allocation of finance at low interest rates for not less than five years at a time. It should be sufficient to enable the growing needs of the people to be met and building workers to be guaranteed continuity of employment.

The account continues—

"(c) Discontinuance of the provision requiring that five per cent. of the moneys allocated to the States be used to provide housing for Service personnel.

(d) Reintroduction of the rental rebate system of the 1945 Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement."

It has frequently been said that whenever we criticise we should also present alternatives. This union, which has a branch in every State, plays a prominent role in the A.C.T.U.

**Mr. Bromley:** It is a very good, progressive union.

**Mr. NEWTON:** It is one of the most progressive unions we have. I have been a member of it, and also an official. It is one of the most progressive unions in Australia. It plays a very important role in the A.C.T.U. by keeping it fully informed on the housing position in each State.

The housing situation in Queensland is now so serious that there are two bases of priority. Years ago there was only one, by which a points priority rating was based on the circumstances of the applicant's existing accommodation. Today, the waiting list has increased, from 2,000 in 1962, to almost 5,000. To overcome the problem, a new priority system was introduced based on the length of time that an application has been lodged, irrespective of the applicant's accommodation. People seeking rental accommodation from the Housing Commission meet this problem.

The number of people who come to see us wanting houses indicates the sorry state of affairs in housing. When people ask for help we have to try to lift their priority rating, knowing that if we cannot they have not a ghost of a chance. I do not try to build up anyone's hopes by saying, "Don't worry about it; you should get something", if I know that, without some priority as presently rated, he has no hope at all.

Wife desertion creates a serious situation in this State. There is no need for me to quote figures in this regard because all hon. members, and particularly Ministers, who have had anything to do with the Children's Services Department, know the position. This problem gets worse every week. I congratulate those women who endeavour to keep a roof over the heads of their families. As a director of a co-operative building society. I know of many women who have taken over the repayments on the family home and are carrying the cost of educating and clothing their children. They are to be congratulated, because, in order to do this, they

must go without something. Unlike the Housing Commission, co-operative building societies and other financial institutions do not reduce the level of repayments made by widows.

Many deserted wives come to see me in an endeavour to get a Housing Commission house for themselves and their children, which they have been unable to get, even though they have accepted the responsibility of looking after their children. In some cases they have taken jobs. Only this week I was contacted by a woman who is driving a taxi so that she can maintain herself and her two children. Unfortunately, the family is separated. One child is being looked after by a minister of religion, and the mother and the other child are boarding with another woman who took her into her home because she was thrown out of her own home. The woman could get into trouble because she receives assistance from Legacy.

**Mr. Bromley:** One of the difficulties is that, unfortunately, some widows have children and cannot afford rental accommodation.

**Mr. NEWTON:** That is true. I am pleased that the hon. member raised that point. These people come to see members of Parliament hoping that they will be able to arrange Housing Commission accommodation for them at a reduced rental.

For some time, Ministers for Housing and Commissioners of Housing have claimed that widows will not be evicted from Housing Commission houses. However, this principle is not being carried out by all departmental officers. Some of them hound widows, saying, "If you don't do this or that, you will find yourself receiving an eviction notice."

**Mr. Lee:** You don't accept Senator Keffe's statement that widows are turning to prostitution?

**Mr. NEWTON:** I do not say that at all. I do not want to come into it. I am trying to stop the hounding of widows by irresponsible officers of the Housing Commission.

In fairness to the Commissioner, and also to present and past Ministers, I say that whenever something has been put in writing, or whenever some action has been taken, they have immediately ordered that a widow remain in the house she is occupying. This is a very difficult problem, and we should make the Commonwealth Government aware of the situation.

**Mr. Hodges:** At the same time, they have to obtain an eviction order, haven't they?

**Mr. NEWTON:** That is true. However, if my wife and I and our children lived in a Housing Commission house and our children grew up and got married, and I died, my widow should not be thrown out of the house. My children have the same rights as other children. They should be able to visit their parents and occasionally spend week-ends with them. This is the thing that worries us.

I know that the Government is concerned about people in this position occupying homes with two and three bedrooms. Until recently, the Government could not move them into new flats, as the rentals of the flats could not be reduced. That can now be done, but unfortunately there are not sufficient flats available to accommodate all these people.

**Mr. Hodges:** The new scheme will provide for that.

**Mr. NEWTON:** I agree with the Minister that a scheme has now been introduced under which, if people move to a one-bedroom or two-bedroom flat, they continue to pay the rent that they previously paid. That is a step in the right direction.

I now want to refer to housing for Aborigines. A Bill was passed through this Parliament which was supposed to bring assimilation and full citizen rights to Aborigines. It is time the Government had a further look at the position of Aborigines in this State. The Department of Education is beginning to accept its responsibility by appointing teachers to schools for Aborigines, and it is about time similar responsibility was assumed in the field of housing. I am not speaking of Queensland only, but also the Torres Strait islands. I have been to those islands and have seen the problems that exist there, and what is happening now is a shocking state of affairs. Where houses are provided, they do not include the amenities that usually go with houses. Aborigines are still expected to use community toilets and laundries. If Government members really believe what they say they believe, they would see that houses provided for Aborigines were lined and ceiled and, in the hot parts of the State, insulated against heat. They should have their own toilet and washing facilities, just as other citizens of the community have.

**Mr. Hodges:** You are not saying this to the Housing Commission, are you?

**Mr. NEWTON:** Yes. We should accept our responsibility to Aborigines. What is the use of saying that Aborigines are accepted as Queensland citizens when the present situation is allowed to exist? The Department of Education is beginning to accept its responsibilities.

**Mr. Hodges:** They get an allocation for housing.

**Mr. NEWTON:** So far as the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement and the Loan Council are concerned, Aborigines are considered in population figures for the allocation of funds. That is why I am now raising this point. They should be given consideration, by an extra allocation, under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, because they are now taken into consideration in census figures. It is about time that we accepted our responsibility in this whole matter.

In the matter of works, we just do not know where we are going. In the first place, the building and sites section used to be attached to the Department of Education. So often does the Government switch portfolios and responsibilities that one is flat out knowing whom to write to on various matters concerning school buildings. If a member wants to raise a building matter that he feels should be the responsibility of the Department of Works, he should know which Minister to approach. This year I wrote on one matter to two Ministers. I wrote to the Minister for Education, taking it for granted that the matter I raised would be passed on to the Department of Works. I was then informed by a departmental officer that the building and sites section was now attached to the Department of Works. Why, then, cannot every matter dealing with works be sent to the Minister for Works and Housing? Even then it cannot be dealt with immediately, because it has first to be referred to the Department of Education.

**Mr. Hodges:** That is why I produced the booklet.

**Mr. NEWTON:** It is handy, but, as things change so often, it is not up to date. We should have been receiving slips of paper showing the responsibilities of the various Ministers.

I now want to deal with a matter that I have been raising for years, namely, the shocking state of affairs at the Cavendish Road High School. I am getting tired of writing letters to the Government on this subject. It is shocking that a member of Parliament has to go round making inspections himself. I am quite capable of doing that, because I am a builder and I can see things that many other people would not.

**Mr. Thackeray:** And you build for the nation, too.

**Mr. NEWTON:** That is right—houses for the people, built by the people. I do not intend to growl about the temporary accommodation at the Cavendish Road High School; I am sick and tired of raising that question.

**Mr. Bromley:** The point is: how temporary is it?

**Mr. NEWTON:** It has been there so long that it has become temporary-permanent. The Department of Works removes the wooden or concrete posts and puts in steel bearers to make the rooms more attractive, but the fact is that they are still temporary classrooms and are not of the same size as new classrooms. In many instances they are dimly lit and have not sufficient windows to provide adequate light and ventilation.

I said in the letter—

“Five new classrooms are urgently required to replace the two demountable rooms and three other temporary rooms being used at the school.”

Two of these rooms being used at the school were in the assembly block built by the parents and citizens' association. That shows hon. members how bad the situation was. In fact, the parents and citizens' association attacked the Government. It built an assembly hall costing \$90,000, of which it provided \$60,000 and the Government \$30,000. That was the most the association could get; it could not get any more. Now two of the rooms in the assembly block are being used as classrooms.

I further said in my letter—

“The present change room, which is eighteen feet by twelve feet (plus shower area) needs to be extended.

(i) Phys. Ed. class each period daily consists of approximately 80 boys.

(ii) For sports, 437 boys use change room Wednesday afternoons.

(iii) Thursday afternoon, 237 boys use change room.”

I have represented the electorate for a decade, and that change room has been in existence since I entered Parliament. If a teacher walked through the room while the students were taking a shower or changing and accidental touched one of them, he could be charged with assault. The result could be very serious for him.

I said also—

“The provision of shelter area plus seating accommodation. The only existing sheltered area consists of covered ways, an area near the canteen and area under the two new classrooms. The bulk of the school population therefore is accommodated in narrow verandahs during inclement weather.”

That is what is happening. The Minister for Works and Housing is fully aware of that, because I showed him similar conditions at a primary school in my electorate.

**Mr. Hodges:** You are quite happy about Manly West now?

**Mr. NEWTON:** Yes, I think so. Things seem to be going quite well, according to the information I have received.

My letter continued—

“The provision of further enclosed areas for students' lockers.”

Again, the lockers are not adequate for the number of boys and girls attending the school. Further—

“A covered way linking the present buildings to the Assembly Hall and new Library.

“The present canteen area needs to be extended as it is inadequate for a school population of 1,745.”

That is another matter that the Government must have a look at. At one stage the enrolment decreased from 1,600 to 1,400, and at that time the position was reasonable. Now the enrolment has increased to 1,745, and I

believe that a limit should be set on the number of students allowed to enrol at the school. Once the number for which accommodation is available has been reached, other students wishing to enrol should be told to attend the high school nearest to the area in which they live.

I said also in the letter—

"The bank on the northern side of the Assembly Hall needs to be enclosed as it is a danger hazard to students at present.

"Provision of bitumen or concrete areas surrounding buildings. Hundreds of students have to cross sticky clay areas when moving to singing lessons (and to new Library block which will soon be used). One stairway on H. block leads directly into slippery clay soil with the result that mud is brought into the classrooms and verandahs during wet weather.

"The enclosing of the school reserve with a tubular steel and chain wire fence, which has been applied for as far back as 1961."

That fence has still not been built. In 1961, when I was the newly elected member for Belmont, I raised the matter because dogs were coming in and taking the lunches out of the children's bags.

**Mr. Hodges:** You realise that we have this trouble all over the State—in the West, the North and the North-west?

**Mr. NEWTON:** I appreciate that, but I am reminded of a question that I asked the Minister some time ago. When these matters are raised from year to year, do they receive any priority in the next financial year? I do not think we would be experiencing so many of these problems had some of the matters I have mentioned today been attended to. It is a shocking state of affairs. The letter I have read was not the only one I wrote. I have two others here, one dated 7 March, which I forwarded to the Minister for Education, and one dated 10 March, which I forwarded to the Minister for Works and Housing. They deal with two entirely different matters, but both mention quite a number of improvements that are required. It is to be hoped that this matter, if it is not dealt with in the Budget, is looked at soon. Something definite will have to be done in an endeavour to overcome the shocking situation that exists with these temporary classrooms, which have been in use for a decade, and also to provide all the things that should necessarily be provided in conjunction with classroom accommodation.

**Mr. Hodges:** When we have new areas opening up—such as Goonyella and other coalfields—and requiring schools and housing, they must be provided for, too.

**Mr. NEWTON:** I agree that these things have to be done in new areas, but it is no use blaming the Opposition. After all, the Government had the chance of making suré of receiving adequate royalties from the companies. At the moment, only a 5c royalty

per ton is charged; another 2½c per ton would have given the Government all the finance necessary to provide the necessary amenities in these areas. I am getting sick and tired of saying to our own people, in regard to schools and housing, "It is just too bad for you. We have new industries opening up in the State and they have first preference." No priority systems, either for schools or for housing, apply in these areas. No priority system applies to Housing Commission houses for firms which guarantee their employees' rent.

**Mr. Hodges:** Those firms are providing two houses to our one.

**Mr. NEWTON:** Since when? When we visited Blackwater, the mining company at that stage had not provided one home, whereas the Government had built 50. The only three the company was building cost in the vicinity of \$30,000 each. They were being built for the company's managers. The Government has now provided between 100 and 200 houses there, and it would be interesting to have the Minister tell us, perhaps in his own report, what the companies are doing in these areas. We know the company is doing it at Mt. Isa, but here again the position is bad. However, I have spent enough time on housing and works.

I now wish to deal with the very important matter of rate concessions in drought areas. We on this side get sick and tired of hearing Government members saying that we would not know what a drought was. How silly can they get!

We read in the Press almost every day that stock are starving and are being sent to abattoirs in an endeavour to reap for the man on the land whatever benefit he can get. But we are not getting any cheaper meat. The price of meat is constantly rising. As consumers, we realise the seriousness of the situation. The price of everything we buy, particularly the products of primary industries, is loaded. However, I am concerned mainly about the amount of money the Government is allocating to drought areas. We hear that rate concessions are to be given to men on the land who are confronted with this very serious problem of drought. The point that has been raised with us, of course, is this: what is going to happen to the people in the towns in these areas who are providing the essential services? After all, in any drought-stricken area the livelihood of these people is affected, too, and the takings of businesses and other people who provide essential services are reduced. But we do not hear about any rate concessions for them.

**Mr. Lee:** By helping the grazier we are, in turn, helping the essential services.

**Mr. NEWTON:** I cannot see that. I am making the point that the Government ensures that the man on the land receives a rate concession, and as a result the local authority

must suffer. But the townspeople who provide essential services are affected also, so why are they not considered? Why are they not given rate concessions?

In October of last year the Minister for Local Government suggested that something should be done to alleviate their problem. He appealed to the Government to help the local authorities in the isolated areas of the State. They, too, suffer from drought.

In no Budget is anything said about what the Government is doing to give financial assistance to local authorities. We are entitled to know this. Opposition members, and perhaps Government members, have received letters from local authorities complaining about the lack of Government financial assistance.

An article in the "Telegraph" of 21 September, 1970, says—

"The State Government will be asked to establish a committee of finance experts to investigate local government financing.

"The appeal will come from all local authorities.

"The Local Government Minister, Mr. Rae, will be asked to initiate the establishment of a committee.

"Local authorities want representatives of the Treasury, the Local Government Department, the Auditor-General, the Co-ordinator-General, the Brisbane City Council, the Queensland Local Government Association and the Cities and Towns Local Government Association on it.

"Local authority financing was the major issue of the week-long meeting of the two associations in Mackay last week.

"All local authorities complained of lack of finance.

"They want the committee to:

Examine the finances of local government throughout the State.

Advise the State Government if new avenues of finance are necessary.

Advise the Government on relieving local authorities of some loan indebtedness.

Investigate the finances of local authorities in other States and the extent of aid given there."

As well they said that subsidies need to be looked at very closely by the Government.

In New South Wales a royal commission was set up to investigate local authority finance. I had the opportunity of reading its terms of reference and report. It found that local authorities in New South Wales are in a very serious financial position. On behalf of local authorities throughout Queensland I appeal to this Government to heed their call for assistance and set up an inquiry to look at the whole matter of local authority finance. It is in a sorry plight. The Treasurer's hand would be much stronger if he went to the Loan Council with that information available to him.

**Mr. Chalk:** There are two problems, of course. One relates to loan finance for their development, or what might be termed their constructional work, and the other to finance for the carrying on of normal activities.

**Mr. NEWTON:** When speaking about this matter some years ago I said that what they received in rates helped them to continue only the services that they were providing. They do not get anything extra from rates. Local authorities are in a very difficult loan raising field, and I am sure that no-one knows better than the Treasurer how much more difficult it is becoming each year.

The other day I referred to interest rates and how they affected the co-operative building societies. They are confronted with a terrific problem because they cannot say, "We will pay so much interest if you will lend us the money". Their actions are governed.

**Mr. Chalk:** I am not trying to detract from the text of your speech, but the real difficulty is that if local authorities are to go to the Loan Council they must go on a united basis.

**Mr. NEWTON:** I suggest that their case should be put to the Treasurer, and that it should go through the State Government to the Commonwealth Government. We do not want them to go direct to the Loan Council.

**Mr. Chalk:** I agree with that.

**Mr. Lickiss:** Mr. Whitlam does not agree with you.

**Mr. NEWTON:** I am not concerned about what Mr. Whitlam may have to say about this. I am stating the views of the Opposition. We decide the Queensland Opposition's policy on these matters. I make that point quite clear because it is important.

The Government of the day, which is responsible for controlling local authorities, should retain the responsibility of making representations to the Loan Council on their behalf for more finance. I make that point, and I make a plea to the Government on it.

I see nothing wrong in what the local authorities have suggested, and in what they have set out in their letters to us. They are not asking for a Royal Commission or a committee of inquiry. They are asking merely that a committee be established to investigate. That should be acceptable to any political party in this State, irrespective of its colour.

**Mr. HUGHES (Kurilpa) (12.43 p.m.):** I could canvass many aspects of the Budget at great length. Each hon. member, in his own way, tends to concentrate on parochial matters, or matters of which he has knowledge or in which he has a special interest. The hon. member for Belmont spoke at great length on local authority problems and housing matters. It is not coincidental that I also wish to address the Chamber on some of those matters, particularly as they relate to the Brisbane City Council.

I could speak of situations associated with the Budget, but suffice it to preface my further remarks by saying that there can be little denial by anybody who will face facts that this Budget was brought down in times of almost State and national tragedy for those who are beleaguered by drought. It ill behoves the Leader of the Opposition to try to belittle it in any way, or to capitalise in a political way on this very grave situation. Those who are aware of the facts have surely faced them, and will continue to do so. Whoever the Treasurer of the day may have been, this was a problem that he could do little else but face, and budget for accordingly. The Opposition cannot make political capital out of the fact that the Treasurer budgeted for a deficit this year. In the light of higher costs and wage increases, which must inevitably concern the Government, it is obvious that the State cannot reduce taxation or decrease its income from other sources. The trend is there, and there appears to be very little likelihood that it will change.

Instead of receiving the normal income from freights on primary and other production, we have incurred expenditure in subsidising freights, and hon. members know the tremendous extent to which the Government has gone to ease the plight of primary producers in this regard.

The Budget is a success as a holding Budget, and this is to the credit of the Treasurer and the Government, particularly in view of inflationary and other factors that have had to be coped with.

The Leader of the Opposition did not analyse the factors and problems associated with financing the State's needs and did not suggest anything constructive. It is the role of the Opposition to do so, and I believe that it has been found wanting. Many Opposition members discussed parochial matters, and I do not cavil at this, because this is an opportunity for them to put their individual cases. They also interested themselves in matters associated with their leanings and their experience.

I shall now deal with a matter which demonstrated recently that this city is wide open to a take-over by militant unions. They will bring this city to its knees if they are allowed to prostitute the responsibilities and obligations of democracy with callous disregard for the citizens of this city. The Brisbane City Council and the Government should take the necessary action to protect citizens against what could be grave situations.

Like other hon. members, I am very concerned at recent events in this city, namely the dispute leading to the non-servicing of water mains, which affected the convenience and welfare of people and created a hazard to health and, indeed, to life itself. Because of this dispute, 250 people were without water for two days; they could not use sewerage, bathe, or obtain water for cooking purposes. In addition, industry was brought to a stop in

certain areas. How much more serious would the situation have been if there had been a break in the water main servicing a hospital?

While we are pleased that this did not happen, we must face the fact that the Lord Mayor and this particular union were prepared to allow this situation to continue. The Lord Mayor, who dominates the Brisbane City Council and appears to be hell-bent on building grandiose monuments to feed his insatiable ego, demonstrated recently that he was unable or unwilling, or both, to deal with this very grave situation. We should take heed of this and learn from it, because it could happen again relative to sewerage, water, and electricity reticulation, which are controlled by this octopus of civic administration. The council has these vital services under its control, but it demonstrated during the last few days that it is incapable of coping with an emergency. In such circumstances, the Government should take an interest in the matter. The council appeared to do nothing to provide emergency services. Homes were without water, and mothers, children and families were inconvenienced.

**Mr. Davis:** Sanity has prevailed.

**Mr. HUGHES:** The matter went to the Industrial Commission, and apparently some people have now shown some sense. But what about when the city was held to ransom by a militant Left-wing union? Why was that allowed to happen? Simply because the Lord Mayor, in a pussy-footing attitude, played politics, and was not prepared to put himself off side with the union. That is what he did instead of carrying out his obligation to the people, and it was a very glaring example of maladministration. People were without sewerage, which presented a great menace to health. What did the council do? No attempt was made to take emergency measures. Here was a callous disregard of the welfare and rights of the people. One could well ask, "Will the city council allow ratepayers a remission of rates because they have not been provided with the service that the council is obliged to provide?" Because the union allowed some of its members to hold the city to ransom, it will be, I believe, condemned by the people.

**Mr. Davis:** Don't you believe in democracy?

**Mr. HUGHES:** I believe in, and defend, democracy, but democracy concerns the whole community; it is not confined to defence of the rights of some so that they can attain their ends. There are obligations in democracy, and it is about time a few people realised that. It is not merely a matter of take, take, take; there has to be willingness to give a little, too. That is why the public will condemn the Transport Workers' Union on its complete lack of regard for the welfare of the public.

I do not disagree with the right to strike, but there are times when I disagree with the manner in which the strike weapon is

used and the city is held to ransom, regardless of those on whom hardship falls. If the union had had a genuine concern for the public in this present stoppage, no objection would have been raised to the use of private contractors to carry out emergency repairs. In conjunction with the council, the union could have said to plumbers and others in private employment, "You are entitled in this emergency to service these mains."

**Mr. Davis:** Did the union refuse to provide a service for sewerage in schools?

**Mr. HUGHES:** Did the union provide any sanitary service for the people whose water supply was cut off, or for anybody?—No! I believe that the Lord Mayor has a responsibility to the people. It is not a question of who is right; it is a question of what is right. That is the real issue, and it should be above politics. The Brisbane City Council has shown a lack of ability or an unwillingness to deal with the matter in the interests of the city and to cope with emergencies that confront it. I doubt that it is unable to do so, because it has many efficient and able officers for whom I have the utmost respect, but they are employees and have to implement the policy laid down by the council.

Even if the unions are unwilling to meet this need and are using the strike weapon in some way to destroy arbitration and to hold to ransom the citizens of Brisbane, as they have done on more than one occasion, I believe that the Lord Mayor, as the elected representative of the people of this city, has a duty and an obligation to be on the side of the people, not to play politics and succumb to and be the puppet of the unions. By using his power, as he is at present, to back the unions, and by playing politics in this way, he stands condemned by the people.

Honourable members on this side of the Chamber showed their concern by directing questions to the Minister for Labour and Tourism and to the Premier relative to this matter. In fact, in his reply to a question that I asked yesterday, the Minister for Labour and Tourism said—

"However, . . . I suggest it has become obvious that when any matter develops into an argument between a left-wing trade union and the convenience of citizens, the Labour city council will not take any action against the union."

The Premier said, when replying to my question to him as to what could be done to provide the means necessary to cope with emergencies confronting the citizens of Brisbane—

"If no agreement is reached, the Minister concerned will make a statement later this afternoon indicating that the Government is not prepared to stand idly by in this serious situation."

That, of course, was yesterday afternoon.

The Government should not be called upon to act. However, the present situation shows the great weakness of the Lord Mayor and the Labour-dominated city council, who wring their hands and stand idly by and allow the citizens of Brisbane to be black-mailed by trade unions that could not care less about the welfare of the people and are hell-bent on destroying arbitration. The Lord Mayor is a puppet of the trade unions and is dominated by them. He plays politics with them and says, "To hell with the citizens of the city." He has shown that by his unwillingness or inability to act in the very grave crisis that has arisen in the past few days.

**Mr. Wright:** Are you condemning the Premier's attitude to the situation?

**Mr. HUGHES:** Far from being apathetic, the Premier said that the Government would not stand idly by and allow these things to happen.

**Mr. Wright:** What has he done?

**Mr. HUGHES:** At least hon. members on this side of the Chamber believe in arbitration and are prepared to act if necessary.

**Mr. Wright:** What has he done?

**Mr. HUGHES:** Arbitration was resorted to and sense and sanity prevailed. That has made it unnecessary for the Government to move in and take over.

I was prepared also to ask the Minister for Local Government to exercise his Ministerial powers. He administers the City of Brisbane Act, and, as a result, has certain powers relative to the huge octopus of Greater Brisbane set up under the Act of 1923 and later amendments. I am sure that, if necessary, the Minister has the capacity, courage, fortitude and wisdom to take action when the occasion arises, and the occasion would have arisen if a solution had not been reached yesterday.

A similar situation could arise again. Although the Government should not have to take over the administrative reins and ensure that the interests and welfare of the citizens of Brisbane are preserved, I believe that an organisation through which it can act in any future emergency should be set up. If electricity, water and sewerage services are interfered with, the Government and the city council should have available to them the means of providing emergency services for the city if the unions are not prepared to meet their responsibilities.

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

**Mr. HUGHES:** Prior to the luncheon recess I was speaking about the City of Brisbane being held to ransom, and I put forward a suggestion which I should like to make quite clear. I asked for the establishment of an emergency squad to cope with any possibility of the city again being held to ransom.

**Mr. Davis** interjected.

**Mr. HUGHES:** If the hon. member for Brisbane was as energetic as he is vociferous he would have done something about the grave crisis Brisbane recently experienced. I hope that, if ever we should again be placed in this situation by militant unions, an emergency squad will be available to deal with electricity, water, sewerage, cleansing and sanitary services.

**Mr. Wright:** Do you believe the Army should be used as strike breakers?

**Mr. HUGHES:** Not as a strike breaking element, although Mr. Chifley did that, and he was a Labour man. The present Lord Mayor of this city, however, is a puppet of the left-wing-dominated Trades Hall and he simply sat idly back and allowed things to happen that could have brought a health crisis to the city—people without showers, sewerage or water for culinary purposes.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** The interjections of hon. members opposite suggest that they are not concerned about these things happening.

**Mr. HUGHES:** They are certainly no friends of the workers, because they allowed this to happen when the Lord Mayor showed that he was unwilling to deal with it.

**Mr. Chinchin:** The Lord Mayor is responsible to the citizens, not to unions.

**Mr. HUGHES:** I wish that somebody would get that message across to him. He is responsible for the convenience and welfare of citizens, the good government of the city and the welfare of its people. He seems to have an insatiable ego which he has to feed by building monuments to his own aggrandisement. He spends millions of dollars on building city squares. He wants to squander too much too soon on city squares while roads go to pieces, the city goes to pot and the people are held to ransom.

In answer to my question yesterday the Premier said that this Government would not stand idly by if this dispute was not brought to an immediate and successful conclusion. We have been able to do that, but we must be sure that in future there will be no need to wait until these things happen, and that, if the council is not prepared to act, the Government will use its powers and act for it. We have to keep open the lifeline of vital services to the citizens of Brisbane. We must see that at all times essential services such as water, electricity and sewerage are available to the people.

We, as a Government, should not have to set up any emergency squad. The council should set up its own organisation to deal with emergencies, and I trust that it will. However, it has demonstrated that it is unwilling or unable to handle these matters and the Government must be prepared to step in. These essential services are vital to the health and welfare of the people and they must be kept going. Surely no-one can cavil at that and I formally request the Cabinet to give consideration to having in

readiness the machinery and the means to provide emergency crews to cope with vital services when strikes and strikers hold the city to ransom.

This applies equally to mental asylums and to correction institutions. We cannot let these things get out of hand. There is a tendency on the part of authority, and in some cases almost an apathy—

**Mr. Wright:** Do you believe the Army should be used to quell strikers?

**Mr. HUGHES:** I have answered the hon. member's query on that. Mr. Chifley decided that they should. And they should, and will, be used in times of necessity if the same situation should arise. Has the hon. member no regard at all for people? If he had, he would be supporting what I am saying. If he has a callous disregard for them, I feel sorry for him, and no doubt the electors will show their displeasure and concern at the ballot-box when the time again arrives for them to vote.

We should not be caught off guard in future or be unprepared. Authority tends to be apathetic and unprepared to deal with emergencies, but we have been long enough in Government to be able to put our house in order and to find a means of setting up machinery to deal with situations as they arise, and not afterwards. If ever the Government is placed again in this situation it must accept its responsibility and not allow a recurrence of the present waste of water when it should be provided to those who require it. We must implement necessary measures to protect the health and welfare of the citizens of Brisbane.

I wish to make a number of brief comments on certain items contained in the Budget. I refer, first, to the Railway Department. Great credit is due to the Minister and the administration on having brought the department from a state of bankruptcy to one in which it shows a surplus. Prior to this Government taking office the railway system was bankrupt and losing \$3,000,000 each year, whereas today it has better rolling-stock, better track, better facilities and a better service, and this year it is budgeting for a surplus of \$500,000. Last year it had an even greater surplus. The department has been transformed from a bankrupt one into an efficient one.

It has always been the practice to deal with certain of the capital charges borne from Consolidated Revenue and interest associated with it, and, as the Treasurer said, this is a matter of concern for the future. However, let us look for the reason for the department's success. Remember that if it is not successful but loses \$2,000,000 to \$3,000,000 annually, that money comes from the mothers and fathers of the children who are in the gallery—from the taxpayers—which means that less money is available for education, hospitals, roads, and other essential services. Any Government must be cognisant of its responsibilities and get

its full value for the dollar. It must make a department efficient and profitable. This Government and the Minister have been able to do that.

The efficiency of the Railway Department is not due solely to having a good Minister. It has a good Commissioner and officers, and good men. Another factor is the tremendous increase in traffic that has resulted from the exploitation of our mineral wealth. If the Government had been of a different political ilk and had been composed of members of the Labour Party I doubt whether Queensland would have enjoyed this increase in mineral wealth—this exploitation—and this increase in railway traffic. Under Labour, the Railway Department would have gone further down the financial drain on its toboggan towards bankruptcy. Opposition members are “knockers”; they do not want anything to do with overseas investment capital. Those who sit in Opposition avow that they will stop overseas investment here. Labour would never have got Weipa out of the files. It was gathering dust. However, in 1957 this Government shook the dust off the file and put the show on the road. As well, \$255,000,000 has been poured into Gladstone to testify to this Government's good administration.

**Mr. Wright:** Mr. Hughes, —

**Mr. HUGHES:** The hon. member was not here when Weipa was gathering dust. He was still in napkins. However, that is not his fault.

**Mr. Wright:** Do you think the Government has made a pretty good effort in securing the royalties on coal?

**Mr. HUGHES:** Yes, it is a good effort. The coal would still be underground if Labour was in power. Who is to say that there will be a use for coal in 100 years' time? Probably there will be no use for it. I am not expressing my view solely; the experts say this.

**Mr. Wright** interjected.

**Mr. HUGHES:** Our coal and other mineral wealth is being exploited, employment is being provided, and investment capital has developed the State. If that is wrong, there is something wrong with the majority of people in this State, who want it and have voted this Government into power to ensure that they get it.

**Mr. Wright** interjected.

**Mr. HUGHES:** We do not want it socialised, either. If the hon. member is so obsessed in his ideas, I am afraid that I cannot do very much more for him. However, undoubtedly his electors will deal with him at the first opportunity.

**Mr. Wright:** Repetition.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The hon. member for Rockhampton South has been responsible for a series of interjections. Such conduct will not be tolerated.

**Mr. HUGHES:** I have so much to say, I must press on. We must do everything possible to entice overseas investment capital here. That is the one way in which we can develop our State and nation. Our numbers are too small and our reserves too few to do it on our own. We must do it in company, without these “knockers” of progress in Opposition who are continually interjecting and screaming.

Without mineral exploitation and the revenue therefrom, the Railway Department would be a further \$35,000,000 in debt. It is there for all to see.

**Mr. Davis** interjected.

**Mr. HUGHES:** The hon. member would be the first to complain if the free hospitals system was abolished and we had to refuse teachers further increases in salary. He would be the first to object if we had to cut down university grants and the programme for roads and capital works. Hon. members opposite cannot have it both ways. People are getting the best of both worlds by the way we are holding the reins of Government.

We are budgeting for a total of \$114,000,000 for education, which represents an increase of 16.38 per cent. on last year's figure. Of this sum, \$15,300,000 is for the university. I should like to see much more money allocated to the university, and to education generally. When I say that, I am echoing the thoughts of my fellow Government members. However, the university senate has an obligation to see that the money is spent wisely. Of the sum of \$15,300,000 allocated to the university, \$6,000,000 is in the form of a grant from the Federal Government. The university has an obligation to demonstrate that it is competent and willing to deal with radicals, and also with the lawlessness which, from time to time, disrupts the university. The Monash University has at long last displayed fortitude, strength of character and courage. I hope that very soon our own university senate members will face up to the situation, which on many occasions has been allowed to get out of control. I know them very well. Individually they are good people, but collectively they are a hopeless bunch of fuddy-duddies and pussyfoots.

Only a minority element at the university is involved, but its members are damaging the university's good name and all the wonderful things for which it stands. The great majority of students want to study and do the right thing. I am hopeful that, after the recent debate in this Chamber, and after conversations that many of us have had with those in authority at the university, things will settle down. I have been there even at 8 o'clock in the morning to speak for an hour or so with Professor Zelman Cowen and others. I have tremendous faith in, and respect for, Professor Cowen. I believe that he is a man not only of tolerance,

patience, fortitude and ability, but of courage also. Time will test his courage, but I hope that he can deal fairly, properly, firmly and decisively with any situation created by malcontents who get out of hand, because such conduct damages the university as a whole.

**Mr. Wright:** What do you think should be done?

**Mr. HUGHES:** When the occasion demands—and there have been such instances, with obscenities, assaults on persons and so on—if there is an assault on a person or damage to property, and so on, the guilty party or parties should be immediately suspended and charged. If found guilty, a penalty should be imposed to fit the crime, with expulsion where necessary, or a recommendation that scholarships be withdrawn. If people are to be induced to support the university, if taxpayers are to continue to provide 77 per cent. of the cost of its upkeep, if firms and Governments are to support it by awarding scholarships, those who partake of the benefits must display a sense of discipline, particularly to permit the great majority of good students to continue to enjoy the benefits to be derived from attending the university.

If, in the future, this dissident element persists in being malcontent and breaching the statutes of the university and the laws of the land, it should not get preferential treatment; there should not be one law for it and another law for us. If an ordinary citizen shouted an obscenity in Queen Street he would be arrested, but those at the university appear to have immunity from the law. This is not as it should be. If something decisive is not done, law, order and discipline will be brought into disrepute and those controlling the university will be held in disrespect. If the penalty fitted the crime, there would be suspensions and expulsions.

The Vote for the Department of Justice has been increased by \$1,000,000. Apart from departments such as the Department of Health and the Department of Education, which give service to the community, it is one of the few departments whose Vote has been increased to such an extent. I have great admiration for the Minister for Justice. He has a garden-variety type of common-sense which cannot be bought at any university.

The Vote for the Law Reform Commission has been increased 300 per cent. I hope there will soon be a report on the activities of this body and that the Minister will let us know what is being done by it. Many of our laws are archaic. For instance, a person who wore sandshoes down Queen Street or who burnt a second-hand fruit case could be arrested and charged, and I could cite many more anomalies in our present statutes.

The Law Reform Commission has a task of no small magnitude, but it comprises men who have the capacity, wisdom, knowledge and experience to deal with the situation.

One illustrious member of it, Mr. Raymund Smith, occupied a place in this Chamber for many years. I look forward to his contribution and hope that, to justify the increase in this Vote, he and other members of the commission will soon give us evidence of the work they are doing to update and consolidate overlapping legislation.

In the Vote for the Department of Labour and Tourism, an amount is set aside for Commissioner of Prices. It is up 7 per cent., which I was surprised to see.

**Mr. Wright:** What does he do?

**Mr. HUGHES:** That is a pretty good question, and I should like the Minister to answer it.

We do not have price-fixing in this State. That is fair enough, because the Government believes in free enterprise. Competition is the best leveller of prices. I know that the Opposition does not like competition; it wants State meatworks, State sawmills, State breweries, State this and State that; I wish it would "state" something worth while. The Opposition would socialise everything except Parliament. That is its avowed intention and its platform. This was reiterated at the Labour-in-Politics Convention at Surfers Paradise. The people of this country believe in competition, and have expressed that belief many times.

There is no price-fixing, so why should there be a Commissioner of Prices? Why should there be this expenditure? We have all known of cases of feather-bedding in the Public Service, and this seems to be anomalous. Why is there a need to retain this Vote? I would sooner see this money given to education or hospitals, where it would be of some service and benefit to the community.

The question of hours should be looked at. We should not hound the corner-store owner. The small shopkeeper provides a service for the welfare and benefit of the community and he should be protected. We should not tend to look only to huge monopoly retailing interests. If a man desires to work, let him work. If we are a free-enterprise Government, we should show it and live up to it. We should practice what we preach. We should not put a brake on initiative, and stop a man from working if he wants to. If a person is prepared to work and provide a service, then let him do so. He should obtain a reward for such initiative. We should remove the dead-hand of officialdom, if necessary. If this is a matter for the Industrial Commission, we should take a case to it and say, "Remove this restriction." In the alternative, we should support any similar application to the Commission.

It was once said that Britain became great because it was a nation built around small shopkeepers. I think that we would do well to adopt the same attitude here. I know that certain goods, such as perishables, are exempt and can be sold at any time, but many other items that are necessary in the home cannot

be bought after the prescribed trading hours. And, after all, what is wrong with selling at times other than the prescribed hours? Why should restriction be placed on a person who wants to work?

**Mr. Wright:** Do you support the sale of liquor in small shops?

**Mr. HUGHES:** Hon. members opposite support the sale of liquor 24 hours a day. They want an open swill. If that question were left to the Labour Party, I should hate to think what would happen in this State. They want grog joints open 24 hours a day. In a decent society, there must be a sense of proportion, and a sense of balance. Obviously the Labour Party has neither.

The allocation to the Health Department has increased by \$9,000,000. I should like a little of that additional finance for the Kurilpa Child Care Centre. I make a plea that Cabinet give the fullest consideration to approving a grant for this centre. In Kurilpa, which is one of the nicest parts of Brisbane (and where the nicest people I know, the majority of whom vote for me, live), there is a child-care centre that has grown from small beginnings years ago through the dedicated services of Mrs. Midwinter and her late husband, Perc. These wonderful people worked in the interests of children and humanity. They started the centre in a small prefabricated hut, then moved to the School of Arts in Boundary Street, and continued to expand to cater for the needs of deserted wives and widows, and occasionally widowers, who had to go to work but who wanted to keep their families together.

I could quote extensively from letters that I wrote to the Minister and that he wrote to me following my representations for a financial grant for this centre. I believe that my application for such a grant should be considered in the light of providing a community need. The centre can expand on only one side, and in order to do that some resumption of land is necessary. The capital cost of this work—about \$80,000—is far in excess of what the centres can afford. Those operating the centre are prepared to continue working to provide for the growing needs of deserted wives who have children and who have to work, and they hope that they will be regarded as deserving of a grant or loan. I think that sympathetic consideration should be given to this very humane work.

I have only another seven or eight minutes in which to speak, and there is another vital matter to which I must refer. Again it concerns the Brisbane City Council.

**Mr. Davis:** Oh!

**Mr. HUGHES:** With the city debt, there is a very real problem. I hope that that will be appreciated by the hon. member who interjected. The city debt is now \$19,670,470. How much is on hire-purchase, I do not

know, and no other member knows. That is something we cannot find out. If anything is hidden, it probably will be in Pandora's box. Undoubtedly the hire-purchase debt of this city would shock its citizens if it was brought to their knowledge. It is a matter for real concern. Where is the city going? It is in headlong flight to bankruptcy because the Lord Mayor is using hire-purchase with very high rates of interest in order to put money into city squares. I do not decry the provision of a city square, a riverside drive, or some other form of beautification, but the programme should be balanced, and one certainly cannot expect to get three or four city squares in a matter of two or three years.

In "The Courier Mail" of 14 October, questions were asked and it was stated that the city had paid \$7,900,000 for land, with much more to be expended on acquiring Lennons Hotel, the I.A.C. building, and the National Bank building. When is it going to stop? The Council spent \$3,500,000 on the city square, \$2,000,000 on the Anzac Square project, and \$1,000,000 to have a square opposite St. John's Cathedral. The ambulance centre of which my parliamentary colleagues the hon. member for Sandgate, Mr. Dean, the hon. member for Redcliffe, Mr. Loughton, and I have been members for many years has had to find a new home because the council has kicked it out. The Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board went the same way. Millions have been paid out for capital works. Things such as roads, services, sewerage, parks and maintenance of roads and footpaths are merely incidental to the Lord Mayor and his council, but they still have to be provided.

The city debt is going to cause great problems when taken in conjunction with the increasing cost of land. I say that the Brisbane City Council is costing people out of their properties and preventing other people from obtaining their own homes, and I shall back up my contention with facts and figures. For generations it has been the policy of right-thinking people in administrative positions in Australia to provide people with an incentive to buy and own their own homes. Here we have a Labour city council that wants to cost people out of doing so. Does it want to socialise home-ownership too? For heaven's sake let it show some decency in administration and make some attempt to meet the needs and demands of the citizens, instead of dictating to them and then finding that a problem has arisen and that it is too late to unscramble the egg.

Recently an inquiry was held into maladministration by the Brisbane City Council in land dealings, subdivisions, and onerous charges placed on developers. Apparently that inquiry was a waste of time and almost farcical, because it has not really got us anywhere. Of course, it highlighted a number of things. Although it condemned the council, the council continues doing things that will price people out of the home-ownership market.

I point out to hon. members that the price of a block of land at Mt. Gravatt has increased as follows:—

Year	\$
1950 .. .. .	500
1960 .. .. .	2,000
1965 .. .. .	3,750
1970 .. .. .	4,750

At Wynnum—

Year	\$
1950 .. .. .	300
1960 .. .. .	1,250
1965 .. .. .	2,250
1970 .. .. .	3,000

Now, turning to the north side, these are the prices for a block of land at Zillmere—

Year	\$
1950 .. .. .	200
1960 .. .. .	1,250
1965 .. .. .	2,000
1970 .. .. .	2,750

At Stafford—

Year	\$
1950 .. .. .	400
1960 .. .. .	1,400
1965 .. .. .	2,600
1970 .. .. .	4,000

The figures are reliable. They have been obtained after a good deal of statistical work at the Department of the Valuer-General. I am sure that hon. members will accept them as being authentic.

**Mr. Davis** interjected.

**Mr. HUGHES:** If ever price control was needed—and I believe in free enterprise—there is very good reason why it should be imposed on the city council. I will show the hon. member why. In 1960, a subdivider was required to contribute one-third of the cost of development and two-thirds by way of a loan to enable services to be provided. Today, the council requires the developer to contribute the whole of the money. Putting it into figures, he is now required to pay per block \$500 for roads, \$500 for sewerage, \$150 for water, \$150 for underground electricity, \$35 for P.M.G. capitalisation—why he should have to pay that, I would never know—\$20 for parks contribution, and any amount for drainage depending on the topography of the ground and its problems, plus surveying, engineering, the interest factor and other things, which together add over \$2,000 per block to the price of land. This is having an escalating effect on prices.

Recently, land on the average was, say, \$2,000 an acre undeveloped, or \$500 a block. Add to that \$2,500 for the things I have mentioned and it becomes \$3,000, plus the interest factor, commission and other things. The developer does not subdivide just for love; he wants a profit of 20 to 30 per cent.

**Mr. Wright:** One hundred per cent.

**Mr. HUGHES:** There is no way in the world that he can get 100 per cent. today. The council sees to that. That means that the purchaser of a block of land has to pay \$3,000 to \$4,000 for it, depending on the area and the original cost per acre.

The seller of undeveloped land then says, "Well, as they are getting \$3,000 to \$3,500 for the land, I want that per acre now", so he asks \$3,000 or \$3,500 for it. The development cost of \$2,500 goes on to that, so the purchaser now pays \$5,500 for the block plus interest on the higher amount. Then the seller of the land wants \$5,000 per acre, and so on.

The council demands are having an escalating effect on prices. It is providing water, sewerage, and electricity. In other words, it is running a business and selling these commodities. Why should the home owner have to pay 100 per cent. of these costs? I believe he should contribute something; that is fair enough, but I do not believe he should have to give 100 per cent. to a rapacious, grasping council. It puts Shylock to shame.

**Mr. Hanson:** The people seem to enjoy it; they vote for him.

**Mr. HUGHES:** Enjoy it? The hon. member is so out of touch with people and the electorate that I almost feel sorry for him. He can afford to wax fat knowing that this Government brought development costing \$250,000,000-odd to Gladstone. He should thank us.

To get back to this problem, it has reached the stage that the consumer will be priced out of the market. We cannot expect the purchaser of a block of land to pay the whole of the cost of these services. I certainly believe that the developer has some obligation, but every citizen of this city—every ratepayer—should subsidise this development. There should be a fair balance.

**Mr. Davis:** I am in favour of progress in my electorate.

**Mr. HUGHES:** Good luck to the hon. member! I do not deny that but let us take an over-all, balanced and sensible view of this matter. This rapacious, grasping council is loading the whole of this cost on to the developer and the reason for it is that no residential land is available other than an odd block. All the large areas of land available in this city are zoned "future urban". Why? So that the Council will have the means to blackmail the developer and force him to succumb to its demands and dictates. And who pays? John Citizen.

The youngsters in the gallery today will have to pay an astronomical price for a block of land when they need it. The poor girls will have to go to work. Hon. members opposite say they do not want women to work, but the Labour council is forcing them to do so. What a shame! What a shambles the administration of this city has been reduced to! This situation will need to be looked at; it cannot be allowed to

continue. Assume certain land is zoned "future urban", and a person applies to the council to have it zoned "residential". The council says, "Yes, we will zone it 'residential' for you if you do this, this, this, and this (costing up to \$2,500 a block) and pay the cost of drainage." That type of thing has an escalating effect on the price of land. It is pricing the Housing Commission off the market in providing low-cost homes.

However, there is a way around this. I do not suggest that the citizens of Brisbane should be loaded with this debt. But if the council is running its undertaking as a business—it sells electricity and water—why should it be allowed to saddle people with this burden? In view of the stringency of loan funds, it is fair enough for the council to sell its services, to cope properly with development in any area, which may be a little before its time. But a basic price should be set for the land, and engineering and survey fees could be added to it. There would be some contribution by way of roads, kerbing and channelling, but in the provision of water, sewerage and electricity the people should not have the whole cost placed upon them. The council forces people to build homes away out in the sticks and then pay an extra \$150 a block, for having in front of them not sticks but underground electric-light cables. Electricity poles on footpaths are not entirely unaesthetic if they are blended with trees and shrubs. It would be fair enough for the council, with its trouble in getting loan funds, to require citizens to pay a basic price, which includes certain roadworks and other material benefits, and loan the council the balance needed to carry out the remainder of this work, in, say, 10-year debentures. And remember that the work is amortised by the council. It is selling water, etc., so it is running a business.

Take as an analogy a biscuit factory to be built by the hon. member for Rockhampton South. Would he go out and say to somebody, "Give me all the money to build my factory. I will sell you biscuits, but you will not get them any cheaper than the price charged elsewhere"? Of course not: it would not work. However, owing to the fact that the Brisbane City Council faces no competition and holds a gun at the heads of the citizens of this city and is able to blackmail developers, the Government's Budget is affected. The council is costing people off their land and forcing women to go out to work. And we as a Government are letting it happen. The Bennett committee of inquiry proved that these problems lay with the council. What have we done about it? It is still going on. The council is still blackmailing people, and the citizens are still paying through the nose. Why, it takes three months even to get an application through for site approval in a small matter.

**Mr. Wright:** How many approvals do you have?

**Mr. HUGHES:** Only the one, for one little block of land. It took a little over three months. I would hate to think what would happen if I wanted to undertake a large developmental scheme. I believe that the whole matter should be investigated and that the Government should call a halt to this situation.

Certainly an ombudsman should be appointed. If a citizen complains to an alderman about the need for roadworks and the alderman either does not or cannot get the job done, that citizen then complains to his State member and asks for help. The State member, cognisant of his responsibilities, takes it up with the town clerk, but he is told by the town clerk to send the matter back to the alderman. The matter goes back onto the merry-go-round, and gets nowhere. The citizens of Brisbane cannot get anywhere in their attempts to achieve proper administration, and they are fuming about it. I am only one man voicing their sentiments and grave concern. It is time that an ombudsman was appointed to settle all this. The council is forcing land developers to do these things. All this does is impose an added cost on the landowner who wants to build a house. It forces people off their properties, and stultifies development in the city, which is driven to other areas. I ask hon. members to note the tremendous increase in activity in the surrounding shires during the next few years.

It is about time that the anomalies created by the council were brought to a halt. I ask hon. members to consider what happened in Sydney when commissioners were brought in to administer that city. By using common-sense they turned a bankrupt council into an efficient organisation.

**An Opposition Member:** What about the C.M.O.?

**Mr. HUGHES:** The same would apply if they follow this pattern.

Aldermen are elected to represent their wards. If they cannot do so individually and collectively, the Government will have to look at the serious situation being created. We cannot allow the city council administration to continue as it is.

Many aspects of the town plan require attention. I do not deny that there are very good dedicated and experienced officers in the council, and I have tremendous respect for them collectively. Many officers in the town planning, engineering and other council sections have my respect—they are doing a good job—but they are only carrying out the administration's policy. They must obey when the administration says, "You will hit this man if he does not meet our demands. If he does not make a 100 per cent. contribution we will not approve his application." That shocking state of affairs cannot be allowed to continue. The present administration is chasing development to outside areas and forcing people off their properties.

**An Opposition Member** interjected.

**Mr. HUGHES:** I am all for John Citizen. He deserves every protection. He comes first, even before party.

**Mr. Wright** interjected.

**Mr. HUGHES:** That is the basis on which I will continue to get increased majorities. The Opposition have put up their best men against me, but they have fallen by the way-side.

The Government must deal with this situation. We cannot allow the price of land to be increased. We do not get back anything from the P.M.G. for paying \$35 extra for underground cables. Why should people have to pay an extra \$150 for underground electricity? The department is selling a service.

I conclude on the basis that if a purchaser is paying a certain price for his land, with a contribution to the council by way of a few thousand dollars in debentures, it could be attached to the title, irrespective of who administers the council, and in 10 years' time he could get his money back.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. CASEY** (Mackay) (2.59 p.m.): Every circus has its clown, but it is a long time since we have seen as energetic a clown as the hon. member for Kurilpa. However, I am very much afraid that his sense of humour and judgment are as out of date as some of the points he has tried to put over us in relation to local government administration, particularly that of the Brisbane City Council. I suppose this stems from the jealousy deep within him because of the period of inactivity he spent as a member of the Brisbane City Council, during which, I understand, the city became renowned for stagnation under the C.M.O.-Liberal organisation led by various C.M.O. leaders such as Chandler and Groom. At last, as the people of Queensland know full well, Brisbane is on the move, and they have a capital city of which they can be proud, controlled by a Labour administration of which they can also be proud. The people of Queensland look proudly at this city and at the way in which it has moved ahead under the Jones administration. Those in the provincial cities and country areas say to themselves, "What a pity it is that the activity reflected throughout this city cannot be demonstrated equally in our areas." The people of Queensland generally could enjoy equal progress under a Labour administration.

Many of the points raised by the hon. member for Kurilpa bordered on the ridiculous. He gave us a diatribe on the difficulty confronting the Brisbane City Council in financing various works and facilities. This difficulty confronts all local authorities in the State; it is not peculiar to Brisbane. The local authorities in provincial cities and country areas are forced to place a burden on people who are buying homes and lands in those areas simply because they have insufficient revenue.

This brings me to the first point I want to discuss. It is said that local government is what the name implies, namely, government of a locality by people with local knowledge and local interests. It has been my privilege, for a number of years, to be associated with local government and to have served on local government. In addition, through the various avenues available to local authority councillors, I have been privileged to attend many conferences where I could meet and become friendly with local authority men from every corner of the State, not only from Brisbane, which is the only place that the hon. member for Kurilpa, in expressing his narrow-minded view, has demonstrated that he knows anything about. At these conferences it is possible to discuss problems which vary from shire to shire and from area to area. There is, however, one common problem—financial plight.

Quite recently, the Treasurer, the Minister for Mines and Main Roads and the Minister for Local Government and Electricity attended and spoke at the Local Government Association conference in Mackay. The Treasurer—I give him credit for this—pointed out the financial problems confronting the State relative to local government subsidies. A pertinent point he made—and I do not disagree with him—was that some local authorities have not been making the best use of their existing resources. However, even if they did so, they would not completely overcome all their problems. The over-all financial plight of local authorities is reflected in the figures of this State.

On many occasions, subsidies and reductions in subsidies have been discussed in this Chamber, and it has been pointed out by the Premier, the Treasurer and various Ministers for Local Government that local authorities in this State are better off than those in any other State because of the subsidy system in vogue in Queensland. This is true. Not one Opposition member would deny this. It was a Labour Party thought and a Labour Party idea. It was implemented by previous Labour Governments and has been carried on since then.

Over the past 10 years the proportion of subsidy received by local government bodies, compared with their over-all spending, has deteriorated. I do not compare the proportion with the various amounts granted by the State itself. If there appears to be some association between these figures and the fact that there was a Labour Government in those days, it is purely coincidental. However, the figures reflect the different treatment and attitudes adopted by different Governments to local authorities. I chose the 10-year period that I shall mention because it was the most recent period for which the figures were available.

In 1956-57, local authorities, over all, received a Government subsidy of slightly more than \$4,000,000, compared with their over-all spending of \$65,000,000. This

represents a subsidy of 6½ per cent. of their total spending. By 1968, the proportion of subsidy had fallen to 5.7 per cent., and is continuing to fall.

Grants received by the Queensland Government from the Commonwealth Government can fairly be compared with subsidies paid by the State Government to local authorities, which are so vital to the finances of those bodies. In 1956-57, the Commonwealth Government, by way of grants for various purposes, gave to the State Government \$57,000,000, which then represented 33.6 per cent. of the over-all expenditure of the State of Queensland, as shown by the State Budget for that year. In the last complete financial year, that percentage increased to 44. In other words, the income received by the State in grants from the Commonwealth Government, expressed as a percentage of the State's expenditure, increased by 11 per cent. In the same period, however, the State has not passed on a similar increase to local authorities. In fact, the percentage granted to local authorities, compared with over-all expenditure, is decreasing.

This is not the only thing that is contributing to the over-all problem in local government. In addition to receiving subsidies that have not kept pace with the increased demands made upon local authorities by the people, local authorities have had increased burdens placed on them not only by the rate-payers but also by the State Government. If we look closely at the operations of local authorities, we will find that most of them have various boards or trusts to which they have to pay considerable precepts. Most such bodies have been established in recent years, and the precepts constitute a direct expenditure from the councils' budgets. They have no control over the finance thus provided; it goes to the boards and trusts and is spent by those bodies.

Whilst regional electricity boards are not directly financed by local authorities, the figures that I have quoted for 1956-57 reflect considerable spending by local authorities in regional board areas. At that time, many local authorities still controlled and owned their own electricity undertakings, and that would be reflected in their over-all figures of expenditure.

A case in point came up recently in my own council. Because an additional fire brigade station was built in an area outside the city—it nevertheless was still under the control of the Mackay Fire Brigade Board—there was an increase in precepts to the council of over 35 per cent., and the city rates had to be increased to meet that precept. The people of the city received no return whatever from that rate increase, which had to be imposed to pay for an additional fire brigade station in an area outside the specific local authority area. In fact, the people of Mackay got a lesser service, because one fire engine had to be moved from the city and stationed at the new fire station. That is the

type of thing that is happening to local authorities. Their costs are being increased by factors that are completely beyond their control.

Let us look at some other costs that must be met by local authorities. I do not say that finance to meet them all should come from the State Government. I instance river trusts. In the case of river trusts, particularly those concerning rivers that are boundaries between local authorities and cover an area in which there are several local authorities, the councils have elected representatives on the river trusts but they have no control over the functioning and operating of trusts, which operate as separate and autonomous bodies.

In some areas, 20 or 25 per cent., sometimes up to 33½ per cent., State subsidy is being paid on river trust work. In many cases it is for work that is not within the council's area, but local authorities are required to contribute very high precepts to the work of river trusts. They usually share the cost, and usually an equitable basis is arrived at when a number of shires are involved.

There is no comparison between that and the work of the Hunter River Authority, in New South Wales. There the people of the area had to pay only one-seventh of the total cost of the work, whether by loan or otherwise, whereas in Queensland the people pay two-thirds and sometimes up to 80 per cent. In the Hunter River area, the State Government paid three-sevenths of the cost and the Commonwealth Government also paid three-sevenths. The State and Federal Governments came to the party very well in that instance, and the Government of New South Wales—I believe it was a Labour Government at the time—must have put a very good case to the Commonwealth to enable the river-training and flood-prevention work to be carried out on a basis so favourable to the people living in the area.

Another example of the way in which the finances of local authorities are being eroded is to be seen in North Queensland where large works are required for flood prevention or some other purpose. I cite the case of the Bowen Shire and the problems that council faced after cyclone Ada. I think that the Bowen Shire had to find about \$65,000 as its share of the work involved in fixing the Bowen River and cyclone damage, and the river trust had to carry a similar burden.

Shires and local authorities are being saddled more and more with the cost of works that are normally outside their control. Many additional costs are being loaded onto them by both State and Federal Governments. One finds that men and women who serve so well on local authorities are very kindly in their outlook towards pensioners. They provide homes for pensioners and amenities for aged persons, and rate remissions are given to pensioners who have lived in an area all their life and contributed to

the cost of roads, gutters, drainage and sewerage. At the end of their working lives, those people are still faced with paying rates. They have paid for the services for their generation and the 40-year loan repayments, and consequently most councils try to assist by giving some sort of rate remission to ease the burden on those people. However, councils do not receive any recompense from the Federal Government for making that concession—I am not placing any blame on the State Government; I believe it is the responsibility of the Federal Government—so the loss of revenue from the pensioner rate-payers must be met by the other ratepayers of the shire.

Turning to health services, I point out that it is all very well for the State Government to say, "We will provide serum for a vaccination campaign." But the health of the people is the responsibility of the State Government, not of local government, and the total cost of vaccination campaigns should be met by the State Health Department. Certainly local authorities should, if possible, be used as the instrumentality in such campaigns, but they should not have to meet the cost. Added financial burdens such as that should not be thrust completely on local authorities.

Because of their closeness to the people, local authorities, particularly those in distant areas of the State, do a considerable amount of free work with their plant and equipment for the various State schools, simply because there is no other way in which the parents and citizens' associations can get the work done. In most cases they apply through the normal channels and are told that the finance is not available to the Education Department for such things, so, with one member of the council on the parents and citizens' association, they get together and decide under the lap to do certain work to help the school. In this way, local authorities are again carrying a burden that should be borne by the State.

**Mr. Davis:** Many of the small towns would die if they did not.

**Mr. CASEY:** Many towns today would die without such help from the local authorities, and many schools would suffer severely if the shire councils did not come to the party and do the work that they so often undertake for them and perform so well.

Traffic safety is another burden that has been placed upon the councils. The complete cost of traffic engineering work has been unloaded on to local authorities and on many main roads it is being handled by them. In addition, local authorities in many areas become the go-betweens for art and culture. They look after the Queensland Symphony Orchestra when it goes on tour and they also provide libraries and kindergartens.

It is true that they receive certain subsidies on libraries, but the libraries must be run and this is solely the expense of the councils. They are free to the people in the area. The State library in Brisbane, for instance, is a free service to the people, but the cost is borne by the State Government. In the local authority areas the cost of libraries is carried almost completely by the respective local authority.

Many of them even have to bear the cost of kindergartens and kindergarten work. We have heard in this debate emphasis being placed on pre-school education in this State and the need for it. I support the thoughts and the comments that have been made upon it, especially by Opposition members who were our school teachers and are very knowledgeable in this subject, including the full implications of the new curricula in schools. Again, in many outside areas, the complete cost of these kindergartens is organised or met by the local authority concerned.

These are some of the impositions that are being placed upon local authorities in the State and that are causing their serious financial plight. These are avenues in which the State Government could support them strongly and well. It is the little things that count and I think we should be prepared to help them. They come under our auspices and work completely within the bounds of the Local Government Act, and it is our responsibility to look after them. It is our responsibility to fight for additional finance for them at the Loan Council. I notice that the State itself is on the threshold of obtaining assistance by way of relief from a portion of its public debt. How much of this will be used to relieve local authorities of a portion of their debts, which have been rising at a faster rate than that of the State itself?

I believe that the Local Government Department could be of far more assistance to various local authorities which are disadvantaged by our present system of boundaries. The time is long overdue for a complete revision of local authority boundaries in Queensland. The last time this was done was in 1929, by a Royal Commission. The documents and findings of that commission are in our Parliamentary library. It was a very comprehensive inquiry and it took into account every factual aspect of local government at that particular time as well as forward planning. But in 1929, no-one in or outside Parliament envisaged the present system of transportation operating in this State. No-one envisaged the improvement that would be brought about after the war years as a result of our contact with other nations and peoples and as a result of our moving on to modern times.

It is 40 years since 1929—more than a generation—and the whole context has completely changed. Towns that once had affiliations with certain shires no longer have them; roads that once went through certain

towns now bypass them; people who once visited those towns during holidays now visit others; and the population travels around more and more. The problems created by the existing local authority boundaries have been referred to recently in this Chamber. Certainly they would have been mentioned to a greater extent if the Government had allowed the hon. member for Barcoo to move his motion.

The problem associated with the town of Blackwater is a classic example of the type of thing that happens. It is a new mining township. I know that the people who lived there years ago would not object to my saying that once it was a small, sleepy little township consisting of the usual pub, the store, two or three houses, the station-master's house and the school with 10 or 12 pupils. All of a sudden the development of coal-mining near the township has resulted in an increase in population to approximately 2,000, and it is envisaged that it will increase in the next 10 years by as much as 300 to 400 per cent. The administration of that town is being thrust into the hands of what was once a township of similar size something like 50 or 60 miles away. That has caused problems and created hardships in the two shires that are concerned. One shire has lost it, whereas the other has gained it, or the area close by. If that situation was looked at properly the Government would have realised that eventually Blackwater will increase in size to such an extent that it will need its own town council.

An investigation into local authority boundaries could look at that situation and the similar one that has resulted from the development of the Goonyella coalfield, which is divided among the Broadsound, Belyando and Nebo shires.

In the areas further west people no longer move to certain townships that previously they supported. Approximately 15 miles outside Barcardine lies the boundary between the Barcardine and the Aramac shires, yet residents in the Aramac shire strongly support the town of Barcardine. In the Broad-sound shire, whose headquarters are at St. Lawrence, people who journeyed to St. Lawrence by rail, which was once the terminus, transferred either to a ship or a coach to travel to Mackay, where they would catch another train for the journey further north. Of course, this was before my time, but perhaps the Minister for Primary Industries might remember what used to happen. A number of passengers who disembarked at St. Lawrence used to travel west to Clermont; however, they no longer do so. The construction of the Peak Downs Highway has enabled people to go to Clermont from Mackay.

The situation changes continually, so it is necessary that a properly constituted commission investigate shire boundaries in Queensland and help the shires increase their efficiency.

An anomaly that arises in local authority administration is that the shire clerk or, in the case of a fairly large township, the town clerk is required to have certain qualifications before he can attain that position and be paid a high salary. He becomes an adviser to his council, and, in many instances, administers a budget that is greater than the expenditure of the Local Government Department. But what happens? Each month he compiles a great folio of documents and forwards it to the Local Government Department for examination. In the department the documents are examined by a clerk on his third classification, who receives a quarter of the salary paid to the shire clerk and possesses a quarter of his knowledge of the Local Government Act.

If the Government believes that shire clerks and shire engineers should be licensed to carry out their work, it should have sufficient confidence in their ability to compile the various forms and returns properly. It is a very cumbersome process to continually check all the work. Of course, it may be that, with computerised control, some of this work can be avoided.

The Department of Local Government should alter its methods so that training can be provided for people in the various shires in the management of local government affairs. It could be taken to the shire councillor level. Anyone who has attended local government conferences knows that many of the motions presented are a waste of the delegates' time. If the State, through the Department of Local Government, established seminar-type conferences, training could be provided in local government administration and spending.

I shall now deal with some of the problems facing transport operators in Queensland. In his Opening Speech, the Governor said—

"The State's system of long distance road passenger transport, initiated from Brisbane to Cairns in 1968... will be examined to establish a basis on which future policies can be founded."

That is long overdue. The service was poorly initiated, and has operated in the same way ever since. I think we should go further and closely investigate what other State Governments do in the way of long-distance passenger transport. When the Treasurer pointed out that the Budget provides \$17,000,000 from Consolidated Revenue to cover debt charges relative to railway capital expenditure, he said it was a measure of subsidy for the rail-user. That is true, but I do not think much benefit flows to long-distance railway passengers. An examination of railway usage discloses that overseas mining companies are the major users. I point out, too, that large southern manufacturers receive rather large concessions. If this is subsidy, as such, the

advantages are flowing to the southern manufacturers, to the detriment of northern manufacturers in Queensland. If the Beckingsale report does not emphasise that point, it will not be a "fair-dinkum" report.

The railway Estimates disclose that obsolete assets have been written off. When we look at some of the railway facilities we realise that there are certainly more to be written off.

I shall now present a short review of facilities available to travellers to the northern and western areas of the State. They can travel by air in cleanliness and comfort, and most Cabinet Ministers use plane facilities. I do not suppose it is fair to compare air travel with railway travel on the bases of speed, comfort, and so on. However, airlines provide directly—or by way of landing fees—first-class lounge and traffic facilities for the travelling public. They also provide baggage-handling facilities which are smooth, efficient and modern, even though now and again they lose someone's port. Their toilets are always neat and clean, and their departure and arrival schedules are organised to suit the major centres in the State.

Let us now look at what confronts passengers who travel on the "Sunlander", the "Midlander", the "Westlander" or the "Inlander". Despite the so-called updating of the railway system, facilities provided for passengers at almost all railway stations belong to the horse-and-buggy days. Old wooden-slat seats are provided for passengers or for people who are waiting to meet passengers.

**Mr. Bousen:** They are most uncomfortable.

**Mr. CASEY:** Yes, they are. They are out of date, particularly compared with what is provided for air passengers.

All railway stations have old, concrete toilets, with wet or damp floors. They are perfumed with phenol. These days, there are much more pleasant-smelling substances for use in toilets.

**Mr. Newton:** You have to use Air-o-zone.

**Mr. CASEY:** Yes. The passenger has to carry his own can of spray.

When a train does arrive, people on the platform have to be careful they are not run over by the good old steel-wheeled railway trolley, with a porter, who has to act like a Chinese coolie, pulling it along. It is degrading, in this day and age, to have Queensland porters working like animals, pulling these trolleys up and down platforms. They are a shocking disgrace and are a blight on the system.

The Minister for Transport, in reply to a question I asked on this matter last year, passed a facetious and caustic remark. It would cost very little to provide new and better facilities for moving luggage on railway platforms. We are supposed to have a modern railway system. The hon. member for

Kurilpa, in discussing railway matters, indicated that he has not travelled farther than from Yeronga to Brisbane. If he spent 24 hours or 48 hours on a train, as many other hon. members frequently do, he would know what I am talking about. These antiquated railway trolleys should be scrapped and burnt. The best we could expect is that we might get some scrap iron from the wheels, and I would not mind sending that to Japan.

At least train departure and arrival times are chalked up on a board on the station platform, and if a train is running late, somebody scrawls that fact on the board so that people do not have to hang around the station.

I shall now deal with the facilities provided for passengers on buses, which have been encouraged by this Government to take traffic from the railways. Buses are a blight on the transport system. Admittedly, they provide cheaper travel than trains. However, bus companies have no departure and arrival lounges in country areas. Their offices are in local cafes and all types of agencies except T.A.B. agencies in some western towns. A person who wishes to depart from a country town by bus might not know where the bus depot is. There are no signs to indicate where it is. He would have to ask a local identity where it was, and then carry his port to that place and stand on the footpath or sit on his port on the footpath until the bus arrived. Very few facilities are provided for bus passengers.

The same remarks apply to toilet facilities. If the agency for the coach operator happens to be located in a shop, passengers can perhaps go behind the counter and through to the back and use the toilet that is used by those who work in the building. If they are lucky, there may be a laneway nearby; many people use places such as that at night-time. I have seen it happening in several cities in North Queensland. Luggage is dumped on the footpath and left there, and people who are walking down the street have to dodge round the luggage and the people standing there.

The coach operators rely, in the main, on service stations for meals and other necessities, but the toilet facilities found at service stations are quite inadequate for the number of passengers who travel on coaches. I know it has been said that each coach is required to have a toilet and wash room. I do not know if any members have tried to use the toilet on a coach while it is travelling along the 12-foot-wide road between Marlborough and Sarina. Those who have known that it is something like going three rounds in a revolving door.

**Mr. Chalk** interjected.

**Mr. CASEY:** It is uncomfortable, to say the least, particularly for elderly people. Mental cripples, such as the Treasurer, would find it difficult indeed.

Whilst speaking of travelling long distances in road coaches, I make the comment that if a passenger becomes ill there is no-one to look after him, as there is on aircraft and trains. In fact, conductors on trains are very good in this way. The main responsibility of a coach driver is to keep the vehicle moving along the road in a proper and safe manner, but if any passengers become sick he is the only person who can look after them. If a passenger becomes ill, he has to get the driver to stop because of the problem of using toilet facilities in some situations.

Another point that I raise, from a case that came to my notice, is the absence of any notice of arrival and departure times of coaches. The need for such information was brought forcibly home to me when cyclone Ada struck in North Queensland and there was flooding and dislocation of traffic. A woman in my electorate was to meet a coach, which was to arrive at 5 o'clock in the morning, at the office of a travel agent in the city. The office is never open at that time; it is merely a place with which to identify the bus, and, to give the travel agent his due, he is merely a ticket-seller for the bus operator and does not have full responsibility for the running of the coach.

This woman was expecting her son, who was recovering from a serious head operation, to arrive on the bus. The young lad, who was recovering from brain damage received in a car accident in the South, was returning to the North by bus, and his mother went to the office at 5 o'clock in the morning—actually it was 4.30 in case the bus was a little early—and waited for it. No-one else was there, and there was no-one whom she could telephone to ascertain when the bus would arrive. She would have been waiting a long time, because the bus never came; it had stopped at Rockhampton at 11 o'clock the previous evening and the passengers for Mackay had been told, "You get off here. This is the end of the line. We are going through the West because the Don River bridge is closed." I travelled that road myself from Rockhampton to Mackay that night and I know that it was open. The young lad was dumped at the side of the road in Rockhampton, without a "razoo", in the middle of the night, and left to fend for himself.

Anyone who has travelled the road between Marlborough and Sarina would be aware of its loneliness. A few months before there had been a fatal bus accident on that road, and this woman was at her wit's end not knowing when the bus would arrive or whether it had crashed. There are no telephones along that road except those at station properties, which could be miles inland. If anything happened to one of the buses in the middle of the night, when very few people are travelling, someone could go in and get in touch with the police and let them know what had occurred.

The case to which I have referred is a classical example of what can happen. The mother waited till half past 8 in the morning,

when the shop opened. When the travel agent came in, she asked what time the bus was coming in. He did not know, because no-one had told him.

**Mr. Thackeray:** They are well away from the station properties.

**Mr. CASEY:** Yes, they are well inland from the station properties. For the reasons I have mentioned, I believe that a full review should be made of the facilities provided for passengers travelling by road in Queensland. The State Government is responsible for both road and rail transport, and it must attempt to overcome the problems associated with these services.

While I am referring to rail services, let me say that I agree wholeheartedly with the comments made yesterday by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition relative to the service provided for rail passengers in the griddle car on the "Sunlander". There are one or two things that I can add to what the hon. gentleman said.

I remind the Committee that, in addition to providing meals and snacks, the griddle car also supplies liquor, and children can obtain sweets, ice-creams and other things from it. That sounds very good, until one finds, as the hon. member for Townsville North said, dozens of people trying to get meals in the griddle car and several others using the liquor facilities. The space provided is completely inadequate.

In my opinion, consideration should be given to providing not only a griddle car but also a dining car of the old type. The griddle car could be like a parlour car similar to those used on the old Sunshine Express, and snack and lounge facilities could also be provided in it. After all, such amenities would be there wholly and solely for the comfort of paying passengers of the Queensland railways.

**Mr. Thackeray:** Are these the old dining-room cars renovated?

**Mr. CASEY:** I should think that they are. The kitchens are exactly the same as those in the old-type dining cars. I think these problems could be overcome very easily by the Railway Department.

It should be remembered, too, that far worse difficulties will arise when the "Sunlander" time-table is altered and the new "Sunlander" service comes into operation. As I have said before, I am unhappy about the new arrival and departure times of the "Sunlander" at Mackay, and I am unhappy about the staggering of the times. A regular arrival and departure time is very important, because people find difficulty in remembering the different arrival and departure times each day. It appears that the major centres of population were not given proper consideration in the compilation of the time-table. The department probably started with Brisbane and Cairns, the terminal

stations, and then divided the running time. Many people in Townsville, and most people in Mackay, are unhappy about the new timetable. An editorial in the Mackay "Daily Mercury" makes that very clear. It contends that if the Minister for Transport had wanted to divert more passenger traffic from the railways to the airways in that part of the State it would be difficult to think of a more effective way of doing it.

**Mr. Jensen:** He never travels by train.

**Mr. CASEY:** This, I believe, is true. Very seldom do we see or hear of him travelling by train.

Another matter relating to transport that I wish to bring before the attention of the Chamber has, I believe, been already canvassed in part, so I will not dwell on it. Under the State road transport legislation a 25-mile limit is imposed for exemption from road tax. In many cases this places a very severe burden on primary producers who live, say, 26 miles from a centre. These men, who exceed the 25-mile limit by only one mile, pay tax not only for that one mile but for the whole 26 miles. If we must have a 25-mile limit, we should have an embargo on payments up to 25 miles. With two farmers living side by side, one could be within the 25-mile limit and the other just outside it. The latter pays a far higher charge for the transport of his goods to market and of supplies to his property than the one living a mile down the road. The tax he pays is levied not on the extra distance of one mile but on the full 26 miles.

This anomaly is shown up very clearly in the cost of carting cane to one of the sugar mills in my district. It creates a very serious problem. The Pleystowe sugar mill has nine or 10 producers living in an area called Wagoora and their cane is transported by road to a place called Wundaru, where it is put on the Pleystowe mill tramline system. These people are not the only ones in that area. Suppliers at Calen and up to Pindi Pindi transport their cane by road transport to the sugar mill.

Although the 25-mile limit is imposed to protect the Railway Department for any loss of revenue, the cartage of this cane to the mill was originally offered to the Railway Department. I understand it was offered to them at a time when the present Treasurer was Minister for Railways and it was declined by the department. The mill turned to road transport, but in the seven-year period since then these nine growers have been burdened with an additional cost of \$125,000 in road taxes on the cartage of their cane. This is a tremendous imposition on a small group of primary producers. They are the only cane-growers in Queensland who pay such a charge because they live more than 25 miles from their point of delivery. If the law of the State says that they have to pay

certain taxes, then they have to pay them. But why should they have to pay on the first 25 miles? This is the point I am trying to make.

This applies not only to the cartage of cane. A similar position exists with the major brickworks in the area, which supplies the city of Mackay with bricks. Builders in that city find that, because of concessions given to Maryborough and the road tax imposition, it is cheaper to buy bricks from Maryborough, some 400 miles away, than from Pindi Pindi, some 40 miles away.

This is a vast and complex subject and could take a considerable time to expound, but it is one that I believe should be looked at very closely by the Government, particularly as the Premier said the other day that because he and the Treasurer had been to Canberra and had received an additional \$1,500,000 for Queensland, they would start looking at ways in which they might be able to relieve the burden of some people in this State. I ask the Premier and the Treasurer, who stood behind the Premier in Canberra, when giving consideration to this added relief not to worry only about the grain-growers who are pressuring them at Country Party meetings but to have a little bit of heart for the cane-growers and others in the Mackay area, too. They need support and assistance, which if received will mean a good deal to them. The cost involved would not be very great.

Finally, I wish to refer to the problem that confronts people in country areas who require specialist treatment. I could cite case after case, as could all other hon. members who represent provincial and country electorates, of people who require specialist attention in Brisbane. In many cases they live 500, 600, 1,000 and even 1,200 miles from Brisbane, and require urgent attention to save their lives.

Under our free hospitals system those people can go to their local base hospital and fill in an application form to receive specialist attention. The form is sent backwards and forwards, and in some instances the hospital authorities will telephone Brisbane to obtain urgent approval, and the person is then transported to Brisbane at the cost of the department to be given specialist treatment.

In Brisbane, a patient who cannot afford to consult the Wickham Terrace specialist suggested by his local doctor is told that an appointment will be made for him to visit, say, the Royal Brisbane Hospital, where the specialist is an honorary, and a date is set for that person so that he can be treated. The patient is admitted to hospital and receives specialist treatment at no cost to himself.

However, a person who lives in a country area is placed in an entirely different situation. If he is taken ill and his doctor recommends that he should consult a specialist in Brisbane, he tries to get the first

available plane to Brisbane to see the specialist. Of course, the patient has to meet the cost of the air fare. As well, if the patient is very sick and requires the company of either his wife, a relative or a trained nurse during the journey, that other person's fare has to be paid. On arrival in Brisbane he may find that he is required to stay here for a considerable length of time. The attitude of the Health Department is that it will pay for that patient's treatment in Brisbane and provide hospital facilities and the specialist at no cost to the patient, but it insists that the patient travel to and from Brisbane at his own expense unless he can comply with a stringent means test. Believe me, the conditions imposed are very stringent indeed. The time is overdue when they should be reviewed to allow any person in the State, irrespective of his place of residence, an opportunity to receive specialist treatment under what is supposed to be a free hospitals scheme. Such a review is needly urgently and should be carried out very quickly indeed.

**Mr. KAUS** (Hawthorne) (3.54 p.m.): I compliment the Treasurer on his Financial Statement. I have listened to many members of the Opposition criticise the Treasurer. Of course, that is their function in this Chamber, and they are entitled to do so, and I hope that they will continue to do so for all time. A number of members of the Opposition have attacked the Treasurer fairly; others have made cutting and sarcastic remarks; and others have told deliberate lies about Government members, which I deplore. Those actions sow doubt in the minds of people who read the accusations.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** (Mr. Ramsden): Order! The word should be "untruths".

**Mr. JENSEN:** I rise to a point of order.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Ramsden): The hon. member is too late in doing so.

**Mr. KAUS:** It also shows a dirty streak in the character of the persons making the statements. It is very easy to criticise when in opposition, but it must be very frustrating for hon. members opposite who travel around this big State of ours to see the progress taking place, thanks to good planning, as outlined in the Government's policy. We should remember that this is all being done for the benefit of the people of the State.

As the Treasurer said, our key word is "progress". What would Queensland's position have been without the mining activities and secondary production? Without the increase in both of these activities the economy of the State would have suffered a good deal more than it has from the effects of drought. However, even the increase of almost 40 per cent. in the value of mining output last year was not sufficient to offset the fall in rural production.

The Treasurer should be congratulated on the emphasis he has placed on education and health in his Budget proposals. These are two services that warrant priority, and he has given it to them. I know that, in financial negotiations with the Commonwealth, the Treasurer has always strongly advocated the allocation of additional funds for Queensland to meet all the needs of education and the other services that the Government is called upon to provide. His advocacy has met with mixed results, but on balance, he has been successful. The newly negotiated five-year Financial Assistance Agreement is a good example of his advocacy. Under it, Queensland scored better relatively than any State except Tasmania.

When allocating funds available to the Treasury, the needs and demands of all State services have to be assessed. Special allocations for extra services can be made only at the expense of other services. Normally, nothing is left in the State Treasury when allocations are made to the different departments. Therefore, if extra funds are channelled to education, they are provided only at the expense of the health and medical services, law and order, primary industries, or general development in the State.

I now invite hon. members to consider the Government's record in expenditure in recent years. In each year the allocation for education has increased at a rate faster than the increase in the State's resources. For the past five years, the average annual rate of increase in expenditure on education is 14.87 per cent., whereas the average annual rate of increase in State revenue resources is 11.4 per cent. Special treatment can be given to one service only at the expense of other services which must be content with a rate of increase less than the increase in State revenue resources. How long can such favourable treatment continue to be given? It is elementary and unnecessary to point out, by way of example, that the person we are striving to educate will, at some time or other, use our health and medical services. I am pleased to see an increase of \$12,000,000 in the Estimates for the Department of Health.

It is also gratifying to see that the Government is assisting creche and kindergartens. In 1969-70, the total assistance amounted to \$271,500 and in 1970-71, assuming there is no increase in the level of Government grants, the assistance will increase to approximately \$340,000 because of the number of kindergartens in operation for the full year of increased grants given in 1970. I think the grant is \$150 up till Christmas, and another \$150 for the following six months. Kindergartens in my electorate asked for more financial assistance, and a letter came to me early in the piece. They will be pleased to know that they are to receive an increased allocation.

The Government should be congratulated on the terrific job it is doing in the construction of the technical college at Seven Hills, which is nearing completion. The first section will not be ready until early next year. The buildings are situated on a 12-acre block adjoining the Seven Hills State School. It has a frontage to Clearview Terrace. It is one of the most modern buildings I have had the pleasure of inspecting. The Director of Technical Education and I had a good look at it and it was interesting to see the modern facilities provided in it. The estimated cost of work so far is almost \$350,000. When the two blocks are completed they will accommodate 360 students in post-Junior commercial courses. Apart from 12 classrooms and three typing rooms, the facilities will include an auditorium, rooms for complex commercial equipment, copying and duplicating, amenity and administration rooms and, in addition, a library incorporated in the administration block. I give full marks to the work-force and the Director of Technical Education for the wonderful job they have done.

The Government gives \$50,000 a year for the benefit of youth clubs throughout the State. Recently I had the pleasure of presenting a cheque for \$200 to the Morningside District Youth Club. Whilst making that presentation and talking to the secretary (who was very happy to receive the cheque because the club was \$4 "in the red" at the time), I learnt that they have to pay sales tax on all purchases of equipment.

I decided to try to do something about that. When I was in the bedding business, I used to make quite a few gym mats, and I remember that when we delivered them to youth and church clubs there was always a docket or exemption form for them. I asked Mrs. Sherlock why she did not apply for tax exemption, and she told me that she had applied to the Commissioner. On the strength of that, I rang the Federal member, Mr. Don. Cameron, and he got on the job. I should like to read the letter received from the Honourable P. Lynch following representations made to the Treasurer by Mr. Cameron. The letter was written to Mr. Cameron and passed on to me, and it states—

"In the absence of the Treasurer overseas, I am replying to your recent representations concerning sales tax applicable to equipment used by Youth Clubs. The matter was raised with you by Mr. W. Kaus, M.L.A., who is concerned that the Morningside Youth Club in his electorate is faced with the payment of 15 per cent. sales tax on four 'gym' mats that it proposes to purchase."

As I have already mentioned, we used to make gym mats out of fibre; they were fibre filled, and canvas covered. Today they have a compact rubber filling.

**Mr. Bennett:** You would get old car tyres and cut off the rubber and use that.

**Mr. KAUS:** Is that what the hon. member would like youngsters to do gym work on?

**Mr. Bennett:** That is what you would do.

**Mr. KAUS:** The letter continues—

"The matter was referred to the Commissioner of Taxation who has confirmed that 'gym' mats are taxable at the rate of 15 per cent. The Commissioner also advised that the only provision in the law under which Youth Clubs could be considered for exemption is one which relates to public benevolent institutions. To be regarded as a public benevolent institution, a Youth Club has to meet certain tests, one of which is that it must operate for the relief of poverty, sickness, suffering, distress, misfortune, destitution or helplessness. On the information available to the Commissioner, the Morningside Youth Club does not meet that requirement."

In my opinion, that is a lot of hooey. Now listen to this—

"So far as Police Boys' Clubs are concerned, the Commissioner informs me that exemption for these clubs has been granted on the basis of a High Court decision that the Boys Brigade (Inc.) was a public benevolent institution. This latter body, as one of its dominant functions, looked to the needs of under-privileged youth. The principles which emerged from that case were largely followed in accepting Police Boys' Clubs as public benevolent institutions.

"The YMCA is not exempt from tax in its own right. However, particular YMCA Youth Clubs may meet the requirements to be regarded as public benevolent institutions.

"An amendment of the law would be necessary to reduce the tax currently applicable to equipment for use by youth clubs or to provide complete exemption. Accordingly, as requested by you, arrangements have been made for the matter to be considered by the Government when the sales tax laws are next under review."

I hope that the necessary amendment will be made. It is only a minor one, but youth clubs not only in my electorate but also throughout the State will benefit. They deserve to be shown some consideration.

At this stage, I turn to the main part of my speech, which relates to what the Government is doing to provide drought relief. Let me deal first with the assistance that the Government has given not only to wool-growers but also to primary producers generally.

Since 1965, the Treasurer has made more than \$8,000,000 available to alleviate the effects of drought in Queensland. Added to that is another \$32,000,000 that the Commonwealth Government has found for drought relief aid. Therefore, in the last five years primary producers have benefited by about \$40,000,000. In spite of that, some people in rural areas are still bitingly critical of the Government's policy.

I, in common with all hon. members, accept the importance of the rural industries to the State and national economy, but some of the claims now being made are beginning to border on the ridiculous. Only yesterday a Brisbane radio station referred to the 14-year-old drought in the west of Queensland. That was a reference to the whole of the west, not part of it, but who has questioned or corrected the statement? In effect, statements such as that imply that all the wool-growers in western Queensland have been on the breadline for 14 years and that the Government has only just begun to do something to assist them. That is totally erroneous.

I remind the Committee that 14 years ago the average bale of wool was bringing about \$200, and the term "golden fleece" was used then just as loosely as the phrase "bankrupt graziers" is being used today.

**Mr. Bennett:** A Labour Government was in office then, when the price was good.

**Mr. KAUS:** I ask the hon. member to wait a moment. On a comparative cost-sale basis, shearing rates were considerably lower, station-hands' wages were much lower, and so were rail and freight rates. A great number of growers in those days enjoyed to the full the cash returns from the "golden fleece" and gave little thought to tomorrow. But then, in the middle 1960's, the drought set in with a vengeance, and in the last two years prices have decreased considerably. It has been almost a re-run of the old biblical story of seven years of plenty and seven years of famine, in which period the wise ones provided for the lean years and the spendthrifts and the inefficient went their merry way without thought or care of what was waiting for them around the corner in the future.

Man-made fibres now challenge the supremacy of wool in the clothing and allied fields. But, in the main, the wool-growers, when approached by the synthetics experts some years ago, refused to talk about percentages of synthetics in products which, until then, had belonged exclusively to wool. It was only a matter of time, they said, before wool would blast synthetics off the map. But the reverse proved to be true, as the back-room boys produced fibre of better and better quality in their laboratories at a price which appealed to consumers the world over. Then came the world-wide use of electric blankets and quality plastic products, all of which made inroads into the wool market. I mention these points because the wool industry is faced with a challenge it has never had to meet since the days when Macarthur brought the first merinos from Spain to Australia. The question this or any Government will have to ask soon is, "How much longer can we supply the financial props to an industry facing a situation that might never be resolved, regardless of how much rain falls in the next few years?"

I mentioned earlier the parallel between the present day wool industry and the old period of seven years' plenty and seven years' famine. I said many graziers had provided for such a time as this drought, but a great many had not. If we examined the backgrounds of these two groups we would find that the thrifty ones were mostly graziers brought up on the land. They or their fathers had met droughts and depressed prices before and they were acutely aware that the good years would not last for ever, so they sold their flocks at the right time and bought back again at the right time. They did not gamble on the weather in an area that has always been considered semi-desert country. It is very difficult to estimate an average rainfall. How is the average worked out? An area might in one period get 10 to 14 inches of rain and in another, 20 inches, which does more damage than good.

**Mr. O'Donnell:** They would always take the risk and have the rain—particularly now.

**Mr. KAUS:** It would be very nice to see it.

**Mr. Rae:** I see your point; it is a very good one.

**Mr. KAUS:** It is very true, and I think the Lands Department has to look at this factor in relation to living areas. Living areas will have to be increased because average rainfall cannot be judged in any of these districts.

Other persons, through lack of experience, did not provide for the lean years. They were men who gambled on the weather. When promising clouds appeared in the sky, many of them bought sheep at high prices, but the rains did not come and the sheep died. Their indebtedness to the banks and brokers increased with the passing of the years.

Some of these men are now the greatest stirrers in the State and the most violent critics of the Government. They would never have been graziers had it not been for the fact that wool was thrown open for ballot after the Second World War and they were fortunate in the ballot. In the days just following the war, anyone fortunate enough to draw a grazing block did not have to prove he had the necessary training to run a sheep property, nor did he have to prove that he had, or could provide, the money to stock it, build a home or fence it. The Government gave him the land and the brokers backed him for finance. It was as good as winning the Golden Casket, if not better. As a matter of fact, in those days I was thinking of doing the same thing. I was never lucky at winning anything, with the exception of winning Hawthorne by four votes at the last election—although that was not good luck; it was good, hard work.

In the years just after the Second World War wool reached the staggering price of £1 a lb. Many wool growers have made good, but others, who now complain that nothing

was done for them, have not made good. Time has found that out, yet they have the audacity to continue asking the Government to give back to them the kind of income that they enjoyed in the middle 1950's.

No-one, least of all myself, wants to see any man going broke; however, every day, in all fields of endeavour, men go broke. That results from either inefficiency, inexperience, insufficient capital to provide new plant or to meet a set-back, a loss of markets, or a combination of the lot. Yet in no other economic area does the Government assist the victims of a collapse to the extent that it has assisted those in the rural sector. I consider that the Government and the Treasurer have done more for the Queensland wool industry than has been done in the past, and it is time to look at this assistance in its correct perspective.

I wish to acquaint hon. members with the drought relief that the Government has provided. Since 1965 it has contributed \$8,000,000 in drought relief and, along with the Commonwealth Government, has provided \$40,000,000 to assist those people who face problems resulting from seasonal conditions and, in some cases, eight years of drought in the past 10 years.

The forms of drought relief that the Government has provided can be summarised as—

Rail freight concessions on stock and fodder;

Road permit concessions on stock and fodder;

Subsidies on road transport of stock and fodder;

Loans through the Agricultural Bank to dairy farmers, graziers, grain-growers and miscellaneous primary producers;

Wheat purchase on terms;

Registration fees waived on drought-loan mortgages;

Stamp duty waived on drought-loan documents;

Interest rates on established loans remain unchanged;

Grants for part-payment of local authority rates;

Rental reduction of 30 per cent. for certain sheep properties;

Extension of time and instalment payments of Crown rent arrears;

Instalment payment of arrears on free-holding purchase dues;

A seed-wheat scheme;

Remission of interest on succession duties;

A Commonwealth drought bond scheme; and

A financial conservation plan against drought, flood and fire in arid and semi-arid areas.

With the tolerance of hon. members opposite, I shall read other steps that the Government has taken—

"In March, 1970, the Queensland Government requested Commonwealth participation in a rural reconstruction scheme for the rehabilitation of drought-stricken primary producers who have reached the limit of their credit-raising capacity.

"In August, 1970, the Commonwealth Government agreed to one of two proposals—an amendment to the Federal Bankruptcy Act to permit the operation of schemes of arrangements under the Farmers Debt Adjustment Act. In effect, this will allow the Queensland Government to use \$1.5 million, now inactive in the Federal Aid Rehabilitation Fund, to assist through debt adjustment landholders considered to have reasonable prospect of financial recovery, who are in their present predicament through circumstances beyond their control."

The Commonwealth has deferred decision on the Queensland Government's second proposal relative to the provision of large additional funds for the scheme, which would be implemented by the establishment of a rural reconstruction board on lines similar to the one existing in New South Wales, with some alteration to suit Queensland conditions. The Commonwealth Government has advised that the Commonwealth Bureau of Agricultural Economics is making an urgent examination of suggested Commonwealth participation in rural reconstruction schemes, but a decision on additional finance, as requested by the Queensland Government, can be made only after the Commonwealth Government has made a study of the bureau's report.

I could go on much longer in this vein, but I point out that a total of \$877,336,000, or more than 69 per cent. of the money, is being spent outside Brisbane to provide town amenities, public capital works, education, electricity, and so on. Today, as a result of the continuing extension of rural electricity supplies, about 98 per cent. of the State's population is served by reticulated electricity.

I should like to highlight what the Government is doing by way of providing major water supplies to mitigate the effects of drought. In 1969 there were seven dams and nine weirs with a holding capacity of 904,000 acre-feet. Four further dams are now under construction, and a fifth has been approved. When they are completed, the State's total rural water storage will be 2,670,000 acre-feet, or seven times the supply available in 1959.

The following major projects are under way: a \$27,000,000 Emerald irrigation scheme, which I am sure that the member for Barcoo is very happy about; a \$21,100,000 scheme for Bundaberg, which I am sure the hon. member for Bundaberg is very happy about. The hon. member for Carnarvon must be very happy about the

Border Rivers scheme. A total of \$9,100,000 is to be spent at St. George, \$8,800,000 at Mackay, \$4,100,000 on the Maroon Dam, Logan River, \$1,200,000 on the Glebe Weir, Dawson River, and \$600,000 on water conservation on the Condamine River, near Chinchilla. That is a fairly comprehensive list showing what the Government is doing to assist drought-affected areas.

In summing up, I point out that the wool industry, through lack of scholarship, application and outlook has created for itself a very unfortunate situation. The direct effect of the industry's total disregard of world demand for merino breeding stock has both directed and accelerated big business research into the field of production substitution, namely, man-made fibres. These financial giants have now tapped world-consumer demand for woollen products by being able to offer high-quality synthetic products, which in the minds of the consumers are now almost wholly a substitute for their woollen counterparts.

The inelastic demand that once existed for wool has now, through its own industry's efforts and determination, been destroyed and converted to an elastic demand. Graziers must now face up to reality, that is, the economic concept of pure competition, where the price in the market-place on any one day, is, in the main, determined by the supply of, and demand for, wool. This is the very situation that other industries face every day. These features are reinforced by the indirect and the derived effects stemming from wool usage. Unfortunately, they are reinforced by catastrophic drought conditions.

The fact that the industry has now seen fit to operate outside the ambit of a purely competitive structure seems unlikely to achieve much in the short term. Such a marketing authority, by virtue of its inherent structure, will, unfortunately, create in the minds of wool buyers problems which are not present in an open market-place or an overt market situation.

How much of the taxpayers' money will be lost in subsidising this venture? And it is certain that it will cost the taxpayers many millions of dollars if such a thing could be contemplated as being feasible.

Graziers who want a single marketing authority should be prepared to back it financially themselves. These pastoralists should be prepared to take the monetary risks along with the gains, and not demand that the other sectional interests in the economy be regimented into subsidising and financing their bright ideas.

The industry should base its activity on seasonal conditions and fluctuate its cattle and sheep population according to seasonal outlook. If feed is readily available, it should maintain herd sizes; otherwise, it should determine likely carrying capacity on estimated feed supply, projected ahead either monthly or three-monthly.

The holding of large areas of relatively arid land whilst at the same time endeavouring to maintain maximum stock numbers commensurate with the carrying capacity of the area and maintain liquidity is very fast becoming virtually impossible economically. Therefore, one should look to high levels of efficiency and apply some of the economic principles so widely used in other industries.

Eventually, some primary producers will wake up to these facts. Some graziers will eventually specialise in growing improved pastures and others will specialise in growing better cattle. Few will possess sufficient resources for top efficiency in both fields at the one time.

How long will it take the grazing industry to get up and get with it? I know graziers have their problems and I should like to see bigger rate rebates granted to them. I should also like the Government to look at Crown land rentals, especially in drought areas, with a view to extending more assistance to graziers. I consider that the State Government and the Federal Government have done as much as they possible can within the present financial structure.

I wonder how many rural people or primary producers know of the existence of the Rural Credits Department of the Reserve Bank of Australia. I have been told that this department has existed since 1925. However, I do not know whether anybody takes advantage of this service. It is set up by Part VI of the Reserve Bank Act 1959.

Section 56 of the Reserve Bank Act reads—

"(1.) For the purpose of this Part, there shall be a Rural Credits Department of the Bank.

"(2.) The bank shall keep the accounts and transactions of the Rural Credits Department separate and distinct from the other accounts and transactions of the bank."

Section 57 reads—

"(1.) Subject to this Part, the Bank may, through the Rural Credits Department, make advances for the purpose of assisting the marketing of primary produce or the processing or manufacture of primary produce, to—

(a) authorities formed under the law of the Commonwealth or of a State or Territory of the Commonwealth; and

(b) co-operative associations of persons engaged in farming, agricultural, horticultural, pastoral, grazing or fishing operations.

"(2.) In lieu of making advances under the last preceding sub-section, the Bank may, through the Rural Credits Department, discount bills for a body specified in paragraph (a) or (b) of that sub-section.

"(3.) An advance under this section shall not be made for a period of more than one year.

"(4.) For the purposes of this section, 'primary produce' means goods specified in the Second Schedule to this Act and includes prescribed primary produce and prescribed goods associated with the production of primary produce."

I raise this matter only because some people may not realise that this service is available through the Reserve Bank.

**Mr. O'DONNELL** (Barcoo) (4.37 p.m.): Normally the hon. member for Hawthorne is one of the milder members of this Assembly. Today something must have inspired him, and he came out of his corner throwing a sharp left and using the word "lies". At that stage I did not object because, frankly, I can see little difference between lies, falsehoods, untruths and prevarications. They do not worry me. After saying that, the hon. member retreated into his shell. Finding the Opposition a not very satisfactory opponent, he then turned on the graziers.

Let us return to his reference to lies. It is a rather unusual word to use in this Chamber but, whilst I firmly object to being called a liar, I do not object to the word "lies". Apparently he was referring to some members of the Opposition who at times become provoked.

**Mr. KAUS:** I rise to a point of order. I did not call the hon. member for Barcoo a liar.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** (Mr. Ramsden): Order! As I recall it, the hon. member for Hawthorne referred to Opposition members who told lies. He did not refer to anybody as telling a lie.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** That is exactly what I said. However, in the hurly-burly of debate, Opposition members often have to become very provocative to get some truth out of the Government, and, unless truth is evident, I suppose people can quite justifiably jump to conclusions. However, I am not going to go into that matter any further. It was rather a tentative left that the hon. member led, and then he retreated into his shell. He then turned his attention to other fields.

**Mr. R. E. Moore:** He was ready to give you a "Sunday" punch if you came in.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** He could not give anybody a "Sunday" punch.

Reference was made to mineral development in this State. Let us get our feet on the ground in this matter. Bulletin No. 64 of 1970, published by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, shows that our export of minerals for the nine months ended March, 1970, amounted to \$43,800,000. One would say that that was quite a substantial figure. But let us look at our imports. We find that in the same period Queensland imported minerals, fuels and lubricants to the value of \$31,800,000. There is therefore a favourable balance shown of

only \$12,000,000. The State has a long way to go before minerals become as significant as some people would like them to be.

I should like to point to our exports generally in the period to 31 March, 1970. Food exports were valued at \$369,100,000, live animals \$56,100,000, beverages and tobacco \$15,200,000, and crude materials, inedible, except fuels \$136,300,000. A rough addition of those gives a figure well in excess of \$550,000,000. The \$43,800,000 for exports of mineral fuels, lubricants, etc., pales into insignificance against these gigantic exports of primary products from Queensland. Let us not forget that.

Then the hon. member for Hawthorne endeavoured to illustrate how much the Government was attempting to do for primary producers in this State. He read out a long list of concessions. I remind the Committee that these concessions were available, in the main, before the Country-Liberal Government came to office. And after it goes out of existence they will be maintained by the A.L.P. in government, make no mistake about that! The concessions were granted for justifiable reasons, and I should say that the figures I quoted relative to primary production show why it was considered necessary to assist these industries that are so important to this State and which will be in existence long after the holes being put into the ground have ceased to be of economic value. It is important to understand that.

The hon. member referred also to rural reconstruction. How far have we got in that field? Hon. members on this side of the Chamber cannot get anything out of the Premier. He says he will not reveal matters of policy. This matter of policy is taking a long time to come to fruition so that it will become public property. That is one of the difficulties of being in Opposition. Again I come to the word "lies", and I point out that members are being provocative to try to get the truth. Who will tell us what is the truth in relation to the Utah agreement with the Government? Because it is not public, the Opposition is told to mind its own business. Freight rates are not public knowledge in some instances, and again hon. members on this side of the Chamber are told to mind their own business. One could give a number of similar instances. Therefore, when the Opposition becomes provocative, it is looking for the truth. Hon. members on this side of the Chamber want to know the truth, because it is very important indeed that the truth be revealed. They do not want to rise in this Chamber and make provocative statements in an endeavour to obtain information. It is very difficult at times, even through questions to Ministers, to obtain the information that one seeks, and questions are asked not always because a member wants to know the answer but because organisations and individuals in his electorate want to know what is happening.

The hon. member for Hawthorne raised the important question of land settlement and development. It is true that many primary producers not only in Queensland but in parts of Australia are in desperate circumstances because of forces beyond their control. It is all very well to speak of the days when wool was £1 a lb. and a grazier could ride his horse into the hotel bar and perform other fancy tricks that are related in stories illustrating what extravagant graziers would do in a time of affluence. Those were isolated incidents, and the lavish spending mentioned in the stories occurred in only isolated instances, too.

The position is very serious today. I am pleased to see the Minister for Lands in the Chamber. He will be able to confirm my statement that the Minister for Lands in Western Australia is in dire trouble with the wheat farmers in that State. As hon. members know, there has been great expansion in the wheat industry in Western Australia. Freight rates were reduced as an inducement, the development and planting of an additional 1,000,000 acres of wheat was encouraged, and opportunity was given for further land settlement. This has all resulted in greater production of wheat, which, of course, was the purpose. We all realise that the industry today is in a situation of over-production, particularly of certain types of wheat. What is the position? The very people who so eagerly seized upon this land when it was thrown open for settlement are now saying to their Minister for Lands, "You got us into this trouble; now get us out of it."

It is important to realise this because, to a lesser extent, it is also happening in Queensland, particularly in the dairying industry. I want hon. members to be firmly convinced that this is a very important issue. I know very well—it has been mentioned today—that hardships befall people in all sections of the community, sometimes through their own fault and sometimes due to other circumstances. It has been said that they have to face up to their responsibilities and that, if they go to the wall, it is just bad luck. I know that, too, and I know very well that a certain resentment exists among people in the closely settled areas of the State—metropolitan areas, provincial cities and so forth—about concession given to people on the land. It is imperative to realise that these concessions are given for a reason. This is the price we pay to develop our country, to foster decentralisation and to see that our nation reaches its fullest stage of development. This is most important.

Blunders are made. Perhaps the expansion in Western Australia was a blunder. Economists will now say that it was a blunder, but, of course, that is hind-sight. In Victoria a blunder has been made. Down there they have an organisation of which the Minister would be aware called the Rural Finance and Settlement Commission, which endeavours to do exactly what its title indicates. But

what has it done? It has opened up almost 500 new dairy farms during a crisis in the dairy industry. This must have some repercussions, particularly outside the State of Victoria. There would be strong interest in it in Queensland as we have so many marginal dairy farms in this State. The State of Victoria is still endeavouring to settle more people on dairy farms, in an industry that is already suffering the pangs of over-production.

I bring these two points up today not to be politically critical but to ask these questions: just how far can we go at this juncture in the development of our primary industries when so many of them are in dire straits? How far can we go in throwing open more land for development when we fully realise that possibly only one primary producing industry—the beef cattle industry—is capable of undertaking some expansion? That is a significant point for consideration by every hon. member, and I put it forward here today as a matter for serious thought.

Apart from the beef cattle industry, trouble exists no matter where one looks and, if it does not, then it is looming. Quite recently, a well-meaning individual said to me, "We must expand rice-growing in Queensland." I said to him, "If you knew the story about rice production you would not make any suggestion even resembling that." It is important that we are informed so that we can approach these problems intelligently.

Hon. members, like the hon. member for Hawthorne, who try to illustrate through "Hansard" and the Press what is being done for the man on the land are not doing us a service. If they intend to tell an accurate story they must set out the situation of the country people throughout the length and breadth of the State.

A brigalow land development scheme has been introduced in Queensland, and it is envisaged that it will allow great development to occur in the beef cattle industry; however, owing to the drought, we have had to go slow. The brigalow scheme could be one of the examples to which I have referred. It would be far better to hasten slowly so that we can ensure that we are not overcrowding an industry which, when the weather is in a benevolent mood, enjoys a certain degree of prosperity.

The hon. member for Hawthorne is absent from the Chamber. He wanted to know how much further the Government could go. I tell him that if he had been attentive in the Chamber he would have learned that in recent years a system of partnerships for people on the land had been introduced to alleviate the payment of estate duties. Recently I read that land used for primary production up to a certain value should be free of death duties. The idea is to put value back into land used for primary production and to assist and encourage people, particularly those who exist on bare living areas, to participate in the industry.

The suggestion has come from another authority, so it will be understood that a number of thoughtful people are aware of the situation on the land relative to primary production. I do not put forward that suggestion, because I should like to have the opportunity to conduct a good deal of research into the matter and to ask highly qualified economic advisers to conduct research also. These thoughts that come forward stress the present desperate situation that exists.

We are concerned not only for the man on the land but also about the vast amount of capital that has been invested in railway lines, country towns, the provision of amenities and the establishment of research stations. The investment of the past when tallied up amounts to a huge figure. That is why I say that we should not come into this Chamber to boast about what has been done but should endeavour to ensure that the future of these industries is preserved. Many changes in technique have occurred in all fields, including animal husbandry.

It must be realised that the basic industries are those that feed, clothe and house us. They are the important ones. Let us not permit them to pale into insignificance. Let us accentuate what is possible. People who have nothing to do with these industries—in the main they are city dwellers—tend to say that they are fading; that they are no longer significant; that mining and our secondary industries are significant. They say that people are trailing into the cities because they are the significant areas. That is not a proper approach. I do not say that our manufacturing industries cannot progress to greater things—I think they can—but rural production and rural producers should not be forgotten. They are the backbone of this State and nation, and will continue to be so. Their force is emphasised by a study of the figures in statistical columns.

We have good reason to become involved in conservation matters. We hear much about the Great Barrier Reef and Cooloola, but we do not hear of great pressure being exerted to preserve the lands in the West. At present, a very small attempt is being made to protect our range lands. Perhaps the drought will have some value in that it may let nature play a hand in regenerating the western areas when the rains come. They have been denuded of stock, and, as time passes and the beneficial rains come (as I hope they will), an opportunity may be provided for regeneration, as long as there is not an upsurge in restocking to prevent it.

When I see the pall of dust over Brisbane, I know its origin—the range lands. Our western soil is not only above this city; it is on its way out to the Pacific Ocean. We must educate those who are using the western lands and try to help in the regeneration not only of desert vegetation, which is used for sheep and cattle feed, but also of the scrubs, which are so valuable in drought-time and in the prevention of erosion.

Perhaps I over-digressed to deal with that matter because of the statement by the hon. member who introduced the significant little word "lies". Members of the Opposition are here to get the truth. It is somewhat foolish if Government members, be they Cabinet Ministers or back-benchers, do not try to make the truth evident in this Assembly. I will say no more about that, but I do not think Government members will miss my point.

The hon. member for Mackay, who is well versed in local government matters, made a significant contribution when he said that his experience in local government had led him to the conclusion—it is not only his conclusion, but the conclusion of all associated with local government—that there is dire need for more financial assistance for local authorities. I wish to apply to shire councils what I said recently about primary producers. Whence do country local authorities come? From the development of rural lands. They are the significant elements of local government for the benefit of districts throughout the length and breadth of the State outside recognised city centres.

I have received three letters, one each from the Peak Downs Shire Council, the Local Government Association of Queensland in association with the Blackall Shire Council, and the Emerald Shire Council, relative to the aim of the Local Government Association of Queensland, which is expressed in the following motion:—

"That member councils of the Association be requested to individually approach their State parliamentary members asking them to bring pressure to bear on the State Government to assist local authorities with finance."

The Local Government Association is moving through each individual council, which will contact its local member of Parliament so that the matter will be raised in this Chamber.

I urge the Treasurer to give favourable consideration to this request. After all, every shire council plays a significant role in decentralisation. Apart from primary production, shire councils are responsible for the only local industry, namely, road construction, which provides employment for men, and this means wives and families, to develop the local centre and to make the township significant. This is most important, because there is a strong alliance between local authorities and primary producers. On behalf of the shire councils, I urge the Treasurer to take cognisance of their representations to him. Unfortunately, he is engaged in private conversation at the moment. He is probably trying to find out what won the second leg of the double. I can tell him if he wants to know.

**Mr. Chalk:** Are there races on today? I wouldn't know.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** The Treasurer would know.

The Barcaldine Shire Council has expressed concern at the budget of the Central Western Regional Electricity Board. That Board is composed of a fine body of men who are doing an excellent job and, although there could be criticism of its costs, there is no criticism of its functioning. The significant point raised by the Barcaldine Shire Council is that, included in the board's budget this year, there is a provision of \$80,000 for sundry expenditure under various headings.

I went back to last year's report and, in Financial Statement and Operating Statistics, 1969-70, I noted under "Generation" that sundry generation expenses were actually \$14,633. Transmission and distribution sundry expenses were \$18,034, and management sundry expenses were \$6,381. Those amounts total approximately \$39,000.

As this matter has been raised, I shall quote from a letter written by the Barcaldine Shire Council to the Minister for Local Government and Electricity. It reads—

"At the recent Budget Meeting of the Central Western Regional Electricity Board this Council's representative was surprised to find that included in the Budget was provision for sundry expenditure totalling \$80,000.00 under various headings. There was provision for sundry expenditure of amounts in excess of \$20,000.00 under some headings. As you will be aware under the provisions of the Local Government Act it is necessary for a separate item to be shown in the budget where the proposed expenditure of any work exceeds \$1,000.00 in the case of a town or Shire or \$2,000.00 in the case of a city. As most representatives on Electricity Boards are also members of Local Authority it would seem reasonable for the same budget requirements to apply to each of these authorities as it would mean that local authority representatives would be able to more readily grasp the implication of the various budget items as they would have the benefit of prior knowledge of the basis under which the budget was drawn up.

"With this in mind it is requested that you give consideration to amending the Regional Electricity Board Acts so as to bring their budget procedure in to line with those required by the Local Government Acts.

"Over the years the Australian Society of Accountants have been pressing for the adoption of uniform accounting procedures throughout the local authorities in Queensland and this is now starting to become a reality. It would therefore seem logical that when this is achieved the next step would be for all semi-Governmental authorities which are subject to audit by the Auditor General to adopt uniform accounting procedures."

This is a matter of great significance, because I point out that last year the total sundry expenses, in three categories, scarcely reached \$40,000. In the next budget, allowance in excess of \$80,000 is made for sundries. From the point of view of good accounting, I think the suggestion made by the Barcaldine Shire Council should be adopted. I am submitting this case to the Treasurer so that he also can take the matter up with the Minister for Local Government and Electricity. This council is a very dedicated body, and it takes matters up only when it considers that it is in the interest of the community to do so. Respectfully, I urge its case.

I now return to a subject that I referred to earlier, namely, mineral development in this State. I suppose that no electorate in Queensland is going to be so involved in mining as Barcoo—unless the Government takes pieces from it and puts them into other electorates by altering shire boundaries!

**Mr. R. E. Moore:** You don't think Windsor will run into it?

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** That is hardly likely.

One cannot be anything but impressed by the possibilities of mineral development. I know, from reading the propaganda put out by Utah in recent weeks, that they hope to produce 17,000,000 tons of coal per annum.

**Mr. Chalk:** You will have the Minister for Mines on your tail.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** The Minister for Mines will have some worries, because Utah is not the only one in the field. There is more hope than there has been for a long time, particularly in the Central Highlands, of development by C.R.A., which controls Blair Athol Coal Pty. Ltd., and people are looking forward to that. I say in all seriousness that if the area west of Capella is as good as is hoped, there will be a significant alteration in the importance of both the Capella and Clermont districts.

Clermont, in particular, has felt very greatly the decline in production of steaming coal. When I went to Capella in 1947, five trains ran to Blair Athol in the morning and five trains returned every afternoon loaded with coal. I think that the production of coal is now about 500 tons a week, and it is easy to understand the significance of the decrease. Of course, that is steaming coal, and that fantastically large field of steaming coal is comparatively worthless unless C.R.A. can develop production of coking coal with which to blend the steaming coal for export purposes.

**Mr. Kaus:** There is a shortage of heating coal in Melbourne at present.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** There is no shortage of it in my electorate.

Such a development would be very desirable. As C.R.A., which controls Blair Athol Coal Pty. Ltd., has a strong link with Clutha, which is prospecting south of Blackwater, one can see the phenomenal possibilities of a tie-up between the two companies, not forgetting that Clutha is essentially a shipping firm. If everything comes to fruition as is hoped, railway extensions and another port could be required, and I shall refer later to the question of the port.

In addition, Thiess are operating in the area, as are B.H.P. and another company that I do not know a great deal about, Rolleston Coal Company. The only address that I have for that company is care of Mr. Bert Sakzewski. There are others, too, that are interested in coal production.

Quite frankly, I realise that every ton of coal that goes out is irreplaceable, and I hope that the Government has some plan to hold coking coal in reserve. I have asked questions about that, but, as I said earlier, one does not always receive answers. However, I can see that there could be great development in the Central Highlands and in areas east to the coast, particularly north of the railway line. Hon. members know that there is development south of the central railway. They know, too, that Moranbah, on the Goonyella site, is on its way. Business people are tremendously interested in that development.

I am very close to the people in my electorate, and I know that not only business people from the coastal areas—one would expect them to be aware of the opportunities—but also business people from western towns have been looking for places on these sites where they could at least take out an option. It is obvious to them that there is an opportunity offering, even though they know it could be only short term.

The thought that worries me most is that this could be short-term development. We cannot take this coal out at the rate of 17,000,000 tons per site per annum and expect to continue to mine it for ever. Some people are amazed at the amount of coal in the area, but this has been common knowledge for a long time. When I was a young lad of 16 I used to attend, in Brisbane, a geology class in charge of a geologist named Mr. Watkins, and he told me that it was estimated that there was enough coal in Queensland at that stage—40 years ago—to supply the world for 300 years. When I went to Capella many old graziers told me about burning coal in their fires. It is hard to realise exactly what is there, but let us not allow it all to go; let us keep a significant amount in reserve because we could need it.

I am often astounded at the interest shown in this matter, and I have met some very interested people lately. Naturally, I know the people associated with C.R.A. and I have also recently met their Japanese

executives. They were all in my electorate, in the town of Emerald, to meet an Australian coking coal technical survey mission. It sounds Australian, but it was composed of Japanese under the leadership of Dr. Sadao Sugamata. Probably the Treasurer has met him.

**Mr. Chalk:** Many times.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** He is regarded as one of the top mining engineers in the world. I am coming to the significance of my knowledge in this respect. Naturally, knowing the C.R.A. people, I was informed to some degree—they do not tell all their secrets, of course—how this mission would operate. They were seriously concerned that they had to go into conference with this mission, which queried them on every aspect of their activities. One of the things the mission wanted to know was what rail gauge they were going to construct, 3 ft. 6 in. gauge or 4 ft. 8½ in. When told it would be 3 ft. 6 in. if it went down at all, the mission wanted to know why it would not be 4 ft. 8½ in. The members pressed this point strongly on the basis that it would mean greater tonnages and quicker movement of coal. Various other circumstances associated with the industry were put under keen scrutiny. I do not want to go deeply into this but Mr. Sudo, who is one of the executives of C.R.A., made a very significant remark to me. He said, "The buyer is always right."

**Mr. Chalk:** That is all right so long as he has enough money.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** Is this not a criticism that has been levelled at the Government—that the Government is always saying that the buyer is always right?

**Mr. Chalk:** I said so, so long as he has enough money.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** It is not as significant as all that; the buyer is not always right. He need not be morally right. I do not blame him for trying to get as much as he can, but the Treasurer knows as well as I do that the criticism that has been levelled at him particularly has been that in taking leadership in this matter he perhaps conceded that the buyer was always right. Of course, the Treasurer is not dealing directly with the steel producers but with the people who supply them with coal. Mr. Sudo said that the buyer is always right, so if he carries that on to his client he has to carry it on in reverse to the Treasurer and also to the Minister for Mines. Possibly that has been the crux of the criticism levelled at the Treasurer and the Government on the matter of royalties. I am not going to debate the matter, but when we realise that this State possesses such a vast quantity of coal that it could supply the world for 300 years, it is essential that we, as sellers, should obtain the best advantage for the people of the State.

The Treasurer must realise why many people have been critical. I know that certain wealthy graziers and members of the Country Party have referred in disparaging terms to the holes in the ground and the unsightly hills of coal at Moura. They are annoyed, so the Government must put the matter in its right perspective. It deals with those people in the supply of amenities and on the basis of freights, irrespective of royalties, so it should not forget that they are Australians who, in the main, face many difficulties in their own fields, particularly primary production. They are very critical indeed, so the Government should revise its approach. I do not claim that we should drive the buyers away. The buyers have to revise their approaches, so the Government should be with them or, better still, ahead of them to ensure the best deal for our State.

Many Australians are interested in the development of our coal, and I know that it will bring prosperity to many people, particularly business people, but do not forget that, whereas the coal towns are booming and business people in them are prosperous, many small country towns have stagnated and the business people in those towns are not prosperous. In Western Australia the primary producers turned on the Minister for Lands and said, "You have got us into this mess, so it is up to you to keep us here so that we can make a living." That sort of thing will happen in this State, and to a certain extent it has happened already. I am very concerned about it, because I think that we can link prosperity and spread it through the community.

I turn now to the method of transport. I have referred to railway lines, but I am not going to debate the "fors" and "againsts" of railway lines. I protested loudly when the Government pulled up certain railway lines, so I certainly cannot protest when it is going to lay others. If I did so, I would be inconsistent. However, I want to know what is happening with the railway line in the Central Division and whether Port Alma will obtain the development that it deserves—and not necessarily because it is Port Alma. I have looked at the matter of coal transport and I have entered one or two arguments about it. I want to know what plans have been made to upgrade the railway line and to what extent the Government will go to accommodate the traffic that will come out of Blackwater and points south. I should like to know if it is at all possible to save Port Alma from the shambles that could develop.

**Mr. Chalk:** If they can get bigger ships into Port Alma, yes.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** Why cannot Port Alma participate in some of the coal business when it develops? Is that at all possible?

**Mr. Chalk:** It is possible if they can get the larger ships in. That is the problem.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** It may be the problem, but I should like to get more facts on it.

**Mr. Chalk:** You have made an intelligent approach to this matter so far. I have listened to you attentively. You must remember that you have talked about the magnates associated with the area. Today, it is the large shipping that will get the market for our coal.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** That is what I am worried about. There is quite an amount invested in Port Alma. Others besides the people of Rockhampton have an investment in Port Alma. Every point west of Rockhampton is concerned.

**Mr. Chalk:** About \$3,000,000-odd is owing on the port in Rockhampton at the present time. I should like to help them out.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** Quite frankly, can Gladstone keep on taking it?

**Mr. Chalk:** No.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** That is a good admission. It bolsters my information that the Gladstone people are flat out now trying to find areas on which to stockpile.

**Mr. Chalk:** There is a limit to what can be shipped through Gladstone. Big extensions will be required there, but there is deeper water north of Rockhampton to which I know the coal interests are looking.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** I know all about that.

If anything can be done to save Port Alma, I think it should be done. I should like to know to what degree the Government is prepared to upgrade the Central Division railway line. That is significant in developing any argument in support of coal ports north of Port Alma. A few years ago I supported Port Alma when trouble arose with the cattle industry.

**Mr. Chalk:** This Government tried to put the wheat through there.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** I was quite happy to see it go there.

**Mr. Chalk:** It was not the Government that stopped the wheat going to Port Alma.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** A few years ago, before Fields built their abattoir at Rockhampton we were concerned about the number of cattle passing through Rockhampton and going on to Cannon Hill. We said we thought that if we could halt even a quarter of that traffic it would be of significance to the Rockhampton port.

**Mr. Chalk:** If you can sell to the graziers the removal of tapering rates, you will succeed.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** We failed in that. All that we succeeded in obtaining was a second meatworks. A cut was then made in Lake's Creek production and an allocation was given to Fields.

I support my deputy leader and the member for Mackay, who referred to the buffet or griddle cars on the "Sunlander", "Midlander" and "Westlander", or any other train with one of these cars. I say categorically that womenfolk travelling by train have been done a disservice by the introduction of this type of car. I emphasise that I do not mind the griddle car being provided so long as privacy and decorum are available for anyone who wants a meal in a dining car.

**Mr. R. Jones:** In addition to the griddle car.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** Yes, in addition.

I do not wish to go into details, but the griddle car has a bar. I do not mind a person having a drink at a bar provided he has it and goes away, but some people do not stop at that. The tone of the griddle car deteriorates; it becomes a club for certain elements on the train. Those people who want attention cannot get it, nor will they seek it after their first experience. I strongly emphasise that the griddle car is totally unsuitable for women and children. We must reintroduce the dining-car service. Unfortunately, the meals are dearer, and one argument put up in favour of a buffet was that cheap snacks could be purchased in it. However, the griddle car has not worked out in the best interests of everybody. I do not criticise the people who work in it and the provender they supply. However, I do criticise the facilities that are available, particularly for women and children. It is impossible to be served with a meal at what most people consider to be meal-time.

**Mr. Wallis-Smith:** It works all right in New South Wales, and that system could be copied.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** One must profit from the experience in other places.

I have covered a good deal of ground, and what I have said is worthy of consideration. Admittedly I have not referred a great deal to the Budget itself, but, as applies to other hon. members, it is what I get in my electorate that interests me, and that decides whether I am satisfied or dissatisfied with the Budget.

**Mr. Lee:** You've got a darned lot out of this Government.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** The result of good representation and excellent planning. As a matter of fact, Mr. Wharton, I shall tell you a story to indicate that I am not too bad at this business. In 1947 I went to the Capella State School and, quite frankly, you have never seen such a tumbledown shack with broken-down paling fences in all your born days. Instead of applying for a new school, I applied only for a new floor. When the supervisor from the Department of Works came around, he said, "You are a smart so-and-so, aren't you? You know very well it would cost as much to put in a new floor as it would be to build a new school." I am

a peaceful person and do not rush into conflict with anyone. He turned up two years later and said, "There's your so-and-so school." That is how I got it. I have done that ever since I have been in Parliament.

I should like to know why the court-houses at Emerald and Barcaldine are in and out of consecutive Budgets. They appear in one Budget and not in the next. One year people come up and say "Good on you. You have got us a new court-house." Then next year it does not turn up, and they want to know what has happened to it.

I congratulate the public servants and teachers in my electorate on the efficient work they have done. Some of the amenities in which they work are not as good as they should be. I have referred to the two court-houses. This can be said of all public servants in Queensland. After all, the Treasurer's Budget depends on the work done by public servants and it is on their generalship, management and reports that he builds up these documents that are brought down in this Chamber. His Budgets depend on these people, and we are fortunate to have them.

**Mr. Lee:** Nobody denies that.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** I have not heard the hon. member mention it.

It is unfortunate that we have suffered the recent drought. The fact that the Treasurer has budgeted for a deficit will cause concern to public servants. I know the Director-General of Education very well. He has been a close friend of mine since I was a young teacher. One thing that would have made him happy during the past few years was for somebody to drop an extra \$1,000,000 into his lap so that he could do some of the things he wants to.

Finally, I should like to pay a tribute to the young teachers who are going to country areas to take up positions in primary and secondary schools. Their work is phenomenal. They are living up to the best traditions of teaching, and it is my opinion that they are much more competent than we were at their age. They are perhaps better trained, and perhaps the added degree of maturity that they now have as a result of their higher education, and longer periods spent at secondary school and teachers' college, is playing an important part. Although I am critical of some aspects of education, I say that these young teachers perform exceptionally well. It is heartening to see them going out and doing a significant task, particularly in rural areas.

**Mr. HOOPER (Greenslopes) (5.36 p.m.):** In the first place, I congratulate the Treasurer on the presentation of his Budget. I know the many heartaches and headaches that he has had in producing these documents.

I should also like to congratulate Mr. Speaker on his record period of office. As his deputy for a number of years, it has

been my lot to work closely with him, and I know full well the work and sincerity that he puts into his position.

Hon. members will remember that at question time this morning I directed a question without notice to the Minister for Mines and Main Roads. It appears either that the Minister, in answer, gave me the wrong information, or that I directed the question to the wrong Minister. I am not being in any way critical of the Minister, because the question was rather a curly one to ask without notice. My question was this—

“When a motor vehicle that has been operated as a taxi is sold or traded in, are all vendors required to declare that the vehicle was formerly a taxi? If so, does this requirement apply only on the first occasion of trade-in or resale? If the answer is that there is no requirement, will the Minister investigate the possibility of instituting a measure of declaration?”

The Minister's answer to me, which I accepted because it was a rather awkward question to ask without notice, was that to his knowledge there was no requirement for such a declaration at any stage after a former taxi had been traded in.

As hon. members know, I was fairly close to a committee that dealt with consumer affairs (I shall not go into that matter, because legislation dealing with it will be introduced tomorrow), and I asked my question after an approach was made to me by a gentleman from Toowoomba. He was interested in purchasing a motor vehicle from a reputable firm in Toowoomba; I understand it was Eagers. He went to their premises and examined a vehicle with the idea of purchasing it. It was an HD Holden, and the price quoted was, I think, \$625. The vehicle was declared to him to be a former taxi. At the same time, another person inspected the vehicle that was declared to be a former taxi, and purchased it.

After receiving the Minister's reply this morning, I checked with car-dealing firms in the metropolitan area, and I found that they are required to declare that a car has been a taxi on the first sale after being traded in. From then on, there is no such requirement.

The gentleman concerned did not succeed in purchasing the vehicle, even though it was the type in which he was interested. It was in fact sold to another dealer, who operates in a small township outside Toowoomba. The man concerned was still scouting round to buy a vehicle of that type, an HD Holden, and he saw a vehicle in a yard in that small town outside Toowoomba. He went in and looked it over and found that it was the same vehicle, with the same registration number. He asked the price. It had increased by over \$500 in one day—from \$625 to \$1,150—and he said, “This was a former taxi, wasn't it?” The dealer said, “No, it wasn't.”

In my book, if it is good enough to declare it as a former taxi in the first instance, it is good enough to declare it for the life of the vehicle. There must be a reason for declaring it as a former taxi. I do not know what it would be, other than the obvious one that taxis are worked very heavily. Why institute a regulation under which it has to be declared the first time but in subsequent sales it does not matter? I am not saying that the profit was excessive, although it seemed to me to be excessive. However, in mentioning the matter, I ask the Minister with all the sincerity at my command to look into the question of instituting a regulation under which it must be stated for the remainder of a car's life that it was previously a taxi.

**Mr. Casey:** Wouldn't you say that would apply also to many of the so-called one-owner cars that are sold many times?

**Mr. HOOPER:** I agree. I think all that is necessary is an endorsement on the registration papers, where it would remain for all time.

The interesting fact about the vehicle to which I am referring is that Eagers—and they may have erred a little—advertised it as having done 40,000 genuine miles. However, the man who displayed it for sale the following day advertised it as having done 20,000 genuine miles, and it had that mileage on the speedo. I leave it to hon. members.

I mention that matter before coming to the main part of my speech because I believe it is very important. I agree with the hon. member for Mackay that such a regulation could apply also to other vehicles.

I have been prompted to take part in the Budget debate by the large number of representations that I have made over many years on behalf of people in my electorate relative to a matter that could affect people in other electorates. My representations were made to the Minister for Mines and Main Roads, the Treasurer, and the Minister for Justice. All three hon. gentlemen, particularly the Treasurer and the Minister for Justice, did their utmost to assist me in problems arising from the implementation of the Wilbur Smith Report and the construction of the South-east Freeway. The Minister for Mines and Main Roads is of course tied to an Act in the resumption of properties in the area of any main road or freeway or any other resumptions being made on behalf of the Government or local authority. It appears to me that the Act has grossly overlooked the protection of people who in fact had businesses and made their livelihood in an area to be resumed but did not own any property in it. I shall quote two specific cases in my submission.

As hon. members know, the construction of the South-east Freeway is now well under way. I am not opposed to it; I believe it is necessary. However, progress hurts

many people, and people have been hurt by resumptions in both residential and business areas. I pay a tribute to the Minister for Main Roads and his officers for their courtesy to everyone I have sent to them in connection with property resumptions and other matters and, indeed, to the Minister for his courtesy to me when I appealed to him on behalf of the two cases I shall bring before the Committee.

I was approached first by a newsagent. Hon. members will know quite well that a newsagent with a blocked run has no redress whatsoever if, in fact, he has no business premises from which he operates. Under our resumption laws, if he has no business premises in the area but only a blocked run, he has no redress.

This newsagent—Mr. R. J. Baker, of Annerley—is a very good friend of mine and as far back as 1967, after the proclamation of the route of the freeway, he realised that he was going to be very adversely affected. If the freeway had been designed to put this man out of business we could not have done a better job; it went right through his area of distribution.

The second man, who also is a vendor, was affected in the same way. He is a milkman, and milkmen are not zoned to blocked runs; they zone themselves. He also came to me with his case. Both were very deserving cases, and hon. members will be horrified to learn that up to date I have not had any success in getting compensation for them. No provision exists in the Act to cover these unfortunate circumstances, and I take my share of the blame for this.

I should like to read a letter that I wrote to the Minister for Mines and Main Roads. It reads—

“You will recall that I made verbal representations to you some time ago in connection with loss of business which will be incurred by Mr. R. J. Baker, proprietor of a blocked newsagency run, a large portion of which will disappear in the path of the new South Eastern Expressway.

“For newsagents who have a blocked run and do not operate from a shop or such like, loss of business can be tremendous and, in fact, in the case of Mr. Baker, who resides in my Electorate at 65 Earl Street, Annerley, there will be a loss of the best part of his living. This business has been operated by Mr. Baker for many years and was purchased by him as a going concern having previously passed from proprietor to proprietor since the late 1930's.

“This situation is one that I believe has been overlooked by the Government's advisers, as have other vendors such as milkmen and bread vendors.

“However, as newsagents are tied to a blocked run they cannot operate in any other area and I believe that special consideration for compensation should be

given to cases such as the Bakers. These are good, honest people who are not in any way opposed to progress who, after having carried out your advice and discussed their problem with the Newsagents Association and ‘The Courier-Mail’ to no avail, are now appealing to the Government, through you, for assistance in their plight.

“Photostat copy of the proposed expressway with Baker's blocked run clearly outlined in red is enclosed.”

I have the photostat here so that hon. members may see just where the freeway is going and just how the Bakers' newsagency run and the milk run have been affected.

A letter couched in similar terms, but dealing with the milk vendor, was also forwarded to the Minister. I think I should read it, too, as the circumstances are different. It reads—

“You will recall verbal representations that I made to you in connection with the loss of business that will be incurred by Mr. K. J. Cowan, proprietor of a milk run, a large part of which will disappear in the path of the proposed South Eastern Expressway. As milk vendors are zoned under mutual agreements”—

that is the difference—

“it is not possible for Mr. Cowan to operate in any other area. Therefore the loss of business to Mr. Cowan is estimated to be in the vicinity of 20 per cent. to 25 per cent. and naturally I am most concerned for his future and appeal to the Government, through you, to protect this part of his livelihood by way of adequate special compensation. This business has been operated by Mr. Cowan for a number of years and was purchased by him as a going concern.

“The situation is one that I believe has been overlooked by the Government's advisers, as have other vendors such as newsagents and bread vendors.

“As I have pointed out previously, Mr. Cowan is not permitted to operate in any other area without purchasing another run or part of a run to bring this business and his living into line with what he now enjoys. I believe that a very close look should be taken at the position of vendors in resumption areas who are facing the loss of a decent living through no fault of their own and I appeal to the Government, through you, to examine very closely the possibility of compensating Mr. Cowan, in particular, and other vendors, who may be similarly affected.”

In January, 1968, I received a reply from the Minister, as follows:—

“Further reference is made to your personal representations on behalf of Mr. K. J. Cowan, Milk Vendor, of 31 Ekibin Road, Annerley, regarding compensation for the loss of business in areas affected by Freeway construction.

"As you are aware, the resumption of property for these works is being carried out by the Co-ordinator-General's Department under the provisions of 'The State Development and Public Works Organisation Acts' in conjunction with the 'Public Works Land Resumption Acts'.

"Compensation under these Acts is payable only to persons having an estate or interest in the land which will be required for the actual road construction. A dispossessed shopkeeper, who either owns or leases the property where he conducts his business, would be entitled to business disturbance embracing loss suffered by forced sale of stock and other contingencies."

Then, and this is the point—

"No provision is made in the Acts, however, for the payment of compensation to vendors operating within an area in which property resumptions are made, and consequently, I regret that no assistance can be offered to Mr. Cowan in these circumstances."

The Minister was tied to that decision, and he wrote a similar letter about the newsagent.

I could not understand why some way could not be found to assist those people and others similarly affected, so I took the matter up with the Minister for Justice and wrote to him.

I received a reply from him, as follows:—

"I refer to the matter you raised with me as to the prospects of compensation in the case of resumptions injuriously affecting the business of such persons as the proprietor of a milk run and the proprietor of a newspaper business, and have to advise as follows.

"The right to compensation and the quantum of compensation and, for that matter, the basis of calculation of compensation, depend upon the Statute under which the resumption occurs. There is no legal right to compensation either for the value of the land resumed or for the injurious affection to the land unless the claimant can establish a Statutory right (Halsbury's Laws of England, 3rd Edition, Volume 10, page 5).

"Some English Statutes do provide for compensation for injurious affection as the result of resumption of the land of a third party but so far as I can ascertain there is no similar statutory provision in Queensland. In this State the right to compensation arises only in relation to the resumption of the land in which the claimant has an estate or interest. This estate or interest is converted into a claim for compensation and this claim often does include sub-claims for injurious affection arising out of the resumption of the land.

"However, if a milk vendor loses customers and suffers a monetary loss as a result of the resumption of his customer's land, this appears to give him no legal right at all to compensation. If the land from which he operates is resumed it is

still a moot point how far his losses, by reason of effect on his milk run, are linked with the resumption of his land. His goodwill depends upon his deliveries to other persons' lands, and is only indirectly linked with his estate or interest in the land where he has his base or depot. Many vendors, I understand, do not have such a base or depot on land within the area of their deliveries.

"A newspaper vendor who delivers is in a similar category. If his shop is situated on land that is resumed he is entitled to compensation for that loss, but not necessarily for the loss of his goodwill since he may be able to retain his goodwill by delivering in the same area from another headquarters."

How ridiculous that is, when he has no area in which to deliver.

The letter continues—

"He cannot claim compensation in relation to the resumption of the lands of his customers since he has no legal interest in those lands."

On 17 September, 1968, the Minister for Justice also wrote to Mr. Bray, joint managing director of Queensland Newspapers Pty. Ltd., in these terms—

"Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Baker, of 62 Earl Street, Annerley, Brisbane, recently interviewed me with regard to the grave diminution of their newsagent's Block Run, consequent on the construction of the Southside Freeway.

"I enclose herewith a map marked 'A' showing the route of the freeway and also their run, outlined in blue pencil. This shows that already two of their sub-agents have been forced to close, and at least one, or perhaps three, will suffer the same fate. Up to the end of August, almost 100 homes have disappeared, with a further 200 homes and 18 flats marked for resumption.

"I enclose details of the change in the profitability of the run supplied by Mr. Baker, and also a copy of the original agreement entered into by him. Of course, this is one of the penalties of progress and cannot be avoided.

"A second map marked 'B' shows an area which is on the verge of marked housing development, and I have been asked to suggest that this area might be made available to the Bakers, to compensate in some way for the reduction of their asset.

"I should be obliged for your sympathetic consideration."

A similar approach was made by Dr. Delamothe to the Brisbane Milk Board on behalf of the milk vendor. Replies were received from Queensland Newspapers Ltd. and the Milk Board which I will read later. The point is that for all this time I have been trying, with the assistance of the

Treasurer and the Minister for Justice, to help these people in some way. I know that the Treasurer interviewed them quite recently. I also know that he favours the suggestion by an interjector that an ex gratia payment should be made.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** It was the hon. member for Ipswich West.

**Mrs. Jordan:** Councils do that.

**Mr. HOOPER:** That is correct.

I know that the Ministers are concerned in that a precedent might be created. That is fair enough, but we cannot see people lose their living. They are entitled to earn it in a business into which they bought, without any knowledge that this might happen. This problem could develop in other areas, and it will probably escalate in other areas. The freeway has passed through the electorates of South Brisbane, Norman and Greenslopes, and is moving into Mt. Gravatt. When resumptions are made for the construction of other freeways the same problem will arise.

**Mr. Casey:** The freeway itself is a precedent.

**Mr. HOOPER:** That is correct.

*(Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.15 p.m.)*

**Mr. HOOPER:** Before the dinner recess I was outlining an unfair situation that confronts vendors in the area affected by the South-east Freeway, and I mentioned that the Minister for Justice, on my behalf, had made approaches to Queensland Newspapers Pty. Ltd. and the Brisbane Milk Board.

The Brisbane Milk Board replied in the following terms:—

"I desire to acknowledge your letter dated 17th September, 1968, regarding representations made to you by Mr. K. J. Cowan, retail milk vendor, 31 Ekibin Road, Annerley, relative to the effect that the Southside Freeway will have on his milk run.

"With reference to Mr. Cowan's application for extension of his existing licence to deliver milk and cream in the Tarragindi area, I wish to advise for your information that Mr. Cowan is authorised by the certificate of registration as a retail vendor issued by the Board to deliver milk and/or cream anywhere within the Greater Brisbane Area. However whilst there is no statutory zoning of milk rounds there has been operating for some time a voluntary system of zoning authorised by the retail vendors themselves and consequently it would not be easy for Mr. Cowan to break into a new area unless by purchase of gallonage from another vendor.

"I think it would be fair to say that Mr. Cowan having been in the business since 1957 would be aware of this position.

"I have acknowledged Mr. Cowan's application and have suggested that he call at the Board's office to see if there is any way he can be advised or assisted."

The letter is signed by the secretary to the Milk Board.

The advice and assistance that the secretary was able to give Mr. Cowan is exactly what is outlined in the letter, namely, that he could do this if he had sufficient money to buy into another area.

The reply received by Dr. Delamothe from Queensland Newspapers Pty. Ltd. reads—

"Dear Mr. Minister,

"We acknowledge your letter of September 17, 1968, regarding Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Baker of 62 Earl Street, Annerley, whose newsagency area is affected by the Southside Freeway.

"There is no doubt that this agent will be gravely disadvantaged by the freeway which traverses the full length of his area and divides it into two parts.

"Two problems are involved:

(i) loss of approximately one third of the dwelling units in the area will seriously restrict the economic base of this agency and will involve the owners in a capital loss quite beyond their control.

(ii) There is some doubt as to the practicability of a newsagency delivery run cut into parts by a freeway. If may be impracticable for an agent making his home deliveries to cross back and forth as necessary over what will presumably be a limited access road.

"We cannot see any way of granting relief from problem (i) above by making available to Mr. Baker the area suggested at Tarragindi. This forms part of another agent's territory. This agent has paid for the right to serve this territory and when he acquired the business our companies and other publishers gave the normal undertaking 'not to prejudice the newsagency by the appointment of a second newsagency in the territory.'

"To cure the problem in (ii) above, the only course open in the end may be for Mr. Cowan to sell the smaller part of the run to the adjoining agent on the same side of the freeway. A great difficulty here is that what would then be left of Mr. Baker's original agency may be insufficient to constitute a viable business or to make a reasonable living for the owner."

That would be the understatement of the year.

The letter continues—

"The present situation is, as you rightly say, one of the penalties of progress. But it would seem inequitable if the penalty is to fall on a few individuals. The new freeway will benefit the whole community. It seems just that the whole community

should shoulder the reasonable costs of achieving improvement in its transport facilities.

"In the case now under consideration, the newsagent has in his newsagency a property right for which he has paid money. The advent of the freeway imposes on him a capital loss. In our view, he has a good claim to compensation by the State Authority authorising the freeway."

That has always been my view, and I still stand by it.

**Mr. Houston:** Yet it has been rejected every time we have raised it from this side of the Chamber.

**Mr. HOOPER:** That is right. It might fairly be asked what losses this newsagent suffered till 5 September. That is a period of less than 12 months, but I have to give the figures over 12 months so that they mean something. What I am about to read was supplied by the Authorised Newsagents' Association of Queensland. It reads—

"As requested we have checked circulation figures, results being as follows, calculated on a basis of 5-cent units.

	April/May/June 1967	
Courier Mail .. ..	3,490	
Telegraph .. ..	2,947	
	<hr/>	
5/12 of .. ..	6,437	2,682
Sunday Mail .. ..		661
C.M. Periodicals .. ..		308
Truth and Periodicals .. ..		791
Consolidated Press .. ..		595
Gordon & Gotch .. ..		238
		<hr/>
		5,275"

In the same period, exactly 12 months later, using the same periodicals and newspapers, the figure was 4,784. The value of units per 1,000 was \$7,912 in 1967, and \$7,176 in 1968. The letter also states—

"We point out in the early part of 1968 no shipments of English magazines were received by Gordon & Gotch. However, in the months of April, May and June back shipments were received together with current issues, and double deliveries were made to agents."

That is the period to which I have already referred. The loss was therefore very much greater than has been indicated here.

The letter continues—

"The effect of this was in inflate the Gordon & Gotch figures in the months in question.

"We would further point out that figures quoted were at 30th June, 1968, and no allowance has been made for any further loss that may be sustained."

The loss, of course, has been sustained since that time.

It may seem passing strange that I, a member of a Government party, should be bringing this matter before the Committee. I do it because I sincerely believe that these people have suffered a hardship for which they should be compensated. So many others could be placed in a similar position. In any further resumption, nothing similar to what has happened to Baker should be allowed to take place. In his case, the freeway has gone completely through his territory. I say to the Government, with all the sincerity that I can command: for heaven's sake, look at this situation and do something about it.

Mr. Baker has received no assistance whatever from the Government. He was compelled to go further into debt by borrowing to enable him to purchase portion of an adjoining run to earn a modest living. Mr. Cowan has not been in a position to do that. I contend that both parties are entitled to receive some financial assistance from the Government. Each of them should be able to get back into a business of a standard at least similar to that which he had before the freeway was mooted.

**Mr. Houston:** Don't you think the same principle applies to people who lose their homes? They receive a small amount for their homes and have to spend a large amount on a replacement.

**Mr. HOOPER:** The principle is the same, but the circumstances are a little different.

**Mr. Houston:** It puts old people into debt.

**Mr. HOOPER:** These people have been put out of business.

**Mr. Houston:** But old people have the problem of finding somewhere else to live and putting themselves into debt.

**Mr. HOOPER:** That is true. I again appeal to the Government to take some action. I know that I have the support of the two Ministers who have endeavoured to assist me—the Treasurer and the Minister for Justice. In my opinion, people in these circumstances should be compensated also for the loss they have sustained in the intervening period. I do not care whether or not this creates a precedent. The Act should be amended to overcome problems such as these in the future. I appeal to the Government to do something about it promptly and fairly, and to leave no stone unturned in finding a solution.

The construction of the freeway has caused a great deal of hardship in other directions. In many cases, of course, that is unavoidable, but I pay a special tribute to the officers of the Main Roads Department who have the unenviable task of interviewing people whose properties are to be resumed. These officers also are tied very closely to the provisions of the Act and can move only within strict legal limits. They have handled the situation very well.

I wish to bring to the notice of the Committee one other deserving case. It has not yet been refused by the Main Roads Department, and it is certainly not a common one—in fact, it probably is unique. A family in the Weller's Hill area is to lose the front portion of its allotment and will be left with only half of the existing front yard. The home will then abut the earth-works of the freeway. The people concerned have been to the Main Roads Department and asked the department whether it will purchase the property, but it, of course, is not in a position at this stage to say whether or not it will. I make this appeal to the Government because I am sure that, having a heart, it will listen to me.

First I shall read from a medical certificate that I have received from the people concerned in support of their claim. The situation is, I think, unique, because three members of the one family could be affected very drastically medically by the freeway. The family to which I refer is that of Mr. Harry Martin, of Amulree Street, Weller's Hill, and I have before me a medical certificate signed by their doctor, Dr. Godwin, of Holland Park. It is in three sections, the first of which relates to Ross, aged 10. It says—

"Ross is regarded as suffering from mild fibrocystic disease. He is subject to recurrent bouts of allergic rhinitis and upper respiratory infection. On occasions he has suffered from pneumonic infections. Because of the possible underlying pathology and his allergic tendencies, his condition could definitely be aggravated by any air pollution—be this dust or fumes."

The next section relates to Helen, aged 7.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Wharton): Order! I inform the hon. member for Clayfield that I am having difficulty in hearing the hon. member for Greenslopes. I am sure that other hon. members also wish to hear what he is saying.

**Mr. MURRAY**: I rise to a point of order. If I choose to sit and gaze at the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha, I do not think there can be any objection to that.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN**: Order!

**Mr. HOOPER**: As I have said, the next section of the medical certificate refers to Helen, aged 7. It says—

"She has never been shown to be affected by fibrocystic disease. Helen does have the marked allergic rhinitis and, when younger, she had recurrent bronchitis and pneumonitis.

"Within the last eight months, Helen has had two severe episodes of pneumonia requiring intensive therapy, both medical and physical.

"I would consider that her health could also be affected by any increased air pollution in her environment.

"Mrs. Martin suffers from persistent, resistant allergic rhinitis which has, in the past, predisposed her to bouts of purulent sinusitis.

"Once again any pollution of the home environs could aggravate or worsen her health."

That might sound very simple, but I refer to an article in "The Courier-Mail" of Wednesday, 9 September, headed, "Disease is not visible", and reading—

"Can you imagine swallowing as many as 15 to 75 pills a day? This is the normal intake of a child with cystic fibrosis.

"In Australia, more than one in every 2,000 children has cystic fibrosis.

"Cystic fibrosis is an hereditary disease which affects the lungs and digestive system.

"Sufferers are required to take numerous doses of vitamins, enzymes and tablets to achieve a normal weight gain. Otherwise the C.F. child has a large appetite, but not a comparable addition to weight.

"The C.F. child has difficulty in breathing and needs twice-a-day physiotherapy and the inhaling of antibiotics twice to three times a day to help his lungs work. His life is a constant battle for breath.

"The Australian Cystic Fibrosis Association was formed in Brisbane almost 10 years ago to help parents teach their C.F. children to live with the disease.

"An association spokesman said yesterday the disease was more 'heartbreaking' than several other types of physical handicaps for two reasons.

"First, the disease was not immediately physically apparent. 'They're children with hidden handicaps', she said.

"Having cystic fibrosis is not like being crippled or blind, where an immediate handicap can be recognised. Children with C.F. look quite normal.'

"She emphasised that this lack of apperency often meant that the lay observer could not sympathise with the child who appeared normal but was actually fighting a secret battle for health.

"The second problem was that the child, when young, found it difficult to co-operate with his mother in receiving physiotherapy, inhalations and innumerable tablets.

"She added, however, that as the child became older, he would accept medication naturally. Many children could benefit through the work of the Australian Cystic Fibrosis Association.

"The association aimed to encourage parents with C.F. children to further their knowledge of the disease; it purchased equipment for loan or donation to needy C.F. children; and it worked to set up clinics where facilities were provided for C.F. treatment."

I believe this article endorses what I said about the need to adopt a particularly sympathetic attitude towards people who are

affected in this way where they are adjacent to a freeway, irrespective of whether they are asthmatics or have other chest complaints. This is a rather deserving case, and I know that it is being closely examined by the Main Roads Department. I do not put it up in isolation but I ask the Minister, through his officers, to look not only at actual physical problems caused by resumptions but also at medical problems that might be caused and health hazards that might arise.

Another matter that I should like to mention in this debate is the fact that over a period of years I have brought before Parliament my submissions with respect to the education, training and placement of blind people. As a result of my efforts, the Government, through the Minister for Health, set up a steering committee, of which I had the opportunity to be a member, to investigate these problems. I compliment the Government and the Minister not only for receiving the committee's report sympathetically but also for implementing its recommendations almost entirely.

I shall not read the report, but I point out that after a detailed investigation lasting many months the Government agreed to subsidise the education, training and placement of post-school blind people. In addition the Government agreed to set up committees under the auspices of the Health Department, in co-ordination with the Education Department, to arrange for their placement and training and to investigate the best possible methods of training. The Government agreed, too, to make available from time to time on a weekly basis a number of specialist teachers. They will give tuition for several hours each week, and at the Government's expense. If the Government could extend its attitude in other directions, it would indeed be carrying out humane work and, as well, would be assisting the less fortunate members of the community. I am very appreciative of the action that it has taken.

However, I am not appreciative of the fact that the Health Department, in another matter, has refused to move. I feel that I should bring it to the attention of the Committee because it is well to air these problems that face everyone in the community.

In a letter to the Minister for Health, I wrote—

"Recently I spoke to you in connection with pathology tests, X-rays and other medical tests carried out at our State Public Hospitals on request of private medical practitioners.

"I refer to the system where a private medical practitioner can officially refer patients (particularly pensioners) to State Public Hospitals for any of the abovementioned tests and while the patient referred is not an in-patient in the Intermediate section of the Hospital then the services are completely free and all results are forwarded to the referring medical officer. However, if the patient is an in-patient in

the Intermediate section and is referred for similar tests by the private doctor then a full charge is made."

Naturally, a pensioner who is able to receive hospital benefits from the Medical Benefits Fund or a similar insurance scheme can be admitted to an Intermediate section and receive his benefits. As well, the doctor of his choice is able to treat him under the terms of the scheme. If he is sent by his own doctor as an out-patient for tests at a public hospital those tests are conducted free of charge; however, if the person is an in-patient they are not. The doctor can have the patient admitted to the Intermediate ward and find that the tests cannot be carried out free, and he can then have the patient discharged and sent to the outpatients' department for readmission. That shows how ridiculous the situation is. My letter continues—

"My own interest and that of private practitioner friends of mine is for pensioner patients only, particularly those who at great personal sacrifice have saved sufficient from their small pensions to pay instalments to Hospital Benefits scheme so that they may take advantage of Intermediate treatment. As Social Service pensioners they are automatically entitled to free medical treatment by their own doctor and therefore do not insure with the medical section of the fund, believing that ancillary services are part of Hospital treatment.

"Pensioners who have been interested enough in their own health and welfare to insure themselves for Hospital treatment, I submit, should not be penalised for doing so.

"I believe a serious anomaly exists in this field and I sincerely urge you to investigate and, if possible, relieve and correct this state of affairs."

This is the reply I received—

"I refer to your personal representations of the 3rd instant in regard to the present policy whereby pensioners who are private or intermediate inpatients in State Public Hospitals are charged for ancillary services.

"In this regard I wish to inform you that all residents of Queensland are eligible to attend at the outpatients and Casualty Departments of the public hospitals and receive treatment including ancillary services, without charge."

I did not know that of course! We all know it! The letter continues—

"However patients, excluding pensioners, who are referred by private medical practitioners to public hospitals for these tests are charged in accordance with the list of charges for ancillary services as prescribed in the Regulations in pursuance of The Hospitals Act, 1936 to 1967. No charge is made for pensioner patients who are so referred."

But no mention is made of outpatients. The letter continues—

"This is a special concession granted to pensioners but the Department does not consider that such concessions should also be granted to pensioners who elect to enter hospital as private or intermediate patients. If they desire free treatment it is available to them in the public wards.

"In those cases where pensioners elect to be accommodated as private or intermediate patients they occupy beds which would otherwise be available to other private patients who would be required to pay all the prescribed charges.

"I therefore regret that I am unable to approve that pensioner patients who elect to be accommodated in a private or intermediate ward receive the ancillary services available without charge."

I put to the Committee that that is exactly what is done. A patient attends as an outpatient and gets treatment free, but inpatients do not. If they are discharged for a period they can get it, but no doctor will discharge a very sick patient. There will be no further charge if this service is made available because, in any case, it is carried out by the hospital, and the service is given before the patient goes into hospital, or at some time immediately after his discharge and before he is put back again.

**Mr. Tucker:** Would not the hospital obtain something from a pensioner registered as an intermediate patient, and would not the hospital also get something from the Commonwealth Government?

**Mr. HOOPER:** That is quite right.

**Mr. Tucker:** They would not be losing at all?

**Mr. HOOPER:** That is right.

I raise that matter for what it is worth, and suggest that the Treasurer could well look into it. I do not agree with the policy. If it is all right for one, it is all right in every case. It should not be applied to one, and not applied to others.

Most hon. members are aware that since the Commonwealth Government's new social service plan for hospital insurance there has been an increase in contributions to insurance funds, which, of course, has meant an increase in the number of people wanting intermediate hospital beds. We do not have enough accommodation to meet the movement from the public section to the intermediate section. The people are now paying for it. I do not say that they should do so, but if that is their choice, and they want the doctor they choose, I believe they are entitled to make the choice. We provide a free service, but if a patient prefers to pay for it, well and good. Patients will get nothing better, but, if they want intermediate service, and are prepared to pay for it, and there is a bigger demand for the intermediate section, let us make provision for it if we can. If a balance is being established

between one section and the other, so much the better. I make my plea in the belief that it is reasonable, and that it should be looked into.

I am concerned about a news item that appeared in the 14 October issue of "The Observer", a local newspaper delivered free in the southern suburbs. The headline reads—

"Proposed university needs the 'Clem Jones Touch'—Ald."

The article reads—

"A Brisbane city alderman this week called for a 'Clem Jones approach' to the building of the proposed Griffith University at Mt. Gravatt."

With all due respect to the Lord Mayor, I do not think that his gentle touch would assist.

The Minister, in replying to a question from the hon. member for Norman, adequately outlined why Griffith University has not been commenced. He said that he did not expect it to reach fruition and be opened until 1975, and he gave his reasons for this. He said that sufficient money had not been available, and he referred to the recommendation of the Commonwealth commission. He said that the available money was better utilised in the existing universities. This is possibly right. I do not take the Minister to task on this, because he is in a position to know. However, I do take to task these aldermen who set themselves up as being more expert than the hon. member for Norman on why the university should be there, why it is not there, and why Clem Jones would put it there. Those aldermen would do well to keep their noses in their own fields. I am not trying to be controversial. I am trying to be fair about this. I do not care whether they are Labour aldermen or C.M.O. aldermen. It happens that, in this case, they are A.L.P. aldermen. They should look after matters in their own fields and we will look after ours. If they desire to enter politics on a State level, they have a right to do so.

**Mr. Newton** interjected.

**Mr. HOOPER:** I am not attacking the Brisbane City Council. I am attacking the principle of aldermen usurping the position of a member of this Assembly.

**Mr. Tucker:** If the converse is the case, we should be able to unload the hon. member for Kurilpa onto the council.

**Mr. HOOPER:** The hon. member for Kurilpa can speak for himself.

I have been taken to task in the "Telegraph" for saying, in an election campaign, that a university would be built in the Mt. Gravatt area or in the southern suburbs. I admit I did say this, and I still say it. I did not say when it would be built because I did not know. I said that it had been approved and would be built. If these

aldermen, by a back-door method, are trying to snipe at me, I am prepared to meet them anywhere at any time to debate it with them. They should take more care of their own duties. Many Brisbane people at present lack facilities such as water, sewerage, and garbage disposal. I am not attacking anyone in particular. I am using this as the basis of an argument. That is their field, and this is ours. State Parliament handles State affairs and the Brisbane City Council handles city affairs.

**Mr. AIKEN** (Warrego) (7.50 p.m.): There seems to be political antagonism towards the rural dweller and this is probably the reason why the man on the land has received such indifferent treatment from this Government and in the present Budget.

The other day during this debate the hon. member for South Coast spoke, undoubtedly with tongue in cheek, of the merits of the Government's treatment of people in drought-affected areas, and he referred to the fact that the Government had spent \$40,000,000 of State and Federal money in drought-relief measures. I challenge the hon. member to say that he is completely happy with the way in which that money has been spent. Unfortunately for the man on the land, much of it has been spent in most unpractical ways. It has been spent on monumental kerbing and guttering, monumental road crossings, and in other unpractical ways. At the same time, people have been literally starving in the affected areas of the West.

Why are the people of the rural areas being callously victimised and penalised for having the guts to live in the West? As a further illustration of government attitude, last week postal charges were increased by the Federal Government to such a degree that a "Women's Weekly" that costs 20c in Queen Street costs 14c to post to rural areas, making the cost in the West 34c. "The Courier-Mail" costs 7c posted, and, if received by air mail, the cost is 15c. Live in the West, and be at the mercy of the wolves!

In addition, there are exorbitant rail freights, completely ridiculous values set by the Valuer-General's Department, high electricity charges, insufficient schools and teaching staff, and inadequate dental, medical and hospital charges. And, coupled with all of those things, is a raging drought calculated to send anybody off the land. Apparently the Government's attitude to this situation is, "Well, it is your chosen way of life. You don't have to live there. Hang you, Jack, I'm all right."

Sound common sense and reason tell us that there is an urgent need to keep rural producers and townspeople in business, and I have been continually horrified at the refusal of the Agricultural Bank to assist rural producers because of their inability to show sufficient prospects of servicing Government loans granted to them. In a great many cases, pastoral firms and lending houses have forced

their clients to sell their stock in order to reduce their indebtedness, and that has settled any chance the producer may have had to service his debt or loan.

Recently the hon. member for Windsor stated in a speech that Governments are not wealthy in their own right, and that far too many people are prepared to depend on Government help. I point out that the Government has a responsibility to this State, and that it is responsible for the regimentation, regulation and well-being of every man, woman and child in Queensland. The time has come for the Government and the lending houses to get together and arrive at a common policy to help the rural producer with his immediate problems.

The sufferings and agonies of the rural industries are rising in a crescendo and surely can no longer be ignored. The primary producer, facing rising costs, has been forced into increased indebtedness, and there is little doubt that many producers will be forced into bankruptcy and turned from their properties. Only the practical efficiency of the farmer has allowed the primary industries to survive for so long. Budget-balancing has resulted in rising charges, which actually amount to producing money to fight inflation. The philosophy of the farmers has always been "hold on and fight", and this they have stuck to and will continue to; but they need help now as never before. All financial avenues have been exhausted, and a solution to the problems of the rural population of this State lies right here in this Chamber, and in the hands of the Government.

Unfortunately, for the true development of this State the level of protection given to primary industries generally has been far too low. Unfortunately, also, all farm costs have to relate to other sections of the highly priced Australian economy. In other words, if it is considered desirable to subsidise various secondary industries by means of high tariffs and subsidies, surely in fairness some degree of subsidy must be allowed for the natural development of our land resources, provided, of course, that those resources are used with efficiency and economy. Surely that efficiency and economy is part of the Australian way of farming, and Queensland farmers have proved themselves to be top class in that regard.

I believe that due consideration will have to be given by the Government to the complete cancellation of the debts of rural producers. Perhaps this will prove to be the only positive way of settling their financial troubles. The die has been cast by the definite lack of action on the part of the State and Federal Governments in their policy of "too little, too late". The argument in favour of long-term, low-interest loans for rural producers was certainly applicable, say, two years ago; but today, with the State's revenue loss for the year standing at about \$250,000,000, loan money, even at low interest, would not solve the problem.

At this stage it would be impossible for rural producers to borrow themselves out of debt. The situation of the man on the land is completely out of control, and the Government must take the blame for that. The rural producers of Australia are now \$2,000 million in debt, with the State of Queensland hardest hit of all.

Might I say that it is my firm belief as a western dweller, that the Queensland Government has traded far too heavily on the misnamed Country Party. Drop the word "country" and the Government is no longer in business. Its real strength has been in its rural support, and, quite frankly, it has worn out its welcome. The Government, too, has paid little heed to the generations of families who, with experience, capital, and application to the land, have contributed largely to our affluent way of living. If these experienced people are forced from their properties, it will be impossible to replace them.

Surely we do not want these people to go to the wall. Surely this Government will shake itself out of its apathy, stop playing with words and, with the biggest industry in the State in such distress, start thinking and acting big. The other day I heard the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha say that this State is no longer totally dependent on primary and rural production.

**Mr. Lickiss:** Isn't that right?

**Mr. AIKEN:** I distinctly gained the impression that for him, as a Liberal, this quote was a happy one. Is this Government prejudiced towards the man on the land, and is this the answer to the shocking treatment and cold shoulder shown to the rural dweller?

The State Director of Industrial Development, Sir David Muir, reported the other day that the Queensland economy continued to expand despite the effects of drought. He went on to illustrate how, from 1963 to 1970, the economy of the State had been tremendously strengthened by accelerated industrialisation and the related explosion in mineral development. Sir David said—

"And this is but an example of the pattern of dynamic growth and development which is occurring in all major regions of this State."

The reference to dynamic growth certainly does not apply to the major regions of this State. Unfortunately, in virtually all areas west of the Divide, Queensland is dying. This gives me reason to believe that the people in the West are not part of Queensland at all but of another State known as Queensland and not part of it. It seems that the political greats of this State find it impossible to lift their sights beyond the Dividing Range.

The maximum benefits of both growth and development in industrial expansion are possible only with the basic aid of our

greatest industry—our primary industry—and the sooner this Government wakes up to this fact and correlates primary-production values with secondary-production values, the sooner the State will really reach its maximum potential as possibly the most favoured area in the world.

The Government has spoken of the introduction of a rural reconstruction scheme. I sincerely hope that a solid and constructive and not a stopgap, publicity-seeking picture will be drawn up for this Parliament's approval. Massive amounts of finance are required, and above all the Government must be earnest in a genuine desire to really rebuild these failing industries. A marked degree of pessimism is evident in rural circles towards the sincerity of this Government, and primary producers are now demanding remedial action. The tempo of living in the West has slowed almost to a halt because of induced monetary stringency, and I again warn the Government that the time is fast approaching when mass exoduses from the West must occur.

Private industries have produced, and more importantly have introduced, untold wealth into this State, and what was once the economic marvel and envy of overseas countries and rival States has today become an uneconomic liability. Undoubtedly the production of food is light, but unfortunately our so-called uneconomic farms will soon be swallowed by corporate bodies and monopolies, and our skilled farmers will tend to revert to the feudal way of life and be forced to work for these monopolies. Collective farming is a virtue of the Ukraine, and this Government has the hide even to insinuate that honest, genuine and "fair-dinkum" Australians—the type of fellows on his side of the Chamber—have ties with Communism. Yet it treats our farmers in this fashion.

Following Government policies I ask: where is the difference—a State run by combines or a State run by the State itself? Where is the difference? There is no difference in the Ukraine. This Government is too malleable to outside pressures, and the Premier, never specific, is always going to do something. Thus today, unfortunately, owing to lack of faith in the Government, the producer can only take stock of his future with apprehension and scepticism. As the friend of big business, this Government seeks to phase out the small man, and this argument applies to all sections of industry—rural industry, small bakers, small grocers, and so on. Today we live in a fairyland of unreality, with a galloping inflation and a general situation in the primary industries that would leave Solomon guessing. The Government has kidded to the man on the land to produce, to improve liquidity of land finance, and to spend to avoid taxation. As a result of this advise we now face over-production and bankruptcy. Today we are in the transition stage of desperation and

don't care, and we need the stimulating knowledge that the State we helped to build will, in turn, help rebuild the West.

At page 378 of volume 249 of "Hansard", on 12 September, 1968, when speaking of the West, the Minister for Local Government said—

"It is certainly on the way up now. It was well down when hon. members opposite were in office."

What arrant nonsense! The Minister is quite aware that the West was infinitely better off under Labour administration than it is today. Present Government rural policies have placed us on a toboggan gathering momentum as we hasten towards corporations and collectivism in property ownership. Is this, then, the answer to the Government's policy of decentralisation?

Rural producers in all sections, by efficiency and management, have increased their production to a marked degree. And for what? To be put on quotas, and told that their industries are uneconomical and ignored and snubbed by this Government.

The Federal Government, too, has been playing the country people for "suckers" and failing in its obligations to Australia's most basic industries. Those who live on the land and love it, who have a pride in possessing it, and who have done so much to develop and preserve it, are stunned by the present Government's approach to carrying on and re-stocking finance matters.

Is this Government satisfied, as apparently the hon. member for Hawthorne indicated that he was in his speech? Is it satisfied with the direction of effort for the man on the land and the rural-town dweller? How can it be? The hon. member for Hawthorne should stop trying to kid people that the Government has done its best for the rural dwellers. Are the monumental efforts of our pioneers in property development, towns, railways, roads and similar achievements to be sacrificed because of a self-centred, uncaring Government that has failed to rise to the occasion and must ultimately force us all out of the West?

The contents of the Budget have done nothing to relieve the anxieties of the man on the land or rural dwellers generally. The primary producer is paid solely by results. He is being victimised by neglect and cost spirals, which are inevitably passed back to the producer and then they come to a halt because they can be passed no further. The brunt of the burden of the cost of our much-vaunted affluent living is being shouldered by the basic-industry producer of our country, that is, the primary producer.

The "get big or get out" slogan emanating from the Government must be replaced by the slogan, "Get big, and get going". If the primary industries of this State are to be saved from lingering death by financial strangulation, the Government must recognise its complete responsibility towards these

necessitous industries and hasten to implement its foreshadowed rural reconstruction scheme.

We all realise that State finances will be unequal to, and possibly completely inadequate in, the task of supplying the massive sums required. It is imperative that the Government should press hard for a greater share of the common purse of the country and to obtain supplementary finance to give the rural reconstruction scheme a chance to succeed. The Government must accept its responsibilities to the State and atone for its completely erosive disregard of the rural economy. Government apathy and neglect, and failure to implement a worthy reconstruction plan or authority, has resulted in complete primary industry chaos. Inflationary trends must be blocked.

I beg the Treasurer to explore every means to resist direct sectional taxes, with particular emphasis on probate duty, which is a real killer, land tax and other taxes which must increase inflation.

As developing countries need finance and credit, so do developing industries. In this regard, and with a desire to develop trade, the aims of the Government must be to lift this State out of the depths of drought and to look for a means to stop the crashing of commodity prices. Confidence and the assurance of a rewarding future must be instilled into the primary industries, and we must rebuild and refurbish to make up the leeway of the past lean years. We must prove to overseas countries and overseas markets the goodness and health-producing qualities of our natural products as compared with synthetic products, and I appeal strongly to the Government to hasten the formation of overseas trade centres with these objects in view. Methods of research and adequate funds must be found and shovelled into marketing methods and methods of satisfactory disposal of what hitherto have been regarded as undisposable surpluses.

I believe that personalised promotion of all Queensland products and emphasis on the importance of our State in the marketing of these goods are musts. Last year, Australia provided nearly \$200,000,000 in aid to underprivileged and developing countries. While I am all in favour of this, I believe that, instead of dollars, we should provide our surplus goods, correctly packaged and presented, and used as a promotion gimmick. There should be personalised promotion coming from Queensland, particularly of our quality goods, emphasising, "This is a product of Queensland."

This State must institute a type of national insurance to provide for recurring droughts, with particular emphasis on conservation of water and irrigation and the stockpiling of fodder and suitable grain for the feeding of drought-affected stock.

Recently I attended a representative meeting of 145 pastoral workers at Cunnamulla. They complained bitterly of the deterioration in the standards of amenities and conditions of pastoral workers' accommodation. Because of a lack of finance, graziers are unable to maintain their hitherto reasonable conditions of accommodation. Today we find razor-thin mattresses, broken beds, broken windows and doors, unsatisfactory toilets, and inadequate water reticulation occasioned by blocked or broken pipes. And the property-owner is powerless to meet the demands of the Workers' Accommodation Act.

I urge the Treasurer to give thought to the rapidly deteriorating improvements on pastoral properties. I believe that the \$2,500,000 handed out to shire councils as drought relief could be supplemented in a calculated way to help graziers keep faith with their employees in the provision of accommodation and employment on their properties. Shearers are almost 100 per cent. users of steel in their shearing tools, and, after an increase recently announced by B.H.P., the steel monopoly, in the price of steel, the shearers sought, through the Australian Workers' Union, a consequent increase in tool allowance. This received a nasty, cold rebuff in the Industrial Commission. Is that justice for workers?

Because Queensland is the major beef-producing State of the Commonwealth, and because beef is probably the most prosperous of all our primary industries, we must be careful to preserve our share of the North American trade. Between Australia and the United States, there is an imbalance of trade favourable to the United States to the tune of about \$1,500 million. With beef-cattle numbers in the United States fairly stationary at about 119,000,000, and a rapidly rising population, it is only reasonable to assume that the growing hamburger-meat trade can be maintained, and probably materially improved. But, from a Queensland point of view, we must be jealous of this market, and we must make every effort to safeguard this essential outlet for Queensland beef. The Government must do everything possible to increase the consumption of beef, not only in America but in other world markets as well. Although there is an evident tendency in other sections of rural industry to diversify to beef production, with the possible threat of over-supply, I feel that the situation can be controlled.

Recently in a speech in this Chamber that sterling champion of the people of North Queensland, the hon. member for Rockhampton North, pointed out that synthetic meat could seriously impair Queensland's share of overseas and local markets. Soya-bean derivatives are high in protein value, and if we in this country are not careful to contain inflation, underprivileged countries, and underprivileged families in this country, could, and probably will, turn to this type of cheaper substitute for meat.

The continuing silence of the Government on decentralisation, and the lack of any encouragement in this direction in the Treasurer's Budget speech, is a matter of deep concern for the State. Diversification of industry in rural areas is vital to the future development of the sparsely populated regions of Queensland, and the submission by the United Graziers' Association for a scheme for a wool pilot plant at Roma could be, I believe, a step in the right direction. I believe that the scheme has considerable merit, as the plant would initially scour the wool and spin the tops, the aim being to produce the finished cloth. I sincerely implore the Government to show some interest in this matter with a view to developing other schemes of a similar nature.

Inequality in education is a primary cause of concern in the West, and many good and valuable citizens have moved from this area to coastal regions, where school services are cheaper and easier to obtain. There is an urgent need for the Education Department to assist by providing subsidies and direct grants for the maintenance of hostels which, because of the drought, are now unable to meet their costs. Unfortunately, too much Government blame is going to drought. Many students are being withdrawn from hostels because of financial difficulties, and, with increasing costs of administration, it is a forlorn hope that western hostels could possibly reduce their fees.

The financial problems of western shires are acute. Certainly these shires can increase their rates to attract more revenue. But can their ratepayers meet such increases? Costs are rising continually, but more amenities are needed if residents are to be encouraged to remain in western areas. Roads must be maintained and improved, also, if rural industries are to survive.

The misnamed drought-relief grants have been of valuable assistance over the past few years. But immediately these funds are withdrawn, shire works will have to be reduced drastically or rates increased greatly. Rural ratepayers, the only significant source of revenue in many shires, can hardly be expected to provide the necessary money when they are struggling to recover from the effects of drought, and this recovery will not, and cannot, be rapid.

Cash grants to local authorities from the State or Federal Treasury are an urgent necessity and should be implemented immediately drought-relief grants are withdrawn—that is, assuming the drought ever breaks. Increased subsidies are required for town necessities and amenities if country towns are to progress. Water, sewerage and community and recreational amenities are essential, and these are usually beyond the resources of local authorities. The raising of money with heavy repayment commitments is only postponing the liability and saddling a future generation with our present responsibilities.

Shires should be responsible for a much smaller share of the cost of constructing and maintaining all classifications of main roads within their boundaries. Special grants should be available for providing access roads to new selections or for opening up new areas.

To enlarge the areas of shires would not assist in overcoming the problems that I have mentioned and would be to the detriment of shire residents. A local authority area should not be so large that it loses its local character, and the absorption of some smaller shires by their neighbours could mean stagnation, or worse, for many small townships. The adjustment of shire boundaries on a very practical basis could be justified in some cases, the basis of such adjustment being community of interest, police districts, or something of that nature. No compulsory absorption of a small shire by a neighbouring shire or shires should ever be considered against the wishes of the residents of the shire to be absorbed.

I view with distress the way in which the people of the West have been treated by this Government. But I hasten to draw my comments to a conclusion by reminding all hon. members that the rural producer is a heavy contributor to the economy of this State and nation. As an employer, as a taxpayer, as a supplier of essential commodities, and as a consumer of other goods, surely he is entitled to much greater consideration than he has hitherto been shown by this Government.

**Mr. RAMSDEN** (Merthyr) (8.30 p.m.): The security of the nation has been the first thought in the minds—

**Mr. Bennett:** Let us hope it does not depend on you.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** I hope the hon. member remains in the Chamber longer than he usually does; he might learn something.

Now, may I say that the security of the nation has been the first thought in the minds of many responsible people.

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Houghton): Order! For the information of all hon. members, I will not tolerate this cross-firing and interjecting. I ask all hon. members to allow the hon. member for Merthyr to be heard in silence.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** As I said when I was so very rudely interrupted, the one thought that has been entertaining the minds of thinking people throughout the world has centred on the wide upheavals against what is widely and generally known as "the establishment". If some think that we on this side of the Chamber make too much of this subject, let me remind them, whether they be in this Chamber or outside it, that we, in the tail-end of the 20th century, are facing a lawlessness unprecedented in world history. Hardly a day goes by but we hear of the hijacking of an

international aircraft carrying 100 passengers or more whose lives are in jeopardy on every such occasion. We are living in an age when diplomats from foreign countries are being kidnapped, held to ransom, and even murdered. We have become so used to this conduct, so used to these terrible events, which in the early part of the century would have brought at least the death penalty to the culprit or a declaration of war between nations, that we simply shrug our shoulders as we read of such incidents. They affect us no more than just another breaking and entering in our own street.

In this country, a country known for its freedoms—freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and freedom to come and go as we please—we have seen a member of a friendly foreign embassy harrassed on our own university campus in Brisbane, and we are so indifferent to this act of international lawlessness that we academically sit down and discuss the merits and demerits, the rights and the wrongs, the whys and the wherefores of this insulting act, as if the diplomat and the country he represents are of no more importance and standing than a drunken citizen being made the buffoon of happy revellers in some pub bar.

So great has the impact of international lawlessness become that we, as free citizens, are in danger of being pulled into this insidious swamp of irresponsible and dangerous quicksand until it is too late. We are apathetic to the point of betrayal. With all we stand for, we have from time to time witnessed the deliberate burning of our own national flag as a sacramental act to openly exhibit inward contempt for law and order in the community.

We who watch, read or hear of such incidents again shrug our shoulders. We say, "Tut, tut!" or "How dreadful!". It shows how much contempt we must hold our nation in when we tolerate these things. Compare our attitude with that of Zambia, for instance, whose representatives last week withdrew from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference and from Australia because the flag of their nation had either been blown down or cut down. They returned home in protest at the insult to their flag, which, as I say, had either been blown down or cut down.

**Mr. Bennett:** Why doesn't the Minister deal with the university students?

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** You can see what I mean by freedom of expression, Mr. Hooper. I cannot get it even in this Chamber.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** Why don't you answer the question?

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** I would not answer the hon. member who is now interjecting, even if he were the only other member left in the Chamber. He is not worth answering.

In the past, a private member was given two opportunities to express his views on any subject. One was during the Address-in-Reply debate and the other was during the Budget debate. However, that number has been increased to three, and on Wednesdays any member can speak on matters of public interest. I realise that, under normal circumstances, one thinks in this debate of the State Budget. However, on this occasion I wish to exercise my right and speak mainly on the security of the nation and, in addition, sound a note of warning to those who hear or read what I have to say. If I say things that may appear to be prejudicial to the interests of any party, I say them only because I am truly fearful of the future unless all Australians, irrespective of their party affiliations, rally to the cause of our free nation.

I ask all hon. members, and indeed all Australians, to cast their minds back and traverse briefly the history of three small Baltic countries which loved and cherished their own freedom, as we do, but were betrayed and sold into virtual slavery, in certain instances by their own nationals, who were able to hide their real purpose in life, treachery and damnable treason from nations that had trusted them.

I intend to quote from the preface of a booklet entitled "The Soviet Occupation and Incorporation of Latvia, June 17 to August 5, 1940".

**Mr. Bennett:** What has this got to do with the Budget?

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** Obviously the hon. member did not listen to what I said earlier. If he can read, tomorrow he will be able to read what I said.

The preface says—

"The occupation and incorporation of the Baltic States into the U.S.S.R. in June, July, and August 1940, marked the end of the Baltic period of independence which had endured since 1918. Soviet theoreticians of the era described the attacks as 'revolutionary intervention'. The Baltic peoples and the Western world regarded the seizures as direct violations of the sovereignties of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Regardless of the label attached to Soviet intervention, the attempt to incorporate the Baltic States physically into the Soviet Union as dependent political entities ended in total success. Yet there is no question that the spirit of the Baltic people has not been won over.

"The events in Latvia from June 17 to August 5, 1940, took place as a result of careful political planning by the Kremlin leaders, including, Stalin, Molotov and Vyshinsky. There is little doubt that, despite early Soviet claims to the contrary, political incorporation was a goal from the outset. This essay investigates the methods of occupation and incorporation.

It poses two basic problems: How does an occupant gain control of public administration, and how does an occupant incorporate a territory into its own political structure? The answers to these questions help formulate the Soviet blueprint for Imperialism, a blueprint which has since been used in Eastern Europe to form the satellite empire."

**Mr. Jensen:** Is this the Red Book from China?

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** I am afraid I have not a copy of the Red Book. I am not as familiar with it as the hon. member who interjected.

**Mr. Jensen** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The hon. member for Bundaberg will have the opportunity to make his own speech.

**Mr. Jensen:** Oh, I'm very sorry.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! If the hon. member continues to interject he will not get that opportunity.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** The essay continues—

"The problem of gaining control of public administration can be divided into several component questions."

Firstly, there was the change in the structure of administrative authority and secondly a change in the top-level personnel of the administration. These things were done in such a way that the outside world was made to believe that free elections had indicated and proven that the Latvian people voluntarily consented to becoming members of the Soviet Union. This was interwoven with another propaganda campaign to convince the Latvian public that the vast majority of Latvians favoured friendship with, and incorporation into, the Soviet Union.

I will now quote a little of the history of Latvia, contained in article 2 of the treaty between Soviet Russia and Latvia of 11 August, 1920, which is quite important. Article 2 says—

"By virtue of the principle proclaimed by the Federated Socialist Republics of the Russian Soviets, which establishes the right of self-determination for all nations, even to the point of total separation from the States with which they have been incorporated, and in view of the desire expressed by the Latvian people to possess an independent national existence, Russia unreservedly recognizes the independence, self-subsistency, and sovereignty of the Latvian State and voluntarily and forever renounces all sovereign rights over the Latvian people and territory which formerly belonged to Russia under the existing constitutional law as well as under International Treaties which... (in the sense here indicated) shall in the future cease

to be valid. The previous status of subjection of Latvia to Russia shall not entail any obligation towards Russia on the part of the Latvian people or territory."

I quoted that article because history has shown how much importance is attached to treaties and words. When we look at Latvia, under the occupation . . .

**Mr. Davies:** Have you been to Latvia?

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** No, but the hon. member might well learn about the people.

**Mr. Hughes:** He would not even know where Latvia is.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** In the section headed "Latvia Under Occupation"—it should not be forgotten that this was after the integrity and freedom of Latvia were guaranteed by solemn treaty—the following appears:—

"The Soviet Union's excuses for the military occupation of Latvia on June 17, 1940, are contained in an ultimatum delivered to the Latvian government the previous day. The Bolsheviks accused Latvia of having 'failed to liquidate the military alliance with Estonia, which was created before the conclusion of the Latvian-Soviet mutual assistance pact and was aimed against the Soviet Union,' and of extending this alliance to include Lithuania."

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I remind hon. members that there is far too much audible conversation. The hon. member for Maryborough is trying to converse by way of interjection.

**Mr. F. P. Moore** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! If the hon. member for Mourilyan interjects while I am on my feet he will certainly not get another opportunity to do so. The hon. member for Maryborough, in conversing by way of interjection, is being highly irregular and out of order. I ask him to desist.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** The statement continues.

"Moreover, the Kremlin asserted that the magazine 'Revue Baltique' was 'a special press organ of the military Baltic entente.'

"The ultimatum continued by stating the terms which were indispensable to the realisation of the Latvian-Soviet pact of mutual assistance. They included the establishment of a Government capable of . . ."

**Mr. BENNETT:** I rise to a point of order. Would it be in order if the hon. member for Merthyr tabled the magazine instead of reading it right through?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** I will comment on the hon. member's point of order when I finish the quotation. It continues—

"They included the establishment of a Government capable of and willing to execute the Latvian-Soviet pact and the free entry of Soviet troops into Latvian territory to secure 'the most important centers of Latvia.'

"With the entry of the Red Army into Latvia a new government under Augustus Kirhensteins was proclaimed and subsequently affirmed by the election to the Latvian Sareima, held on July 14-15, 1940. The formal incorporation of Latvia into the U.S.S.R. took place on August 5 1940, at the Seventh Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. in Moscow. A Soviet Constitution was imposed on Latvia August 30, 1940."

**Mr. R. JONES:** I rise to a point of order. The External Affairs Department is not a portfolio of this Government. Therefore—

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! There is no point of order. If there are any more facetious points of order taken, which are in no way pertinent to the debate, I shall deal with the hon. member concerned.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** The story relating to the three Baltic countries is similar. The whole point that the hon. members opposite seem to be missing, as they take frivolous points of order in order to stop me and waste my time, is that the Baltic countries were taken over by traitors inside the Baltic countries themselves. Opposition members no doubt feel very keenly about such subjects.

**Mr. R. Jones:** Tell us what happened in Finland.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** I would tell the hon. member what happened in Finland if he was sober. If he comes back tomorrow, I will.

**Mr. R. JONES:** I rise to a point of order. Firstly, I think the hon. member for Merthyr should have the courtesy to sit down when a point of order is taken.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! What is the point of order?

**Mr. R. JONES:** He made an insinuation against me which is entirely untrue. I am of sober character. I resent his insinuation and I ask that he withdraw it.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I ask the hon. member for Merthyr to withdraw the remark.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** I accept his assurance that he is sober.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The hon. member for Cairns asked for the withdrawal of the statement.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** Well, I withdraw it.

**Mr. R. JONES:** I ask for an unqualified withdrawal.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member for Merthyr withdrew it.

**Mr. R. JONES:** He said he would withdraw it on the understanding that I was sober.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The hon. member for Merthyr withdrew the remark to the satisfaction of the Chair.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** On page 735 of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, relative to Estonia, the following appears:—

“On Feb. 2, 1920, the peace treaty with the Soviet Union was signed at Tartu. Russia ‘voluntarily and forever’ renounced its sovereign rights over the territory and people of Estonia. The war of liberation had cost the Estonian army 2,236 dead. At its peak in Dec. 1919 the army numbered 86,600 men.”

That is not the end of the story, because there is still Lithuania, the third Baltic State, to look at.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! If the persistent audible conversations do not cease, I shall deal with hon. members who do not take heed of the warning given by the Chair and refuse to obey the authority of the Chair. This is the final warning.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** On page 736 of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, there appears the following:—

“When the Vaps proposal was presented to the country in a referendum in Oct. 1933, it was adopted by 416,879 votes (56.3% of the electorate). The new constitution gave sweeping powers to the president. Pats became acting president and was expected to prepare the ground for the first presidential election. Rather than risk the success of the Vaps nominee, he proclaimed on March 12, 1934 a state of emergency; the Vaps was dissolved, its leaders were arrested and the political activities of all parties forbidden. Laidoner assumed responsibility for public order. For three years Pats ruled as a benevolent dictator. In Dec. 1936 a new constituent assembly was elected.

“It prepared a third constitution with a chamber of 80 deputies elected by the majority system and a national council of 40 members. The election was held in Feb. 1938; in the lower chamber there were 63 members of the Patriotic League founded by Pats in Feb. 1935, and an opposition of 17 led by Torisson and Teemant. In April, Pats was elected president for a term of six years.

“The fate of Estonia was decided by the so-called nonaggression treaty of Aug. 1939 between Nazi Germany and the U.S.S.R. A secret protocol to this treaty assigned Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Eastern Poland to the Soviet orbit. After the defeat of Poland, this arrangement was revised on Sep. 28 and a secret supplementary clause extended the Soviet’s sphere of influence to Lithuania.”

In other words, what I am trying to show is how the Baltic free countries were overrun and defeated by so-called free elections in their own countries, and betrayed by people in their own ranks.

Time will not allow me to quote from a great mass of highly relevant material.

**Mr. Bennett:** Thank heaven for that.

**Mr. R. Jones:** You could have fooled us.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** That would be the easiest thing in the world to do. An idiot could fool the hon. member. Those who do hear me, and those who read what I have to say, can, if they wish, pursue this matter further for themselves.

I summarise the whole situation by reading an abstract—

**Mr. Bennett:** An “extract”, not an “abstract”. We are not talking about paintings.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** The hon. member may know a lot about law, but he knows very little about Parliament because he is never here. I inform him that it is an “abstract”, not an extract. I thought even he would have known that. It is an abstract from “The Sovietization of the Baltic States” by Alfred Erich Senn, and it states—

“Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia have been subjected to an intensive campaign aimed at integrating them into the Soviet Union. The Communists have reorganised the economy, deported their opponents, and tried to re-educate the Baltic people in a spirit of devotion to the U.S.S.R. Since the death of Stalin they have let up somewhat, allowing a greater degree of personal freedom; but there is no indication that they would ever willingly give the Baltic nations their freedom. Despite their almost hopeless position, the Baltic peoples have continued to cling to their old national ideals and to hope for liberation.”

It might well be said that what I have related today is only history and, as has been suggested in some of the interjections that have been made, others may say, “What has this to do with us in Australia in 1970?” If we are wise, we will learn from history. If we are foolish and hell-bent on our own destruction, we will ignore the lessons of history and say that these things are no part of us. But they are part of us. They are part of our present, and they are certainly part of our future and destiny.

I had the privilege, distinction or opportunity—call it what you will—of being in a hotel in Adelaide directly opposite Parliament House on the occasion of the first Vietnam moratorium. I was able to watch from within a few feet the burning of papers on the front porch of Parliament House, to hear the chanting, and to see, to my shame and Australia’s shame, the arrest of six

people for disturbing the peace, all of whom, it subsequently turned out, were either Vietnam veterans or soldiers in civilian clothing.

I now propose to quote from a pamphlet, "Moratorium and Revolution." All hon. members opposite have seen it. They may not want me to quote it, but I shall do so because it is in context with what I want to say.

The title is "Defending Anti-War Democracy", from "The Australian" of Wednesday, 15 April, 1970, and it says—

"Dr. J. F. Cairns, the Federal Labor MP for Lalor, fully deserves the compliment unwittingly paid him by the Government yesterday. His leadership of the anti-war, anti-contraception movement behind the Vietnam Moratorium Campaign has been forthright and courageous in the face of considerable risk.

"The momentum of the campaign and Dr. Cairns' role in it have alarmed the Government . . ."

Later, the same article says—

"Significantly, there was no attempt to dispute Dr. Cairns' repeated claim that the citizens' rights to use public places for political purposes are the same as their rights to use those places for commercial or social purposes. Nor is it denied that a citizen with strong enough feelings against a particular law—be it contraception or obstructing footpaths—can break it. He may pay the consequences but he may also help to change the law, as many events in recent times have shown."

I will stop at that point.

The tragedy of all this is that there are men in Australia—dangerous men—who are hiding behind a facade of respectability and democratic institutions. We have, for instance, Dr. Cairns, who is a member of the Federal Opposition front bench and could be expected to be a Cabinet Minister of some consequence if ever Labour became the Government in the Federal sphere, openly declaring that he hopes that authority has had its day and is doomed. If hon. members opposite are really concerned for themselves, for their party, or for their nation, they will look objectively at Dr. Cairns and see what he stands for and, indeed, in what manner he is interpreted by the revolutionaries of the Vietnam Moratorium Committee.

Even the Press, in parts, has been affected by the emotional output of such campaigns and has, wittingly or unwittingly, been used by the campaigns in what purport to be quotes from "The Australian" of Wednesday, 15 April, 1970. I quoted from this yellow pamphlet—a suitable colour, I suggest—two small paragraphs because they show the place of Dr. Cairns in the Vietnam moratorium campaign. The second one, which says that

it is not denied that a citizen with strong enough feelings against a particular law can break it—

**Mr. Jensen:** Who printed it?

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** It does not matter who printed it. It is something that is said to have come from "The Australian" of Wednesday, 15 April. I find it very difficult to believe that "The Australian" was responsible for the whole of the article. I cannot believe that any responsible newspaper could possibly have written all of it. However, it is very difficult to say where the editorial comment of this scurrilous pamphlet ceases and where the article from "The Australian" begins.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. The hon. member for Clayfield.

**Mr. MURRAY:** I rise to a point of order.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The hon. member for Clayfield was not only talking over and above the hon. member who is making a speech, he also showed discourtesy by having his back to the Chair.

**Mr. MURRAY:** I rise to a point of order. I was not talking.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member will resume his seat.

**Mr. MURRAY:** I rise to a point of order.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The hon. member knows quite well that I can hear him talking, otherwise I would not call him to order.

**Mr. CHINCHEN:** I rise to a point of order. The hon. member for Clayfield did not say a word.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** The paragraphs that I have read to hon. members give the most amazing interpretation of the rights of the private citizen that I have yet heard. I have not had time to compare how much of that pamphlet is direct quotation from "The Australian" or to discover where the quotation finishes and the editorial comment begins. The latter might well believe that a citizen with strong enough feeling against a particular law—to quote the exact words—"can break it". Surely no responsible newspaper believes this. If I, as a citizen, believe that the law against breaking and entering is wrong, that the law against murder is wrong—

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! Hon. members on the cross-benches at the rear of the Chamber: I do not know how it is happening, but your conversation is coming over more audibly than the hon. member's speech. I appeal to you to desist from talking.

**Mr. Murray:** Nobody is talking here.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The hon. member for Chatsworth knows who is talking.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** If I believe that the laws against breaking and entering, or murder, or rape, or incest are harsh laws, and in the circumstances in which I find myself they are too harsh for me to countenance, surely the responsible Press does not give me the right to break such laws, provided I pay the penalty, in the hope that I will bring about a change of the law.

**Mr. Bennett:** You have already broken some laws.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. Bennett:** You yourself have broken one of the most fundamental laws.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** And that I have the inherent free right to break—

**Mr. R. Jones:** You are an indecent member.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I hope the hon. member is being facetious and is not imputing improper motives against the hon. member.

**Mr. R. Jones:** As a matter of fact, I am.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Then the hon. member will withdraw the remark and apologise.

**Mr. R. Jones:** I cannot.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The hon. member certainly can, and, what is more, he will. The hon. member will withdraw and apologise.

**Mr. R. Jones:** This man is a Temporary Chairman of Committees, and he should know better than to cast aspersions on me.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I appeal to the hon. member to withdraw and apologise. I do not want to have to deal with him.

**Mr. R. Jones:** I will not.

#### NAMING OF MEMBER

**The CHAIRMAN:** I name the hon. member for Cairns for disregarding the authority of the Chair.

The House resumed.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Speaker, I have to report that in Committee I named the hon. member for Cairns for disregarding the authority of the Chair.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Chairman reports that he has named the hon. member for Cairns for disregarding the authority of the Chair.

**Hon. G. W. W. CHALK** (Lockyer—Treasurer) (9.4 p.m.): I was present in the Chamber when this matter arose. I realise there is a responsibility on the Chairman of Committees to keep control of the Committee. I ask the hon. member for Cairns to

obey the Chair and, rather than ask him to retire, I give him this opportunity to indicate to the Chair that he is prepared to withdraw the remark and apologise to the hon. member for Merthyr.

**Mr. R. Jones:** This evening I have been subjected to—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! There will be no speeches. The hon. member will withdraw the remark.

**Mr. R. Jones:** Owing to the lateness of the hour and because of pleas from my colleagues on the front bench on this side of the Chamber, I will withdraw on this occasion because I think the truth of the matter has been brought to a head. But I will not "cop" it in future.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member is also asked to apologise to the Chair in matters like this. I do not want to be too difficult, but if the Chair is offended it is normal for the offending member to withdraw the remark and apologise to the Chair.

**Mr. R. Jones:** I apologise to the Chair only.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I believe that in the first instance the hon. member withdrew the remark. He will now apologise to the Chair.

**Mr. R. Jones:** I apologise to the Chair only.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member must withdraw the remark and apologise to the Chair.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** I rise to a point of order. He did withdraw the remark.

**Mr. Bennett:** I think that on an occasion like this, when you are setting a record, you should give him a pardon.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I am prepared to accept the withdrawal and apology of the hon. member for Cairns, and I shall also accept the plea of learned counsel. As this is a day that possibly will be remembered for many years, I extend the hon. member for Cairns a pardon.

**Mr. R. Jones:** My felicitations to you, Mr. Speaker, too; but my challenge to the other side of the Chamber still stands.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member for Cairns, having withdrawn and apologised, is exonerated.

#### SUPPLY

##### COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT— RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** I have read what is printed in the yellow pamphlet. As I have said, the Australian Labour Party ought to ask where we are going. One might well ask

whether the statement I have read is very far removed from that made by Australia's alternative Prime Minister, Mr. Gough Whitlam. He said he would advise young men who are called to the colours to accept the call and then, if they so felt or if their conscience so dictated, presumably in defiance of their oath of allegiance, to reserve unto themselves the right to refuse to obey commands. As I see it, the inherent danger is that this country is in danger of being taken over by the enemies of the people and the nation, as has happened already in Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. They were taken over by constitutional methods, or the unconstitutional use of constitutional methods, just as much as they have been taken over by armed intervention similar to that which occurred in Czechoslovakia and Hungary. They have been taken over by the prostitution of the democratic parliamentary system and the parliamentary way of life.

Recently we have heard a good deal from the Leader of the Opposition in his demands for the abolition of the Special Branch of the Queensland Police Force. If I remember correctly, he said that the most damning aspect of the Special Branch was not what it was doing, but its very existence. In one way he gave me the impression—whether he actually said it or not—that if Labour were to come to office it would abolish this branch, which, firstly, is claimed to be a political force being used as an agency of the Government; secondly, as a secret Police Force and, thirdly, as an unnecessary security force which should not be in existence at all, as we have a Federal security force.

I wish to defend these men of the Special Branch against the attacks made on them, not only by radicals at the university and certain elements of the trade union movement, but also by the Parliamentary Labour Party, as propounded by the Leader of the Opposition. These are the men who are called upon to do the dirty work in the community in the interests of public safety, often at great physical risk to themselves. I place on record that I admire them for their patience under extreme provocation. I believe I speak for all responsible citizens when I commend them for a job well done in protecting the public from the lawless, the provocateur and the anarchist.

Let me examine the three criticisms I mentioned relative to the Special Branch. The first is that it is a political force being used as an agency of the Government. I do not honestly know what objection there can be to the Special Branch being used to protect the Government. Indeed, its job is to protect the Government of the day, whatever the Government's political colour. Government in Australia, at least so far, has been government of the people by the people, through free elections. Surely the Leader of the Opposition would not

advance the theory that those who want to should be given freedom to overthrow and destroy the Government; that the Government of the day has no right to be made aware of subversive movements whose aim is to destroy our way of life and a democratically elected Parliament.

**Mr. O'Donnell:** Provided their duties are confined to that.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** I am glad the hon. member made that interjection. I hope that later tonight he will not regret what he said.

If the Leader of the Opposition claims that Labour would not have a Special Branch,

**Mr. O'Donnell:** He did not claim anything of the sort.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** He certainly implied it. I do not know how else I could interpret his statement that the most shocking thing is not what the Special Branch does, but the fact that it exists at all. If that does not mean he will wipe it out, I do not know what it means.

If Labour wants to abolish the Special Branch, my only comment is "balderdash". Labour in Opposition may not believe in the Special Branch, but I know from my own personal experience that Labour in office certainly does.

I thank the hon. member for his interjection that, provided the Special Branch is used to protect the Government of the day, it is all right. However, when it is used to persecute, to cower and deny the ordinary citizen his ordinary civil rights and liberty to appeal against government's arbitrary decision, then, of course, it is all wrong. When the special Branch is used not to prevent chaos and disruption of free movement but rather to harass and to batter the defenceless private citizen who is not charged with any offence and to deny him the right of access to the courts of the land by executive devices, then the Special Branch is being prostituted. That is what happened under Labour. It happened in 1955, before the split in 1957.

I speak not from what I have heard or read but from my own personal experience. I speak of a time when the Special Branch, on the direct orders of an A.L.P. Minister of the Crown, kept me under surveillance 24 hours a day, seven days a week, simply because I refused to accept an arbitrary decision made by him.

If what I say is not right, I would not be in this Chamber tonight because at that time, I had no politics. I was not a member of any political party. I exercised my secret vote, not in this State, but in New South Wales, prior to the war as a private person without party affiliations. I did not know a member of Parliament. However, my next-door neighbour at that time, himself a Labour voter, had a brother who was a Labour member of this Parliament.

He was so shocked by the arrogant and unwarranted treatment meted out to me by the Special Branch, at the orders of this Minister of the Crown, that he decided to ask his brother, who was a member of this Parliament, to come to my rescue and plead my case.

**An Opposition Member:** Did you have your phone tapped?

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** I would not know because I did not have access to the files, as Labour members did in those days.

I had committed no crime. I had been charged with no offence. At the time, I was assistant secretary of the Services Canteen Trust Fund operating from Victoria Barracks. If any one doubts the veracity of what I say he need only ask my former superior (whose name, address and phone number I am prepared to supply privately), and he will be told that my story cannot be denied.

I say this only because the Leader of the Opposition has implied that the Special Branch operates only under a Country-Liberal Government or anti-Labour Government, to the detriment of the people. I assure the Committee that the Special Branch was most active under Labour, and at the direction of a Labour Minister, the Special Branch followed me, spied on me and reported on me to the point of persecution; so much so that to go to work I had to jump over back fences, and to come out of Victoria Barracks I had to use a different gate every time to ensure that I was not followed. This was the type of scrutiny conducted by the Special Branch under Labour.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** Oh, rubbish!

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** It is all right for the hon. member to belch or do whatever he did.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** Were you the padre?

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** If the hon. gentleman takes the trouble to read "Who's Who" he will know in what year I was a padre. If he is trying to cast aspersions, he will need to be a better man than he is.

This hypocritical Australian Labour Party would tell the public that, under Labour, the Special Branch would be abandoned when, from my own experience, I can tell the people of Queensland that, under Labour, without any justification, and without any threat to the State, the Special Branch was used by a Minister of the Crown to try to stop me going to work.

Do the Leader of the Opposition and the Australian Labour Party want to disband the State's security police and leave the security of the State unguarded so that an enemy of the State can prosper undetected until, like Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania, Queensland is overrun by foreign and hostile

interests? I said earlier that the Leader of the Opposition made three statements on the Special Branch.

**Mr. R. Jones:** Are you a freedom fighter?

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** I was, and so was the hon. member, so he should not decry someone who was.

**Mr. R. Jones:** Don't start crawling back, because I won't accept it.

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** I am not crawling back. I am only sorry that we were in the same Force.

The Special Branch is a political force. It must be, because its job is to protect the Government of the day. Of course it is a political force, in the same sense that the vice squad is a vice squad, the consorting squad is a consorting squad, and the gaming squad is a gaming squad. I would not be ashamed to advocate the continuation of the Special Branch to ensure the security of the State, and to ensure that the Government of the day, properly elected by the people, was not in danger of being overthrown by anarchists such as those who in other countries hijack aircraft, and kidnap and murder diplomatic staff members.

I am saying to the people loudly and clearly what the alternative Premier of this State is saying. He says, "Elect me and my shadow Cabinet announced today, and your security police will be annihilated. Your State will be in such a condition that no radical or anarchist will be impeded in his attempts to overthrow the Government, because I will leave Queensland without protection by qualified people."

The second thing that the A.L.P. says about the Special Branch is that it is a secret police force. One of the reasons advanced by the Acting Commissioner of Police, Mr. Whitrod, a few days ago for changing the leadership of the Special Branch was that its members are as well known to the public as the agitators they arrest. Surely there is nothing secret about a group of men who are so well known to the public that the police chief has to replace them? Both the Press and the public quickly recognise members of the Special Branch.

The third point made by the Labour Party about the Special Branch is that it is unnecessary because the Federal Government provides security forces for the nation. Labour members forget that the States are sovereign States. How unrealistic it is to argue that we do not need a security force for the administration of the law within our own State! This can well be realised when it is recalled that only a few weeks ago State police could not interfere on Federal property, and Federal police could not take action on State property. Let us not forget that when the Leader of the Opposition objected, at a trade union congress, to the Special Branch, he in fact said, if he was

correctly reported, that, whether we liked it or not, the Special Branch would be abandoned under Labour.

**Mr. Casey:** What threat to security would they have to protect us from—a take-over by New South Wales?

**Mr. RAMSDEN:** If the hon. member cannot understand what we need to be protected from, all I can say is that that is a very, very dangerous admission to make in this Chamber.

Let us ask why there has been a change in the A.L.P.'s attitude to the Special Branch. Is it because there is trouble afoot, and the A.L.P. does not want the Government warned? Is it that the security of the State is about to be assailed, and Labour members, as puppets of dangerous men behind the scenes, cannot stand by and watch this menace stopped, and have accordingly changed their policy on the Special Branch? Is this the reason? Or have they really changed their policy? After all, we have only to look at some of the members of the A.L.P. in the Federal sphere. There are Mr. Bert James, who was previously in the New South Wales Criminal Investigation Branch; Mr. Hayden, from Queensland, who was formerly a policeman; and, the bobby-dazzler of them all, Dr. Jim Cairns, who was at one time a member of the Special Branch of the Victorian Police Force. In fact, he was in the Observation Squad. That, for the benefit of those who do not know what it is, is a squad that operates as a truly secret Police Force. Its members assume other characters and wear disguises.

I conclude this call to guard the security of the State by reading a letter received from Mr. Arturs Berztiss, of the Australian Latvian Federation. It is dated 18 November, 1958, and it says—

"Today is the Independence Day of Latvia. Forty years ago on November 18th, 1918, when the great Allied victories in the First World War had made the political climate of Europe suitable for the tender plant of Freedom, Latvia, among many subjugated nations, claimed her share of the Right of Self-Determination of Nations and proclaimed her independence. This declaration was corroborated by Latvian soldiers in a bitter War of Liberation that lasted for almost two years. Only then could the Latvian people enjoy peace, economic development and social justice in their own country governed as they themselves desired. However, these privileges, which it would seem, are the birthright of every nation, could last only for 20 years. In 1940 Latvian Independence was destroyed by Soviet invasion and the Latvian nation today is partly enslaved in forced labour camps, partly fettered and humiliated in their homeland, partly living as exiles on the hospitality of the Free World eagerly awaiting another 18th November.

"I take the liberty of enclosing a brochure which shows what happened in Latvia when it was deprived of its hard won independence. I am doing this in the conviction that the story of the happenings in Latvia and the methods of subjugation used there are of use to everyone, as a warning lest they be repeated elsewhere, for the same enemy that robbed us of our freedom is stretching out for yours, is threatening that of the rest of the world. The world is his limit."

Twelve years later his words ring truer than ever, because Hungary is under Soviet domination, so is Czechoslovakia, and so are the Baltic states.

Finally, let me quote from the words of Mr. Arthur Calwell, a man known to all hon. members as the leader of the Federal A.L.P. for many years. Mr. Calwell wrote an article entitled "A Great Russian Patriot" for inclusion in a booklet "Lenin Through Australian Eyes", which is described as "an Australian contribution to the Lenin Centenary 1870-1970". I shall quote very briefly from it. He said—

"The Liberals in Australia are still Conservatives, but they do not differ very much with the social climbing, status seeking, lower middle-class professional and white-collar people who like to forget that their parents and grand-parents were exploited trade-unionists.

"Lenin once said that Russia needed one hundred years of Socialism before it would become a Communist country. I may be wrong but I do not think the U.S.S.R. will ever become the Communist country that Marx, Engels and Lenin foretold. Lenin had a flexible mind and decided, after a short period of war-time Communism, to persuade the Russian masses to adopt the New Economic Policy. There have been further modifications of this policy under Lenin's successors and there will be more, I believe, when the policy of peaceful co-existence, which was first advocated by Lenin, becomes more generally accepted among the peoples of all nations. The policy of peaceful co-existence simply means that every nation is entitled to whatever political and economic and social conditions it desires and that no nation has the right to interfere in the affairs of other nations for, in this way, wars can be avoided and the chances of world peace promoted."

Let me ask: after Russia in the Baltic countries, Russia in Hungary, Russia in Czechoslovakia, and after Russian expansion in the Indian Ocean, can any sane, thinking person believe with Labour, through the voice of Arthur Calwell, that peaceful co-existence can be, or is, practicable? Or would he agree with Mr. Berztiss that it "can happen here"? I leave it to the electors to determine the security of the nation.

**Mr. JENSEN** (Bundaberg) (9.30 p.m.): We in this Chamber have not, for many a long day, heard such a diatribe of drivel as has tonight come from the hon. member for Merthyr. I am indeed very sorry for you, Mr. Hooper, and for your leader in this Chamber, Mr. Chalk, in having on your side a member who would rise in a Budget debate and for three-quarters of an hour speak about three Baltic countries, uttering not one word about his own Treasurer's Budget. The Treasurer, we know, wants to be our next Premier, yet you, Mr. Hooper, have had to call the "ginger group" to order at least six times tonight. It is disgusting. The Treasurer is not game to have a go against the Premier. He nearly had a go on the conservation issue and he is supposed to have a go on the redistribution issue, but while he has this type of member behind him what chance has he of ever becoming Premier of this State?

The hon. member who has just resumed his seat spent three-quarters of an hour talking rubbish about three Baltic states that have no relationship whatever with us. It is his Government that deals with the Soviet Union, which took those states over. Without the trade this Government does with the Soviet Union it would not know where it was.

**Mr. Casey:** It sells them rutile.

**Mr. JENSEN:** It sells them everything. The hon. member for Merthyr tonight even sold his own Treasurer out. He certainly sold the Liberal Party out, because it will never become the Government of this State while one of its members comes in here supposedly to back his Treasurer up and spends the whole of his time discussing three Baltic states. I thought the Treasurer would shortly throw the Government on the redistribution issue. He has every opportunity to do so, and I would like to see him do it because he thinks he can beat the Labour Party and I want to see him try. I know the Treasurer would want the opportunity and I would like to see him get it. I know he is the only intelligent member on that side of the Chamber.

**Mr. Murray:** When are you going to get onto the Budget?

**Mr. JENSEN:** I will get onto the Budget shortly, but I want to get this matter straight first. I know that the Treasurer can walk out of this Parliament tomorrow and take over the directorship of about 20 companies, 19 of which will be owned by the Japanese.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. JENSEN:** Thank you, Mr. Hooper. They are upsetting my equilibrium. I think the Treasurer has ability and I want him to try because it will be the last chance he will have before he eventually leaves here and becomes a director.

I turn now to the Budget. I do not want to spend three-quarters of an hour speaking about the Treasurer, as the hon. member for Merthyr did in talking about three Baltic countries. I want to speak about the Budget because, this year, Bundaberg has been given a bit of a go. Last year we did not get a go at all, but this year Bundaberg has received some of the consideration due to it.

**Mr. R. E. Moore:** Have you bought a new car yet from your shares?

**Mr. JENSEN:** I do not want to waste time on anybody who does not want to hear about Bundaberg; he can leave the Chamber, because I intend to be a little bit parochial.

Some hon. members do not realise that Bundaberg is the ninth city of this State and a very important one. It does not grow and then stagnate, but continues to grow each year with an annual increase in population of from 900 to 1,000. Tonight we listened to the hon. member for Warrego speak on rural affairs. He is one of the most prominent men on pastoral matters, and he can run rings around Government members who consider themselves to be specialists on the pastoral industry. I do not know anything about it, but I know a good deal about the rural sector.

This year the sugar industry is faced with the problem of excess production. The problem extends to Bundaberg. Recently I asked the appropriate Minister about excess sugar, but as yet he has not been able to answer the question because the C.S.R. Company has not told him what the situation is. The Bundaberg mills are well over their peaks. For many years they crushed whatever cane they could get and suffered the consequences, but this year they are over their peaks, and the Government cannot take the sugar. The Bundaberg-Wide Bay district will suffer, particularly as it was under its peak for a few years.

**Mr. Ahern:** Are any of their shares worth buying?

**Mr. JENSEN:** If the hon. member wants to get onto sugar shares, I will tell him those he should buy.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. JENSEN:** If the hon. members opposite would like some information on shares, Mr. Hooper, they can see me outside in the lobby.

The sugar industry in Bundaberg is suffering this year in that it cannot cut the extra cane. If it was allowed to do so, the extra production would make up for low yields in other years.

**Mr. Lee:** You don't think it is Robinson Crusoe, do you?

**Mr. JENSEN:** You will never be Man Friday, anyway.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. JENSEN:** I notice that the Treasurer has given Bundaberg a little consideration by way of drought relief.

**Mr. Murray:** He always gives Bundaberg consideration.

**Mr. JENSEN:** Last year he took Bundaberg off the list after it had 20 inches of rain in January. That was stupid, because everybody knows that cane or any other crop does not grow within a week, but takes six months to grow. Within a week of that rain Bundaberg was taken off the list. However, it has since been put back on. As he did in last year's Budget, the Treasurer has given Bundaberg \$5,000, which is the same amount as that given to Gympie and other little towns throughout the State. I remind him that Bundaberg has a population of 27,000 and the highest unemployment figures in the State. The Government will not understand that Bundaberg must keep people in employment. The Treasurer simply gives \$5,000 all round. He does not even look at the cities and what they have to do to exist, but makes an easy allocation, which saves him a lot of work and trouble.

**Mr. Hungerford:** Do you think you could spend it?

**Mr. JENSEN:** We could spend that, and another \$35,000, if he wants to give us that amount.

I wish to deal now with health. The Government has provided \$2,000 per annum towards the salary of each fully trained sister on the staff of the Pioneer Memorial Hospital. I am very pleased to say that such a grant will help that institution considerably.

The Government has also doubled the subsidy for the subnormal children. The Bundaberg branch sincerely thanks the Minister, but I believe that the Minister for Education or the Treasurer should pay the full salary of teachers who work with subnormal children. Why should these children be disadvantaged? The attitude seems to be, "They are subnormal, so why should we teach them?"

**A Government Member:** Don't forget that there was no association to help subnormal children in Labour's day.

**Mr. JENSEN:** We had charitable organisations that helped them. We still have charitable organisations that do what they can for them. There is a subnormal in the Government back bench, Mr. Hooper, who turned his back on you. He was talking all the time.

**Mr. Murray:** There was complete neglect of the subnormals under Labour.

**Mr. JENSEN:** I do not wish to listen to interjections by the hon. member for Clayfield. He acts subnormally in this Chamber. That is why the Treasurer can never attain the Premiership.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! In fairness to the hon. member for Bundaberg, I appeal to the hon. members for Mourilyan and Clayfield not to converse across the Chamber.

**Mr. JENSEN:** The Government helped Bundaberg this year by building a new State school. It was promised about three years ago, and will be ready by the end of the year. But nothing was said in the Budget about a new high school in North Bundaberg. On 3 March the Minister for Education said that if the school could not get a place on the 1970-71 works programme, every effort would be made to place it on the 1971-72 programme. He said that the school would then open at the start of 1972. I hope he sticks to that announcement, because he knows what the Bundaberg High School is like. He knows how dilapidated and overcrowded some of the buildings are. Some of them have been there since 1948, and others were Army huts.

The Kepnock High School started accepting pupils in 1964, and was officially opened by the late Premier, Mr. Pizzey in 1966. Over 700 pupils now attend the school, which has five floating classrooms and four temporary classrooms. The Minister for Works has just announced that two more classrooms are to be built at the school. That will relieve the position, provided the construction of the North Bundaberg High School is proceeded with.

Temporary classrooms are not a solution. When the planners cannot see four years ahead, their planning is pretty weak. I do not want to harp on the need for a new high school in Bundaberg. If the Minister for Education would get the district superintendent to visit the area more often, everything would be all right. But he stays in Maryborough, our little sister city, instead of being stationed in Bundaberg where he could do some good.

The East Bundaberg State School has not even a library room. I wrote a letter on the subject to the Minister of Education, who passed it on to the Minister for Works. The request has now been passed on to the superintendent, who will look into it. A library room is critical for next year's curriculum. The superintendent does not know there is no library room, because he is sitting down in Maryborough instead of going to Bundaberg, which is the major city on the coast.

**Mr. Lee** interjected.

**Mr. JENSEN:** I do not want to talk about the Russians and Lee's private enterprise, selling gravel all round the place. Now he wants to know what shares I am buying because he wants to get in on the "grouter". If he looks at Jensen's Minerals—I do not know that company—he will see the shares went up from \$1.40 to \$2.65, simply on my name. He can get onto those if he likes.

I register appreciation at the Department of Cultural Activities grant to the amateur players. I appreciate anything that is done in my area, but I hate to be ignored and left out when something is necessary and should be done by these departments.

I want to work through the Financial Statement systematically so that the Treasurer will know where he is, seeing that he is sitting over there signing cheques.

The hon. member for Sandgate and I have spoken about the ambulance service before. The financial statement of the Bundaberg Ambulance Brigade last year shows that individual contributions amounted to \$10,563 and that employees' contributions amounted to \$19,992, a total of \$30,555. The wages paid by that brigade amount to \$57,351, nearly twice the amount received in contributions. It is only the gambling conducted by the ambulance, donations, and other endowable collections and benefits, which amount to over \$30,000, that allow this ambulance brigade to operate. That amount is collected because of the charitable nature of the citizens of Bundaberg, who have to double the contributions to allow the ambulance service to exist.

**Mr. Rae:** That goes on everywhere, whether it is Charleville, Winton,—

**Mr. JENSEN:** No, it does not. The Maryborough Hospital runs the Maryborough ambulance.

If ambulancemen were not in the streets every day of the week selling 20c numbers, the brigade could not exist. Because the ambulance service gets people to hospital quickly, insurance companies are saved the expense of paying double indemnities on insurance policies. Therefore, why does the Treasurer not introduce legislation to make insurance companies pay the ambulance brigade, the same as fire insurance companies pay the fire brigade? This could easily be done.

The insurance companies are saving millions of dollars while the people of Bundaberg have to contribute towards the upkeep of the ambulance brigade there. It must be realised that people are requested to subscribe to many worthy causes—the Cancer Fund, the Asthma Foundation and the Heart Foundation, and every type of fund that there is, instead of the money coming out of revenue and medical benefits. The Government should get onto the medical benefits funds, which are run by the doctors. They are making millions, too, but there is no thought of making them provide finance for some of this work.

About ten years ago I saw the balance sheet of the Medical Benefits Fund in "The Bulletin", showing a profit of about \$8,000,000. I wrote to "The Bulletin" asking who got that profit. The funds say they must have such large balances. I do not know

what the doctors would say about it. I should like the hon. member for Wavell to give us some facts on that point. People are expected to subscribe constantly to charitable organisations such as the Sub-Normal Children's Welfare Association, the Cancer Fund, the Asthma Foundation, the Heart Foundation, the ambulance, and many others. But never a word is said about the profits being made by medical benefits funds. We have to put up with these constant requests for donations all the time.

**Mr. Chalk:** I wish we didn't have to put up with this.

**Mr. JENSEN:** I am sorry that the Treasurer does not want to put up with this. He cannot even see his way clear to improving the service provided by the T.A.B. He takes every cent from the North, and gives no assistance whatever to the people in that area. He allows them to be robbed. He will not even provide them with an adequate radio service. We cannot even hear about the scratchings and riders. We have to bet blind—and the Treasurer allows that to continue. He will not even place the T.A.B. under the scrutiny of the Auditor-General, and it is a \$70,000,000 a year industry. I cannot understand that.

I understand that the T.A.B. is going to install a computer. When that is done, the T.A.B. will become like the S.G.I.O. and we will not see its accounts for three or four years. The T.A.B. is ready to spend money on a computer but it will do nothing to help people in country areas. When the computer is in operation, we will never see its balance sheets, and nobody will know what it is doing.

I shall now spend a little time on the Railway Department, and I hope the Minister for Local Government and Electricity remains in the Chamber because in a few minutes I shall give him a little food for thought, too. The other day the Deputy Leader of the Opposition spoke about the "Sunlander" and the griddle car. I am one who travels between Bundaberg and Brisbane every week by train; I save the Government about 40 air tickets a year because I travel on the "Sunlander". The Bundaberg train no longer runs, and, as the people of Bundaberg are now served by only the "Capricornian" and the "Sunlander", I want to know when seats are going to be reserved on those trains for Bundaberg travellers. This is of interest to the hon. member for Maryborough, and also the hon. member for Isis and the people of Childers. There are now occasions when Bundaberg travellers cannot get seats on those trains, and I do not know what the position will be in the future. I travel on the "Sunlander" because it suits me, and because the Minister has been gracious enough to give me the privilege of travelling on it.

Travelling on the Bundaberg Mail was bad; it rattled your "guts" out. The same can be said of the Rockhampton Mail, too.

**Mr. Hanson:** You deserve a gold medal for travelling on it.

**Mr. JENSEN:** That is right—and not the one that we get for being parliamentarians, either.

**Mr. Camm:** Why don't you say something for railwaymen instead of running them down?

**Mr. JENSEN:** I am not running them down. What's wrong with you, you donkey? I am trying to tell you about train times from Bundaberg.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. JENSEN:** Talk about pie-eyed parrots! I read in the Bundaberg paper that mentioned pie-eyed parrots that the Treasurer said there were galahs in Bundaberg. There are some galahs on the other side of the Chamber, too. That is why the hon. gentleman will be over on this side before long.

**Mr. Chalk:** I am coming up to see you next week.

**Mr. JENSEN:** Yes. I will be with the honourable gentleman on Tuesday.

Hon. members have to travel down on the "Capricornian" on Monday nights. I have to attend functions on the next two Monday nights, as I will be chairing the meetings. Therefore, I will have to travel down on the Rockhampton Mail, which is of about the same standard as the Bundaberg Mail. It rattles and crackles along. The hon. member for Maryborough should get the M.B.E., or an award of some sort, for travelling on that train every week. I could not take it. He has to leave the train on Tuesday mornings and take his place in this Chamber. It is a serious matter. I travel on it at times, and sometimes I travel on the Rockhampton Mail. When possible, I travel on the "Sunlander".

I ask hon. members to have a look at the times at which the "Sunlander" leaves Bundaberg. They do not suit anyone travelling from Bundaberg who wishes to arrive in Brisbane early in the morning. They certainly do not enable me to be here in time for the sitting of the House. If I use the air service, I do not arrive here till midday, and I have not been late for a sitting since I was elected to this Assembly. I was absent for the first time last Friday, when I had to attend a T.P.I. function in Bundaberg, and I shall be attending a function with the Treasurer tomorrow week.

**Mr. Chalk:** There will be two intelligent people in Bundaberg on that day.

**Mr. JENSEN:** As I said earlier, the hon. gentleman is the only intelligent person on that side of the Chamber.

While the Minister for Mines is in the Chamber, I point out to the Committee that the Bundaberg City Council wrote to me about a tourist road to Bundaberg. As I said, it is the ninth city in the State and its population is growing at the rate of 900 to 1,000 each year. It is not stagnating; it is growing. A few years ago the Minister agreed to the construction of a by-pass road that took business from the railways and assisted the big road transport companies. That road runs from Apple Tree Creek to Gin Gin, a matter of 30 miles in 2,000. As he knows, 70 per cent. of the traffic now by-passes Bundaberg.

I appeal to the Minister for Labour and Tourism—he may have more common sense and brains than the Minister for Mines and Main Roads—to build the road to which I am referring from money allocated for the promotion of tourism. There are two missing links in the road, which would take tourists up past the beaches at Elliott Heads, Burnett Heads, Bargara and Moore Park to Miriam Vale. It would also pass Woodgate, which is one of the best beaches. Only two years ago allotments there were selling for \$100; now it is impossible to buy one for \$1,000. In addition, it would pass Burrum Heads. The beach that I am indicating on the map is one of the best beaches on the North Coast.

**Mr. Lee:** Which beach? We can't see it.

**Mr. RAE:** I rise to a point of order. I should like to know to which beach the hon. member is referring.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. JENSEN:** It is the one that I am indicating. The next one is Bargara. The Minister for Local Government has been there, I know, because I was with him. It has the most picturesque golf course in Queensland. There is nothing like it, yet such a picturesque place is being bypassed by this road that is being developed and put through at a cost of hundreds of thousands of dollars to enable transport companies to bypass Bundaberg. This road could, without any trouble whatever, run through Bundaberg. If the Minister for Mines and Main Roads has not the money, the Minister for Tourism should have some to prevent the bypassing of a city the size of Bundaberg. In all his literature he should include the exhortation, "Don't bypass Bundaberg, the most picturesque city in Queensland."

**Mr. Lee:** He is worrying about the cost.

**Mr. JENSEN:** I am not worrying about the cost. I am not a road engineer. As I said the other day, when the hon. member for Yeronga rises to speak he tries to tell Ministers and public servants how to do their jobs. I have never told public servants what this road will cost. It is their job to estimate it. The Minister for Mines and Main Roads has told me by letter what it will cost, and I have handed it on to the council.

I wanted to bring this matter up because for a town the size of Bundaberg to be bypassed by 70 per cent. of the tourist traffic going north is a very serious matter.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** Do you mean to say you want all the big transport trucks going through Bundaberg?

**Mr. JENSEN:** I did not say anything of the sort.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** You are getting very close to that.

**Mr. JENSEN:** I will not say much about irrigation for Bundaberg because I know this matter is coming up very shortly. The people of Bundaberg are very pleased that the Government, after double-crossing them a couple of years ago, is now allocating \$8,300,000 for an irrigation scheme. In addition, the Federal Government, recognising how good it is, has allocated \$12,500,000. My only comment on this is that I want to see Bundaberg people employed on the work and Bundaberg firms get some of the work.

**Mr. Lee:** What if they are not the lowest tenderers?

**Mr. JENSEN:** I do not care whether or not they are the lowest. I am looking after Bundaberg. I am interested in Bundaberg and I believe we should be given a go especially after having been dumped for so long.

I have here a report on employment in sugar towns. It was put out by Professor Harris of the university and it gives unemployment figures for all sugar towns. It is noticeable that towns such as Ayr, Bundaberg, Cairns, Mackay and so on have the largest percentages for unemployment figures. The Premier and the Treasurer duck this matter every time it is brought up, but Bundaberg is listed as having an unemployment figure averaging 4.8 per cent. which is the highest of any city. This is peculiar to every sugar town and the more sugar mills situated around a city the worse the unemployment position becomes during the slack season. If a town has no other factories, female unemployment is the big worry.

When a start is made on this irrigation scheme I want to see it proceed apace in the slack season and slow down somewhat during the crushing so that it will give maximum employment during the slack season and will not cut into the work-force of the mills during the crushing, which would cause disruption. The sooner this scheme is commenced the better, and the more contracts let to Bundaberg firms the better it will be for that city's employment position.

I wish to deal now with pollution, as the Minister concerned has honoured me by being present in the Chamber. Yesterday, in answer to a question that I asked, he said it would be impracticable to station an officer of his department at every location in Queensland where there is a possibility

of pollution occurring. I know it would be impracticable, but he knows that pollution has been occurring for the past year in Bundaberg. It has not been occurring in all other cities.

I can show the Minister newspaper cuttings that I produced in the Chamber last year, and I will deal with them one at a time. Here is an article, dated 5 November, 1969, dealing with dead fish. Last year I asked the Minister if he would send an officer to Bundaberg at the end of the crushing season, but, as usual, he said no, and offered the same old excuse. However, his officers in Bundaberg promised that when the first death of fish occurred they would have a man in Bundaberg within 24 hours. Every time the Minister is asked to send an officer to Bundaberg, he offers some lame excuse.

**Mr. RAE:** I rise to a point of order. I appreciate the hon. member's concern about pollution in his area, but in making that charge, he is implying that I have done nothing. He knows full well that that is not so.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** Make a Ministerial statement.

**Mr. RAE:** I will not make a Ministerial statement at all.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The hon. member for Bundaberg.

**Mr. JENSEN:** I am reminding the Minister that last year I referred to pollution and asked him to send an officer to Bundaberg when crushing ceased. I received the same excuse as the one I received on this occasion, that is, it is not practicable. It is quite practicable.

On 6 November, 1969, the local newspaper contained the headline "Pollution toll in river rises". In January of this year I pointed out in this Chamber that the deaths of fish do not occur in the off season.

**Mr. Camm:** Where does the pollution come from?

**Mr. JENSEN:** It would come from the Minister if he was there.

**Mr. Camm:** Where does it come from?

**Mr. JENSEN:** I do not take it upon myself to do the work of the Minister's officers; I do not tell the officers of the Main Roads Department how to build roads; I do not tell the Minister for Education how his teachers should teach their pupils. I am asking the Minister and his officers.

In the editorial of the "Bundaberg News-Mail" of 29 November, 1969, this appears—

"It seems strange that the Department of Local Government has been unable so far to obtain from the Government analyst a finding on the cause of the big

'fish kill' in the Burnett River more than two weeks ago. Pollution concern has become widespread, and the public is anxious to know the extent of any trouble in the waters of the Burnett River. The Government analysts either must be very busy or the identification of the cause of the deaths must be most difficult to ascertain.

"Another factor could be possible, and in view of a recent report submitted at a Queensland Littoral Society its possibility is equally worrying. It may be found that severe pollution in the river is caused not only by industrial waste. Perhaps this may explain the delay in the release of information. In any case, the public still is entitled to know and the State Minister involved should make more inquiries."

That was last year.

**Mr. Lee:** What happened this year?

**Mr. JENSEN:** I will show the hon. member what happened this year; I have the papers here. This year these headlines appeared: "Further Fish 'Kill'", which appeared on 21 July, soon after crushing had started; "Substantial fish 'Kill' in Burnett"; and, after the death of the big groper, "Massive fish kill in River". The groper weighed 450 lb. and measured 6 ft. 6 in. At 6 ft. 6 in. it was a little bigger than the Minister, and a little fatter than he. This is a serious matter.

Another headline reads, "Death of a River". The article states—

"They ought to rename the Burnett River and call it Baffle Creek because of the number of people who are apparently baffled by its pollution. While they are all busy being baffled, there is nothing surer than we are having our river killed off as a fishing spot.

"And if anyone wants to claim that he's not baffled about our pollution—specifically, its causes—then why hasn't there been a bit of action?"

That little item in the Saturday issue of "Bundaberg News Mail" is having a crack at the Minister's department. I do not like to see Government departments criticised in this way. I rang the department and told someone what to look for, but that is what the people think of the department.

Another article is headed "People Treated like Fools". Councillor Baker, a constituent of the hon. member for Burnett, was responsible for that headline. I did the best I could by ringing the department to outline what should be looked for.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the hon. member to address his remarks to the Chair.

**Mr. Rae:** We have done a very good job for Bundaberg, and we are doing a better job this week.

**Mr. JENSEN:** I should like the Minister to keep the men there until the end of the crushing season. I know that he promised to have them there for a week, but that is useless. No-one will discharge waste into the river while they are there. If they were left there until the end of the year, we might get somewhere. I can tell the Minister when to come up there.

**Mr. Rae:** Well, you tell me; let me know.

**Mr. JENSEN:** What would happen? As before, the Minister would not send anybody up there.

I want this matter cleaned up once and for all. Everybody thinks that somebody in the Minister's department is protecting industry in Bundaberg. Although I have been told that I am a shareholder in one of the mills, I will brand whoever is responsible for the pollution.

**Mr. Rae:** That attitude is quite right.

**Mr. JENSEN:** That is so.

Although I have some further comments to make, I know that the Treasurer would like me to sit down. I am always obliging and co-operative and, as we will be debating the Estimates, I will not speak much longer at this stage. Before sitting down I should like to say, how sorry I am that you, Mr. Hooper, belong to a party which has members who are complete drivellers and who are completely without manners and respect for you. They are trying to "kill" the Treasurer, who is doing his damndest to win the Government, by talking about the Baltic and things like that when we have the Treasurer's report, which is well worth speaking on, to deal with.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** Tell us about the drunken parrots.

**Mr. JENSEN:** The drunken parrots in Bundaberg are not as drunk as some of the members on the Government side at times.

I have tried to present certain points relative to the Budget, which, I know, has helped Bundaberg a little. I have also referred to ways in which it could help a lot more, and I hope to expound further on them when we deal with the Estimates.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 10.17 p.m.